

Community comment period is open Feb 2020:

In February 2020, we are soliciting feedback on our community documents. Please use the suggestion mode to edit text and/or leave comments. Comments you have, and especially references to published literature, blog posts, and your personal experiences are what will shape our community. After the feedback period, the Steering Committee will ratify and post the finalized documents. You may also leave additional comments on the blog and/org by emailing info@lifescitrainers.org

LifeSciTrainers Vision, Purpose, and Mission

Vision

(What will the world be like if we succeed)

1. LifeSciTrainers improves life science by ensuring scientists and educators have the latest skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

Mission

(How we accomplish our vision)

1. LifeSciTrainers accomplishes its mission by building a global community of practice for life science trainers: anyone who delivers short-format training (workshops, boot camps, short-courses, etc.) - often on new and quickly-evolving topics - in the life sciences. Community-of-practice involves establishing forums for these trainers to share their knowledge, resources, and expertise, develop and promote standards for training, open educational resources, and establish the role of trainer as a vital position within the life science community.

Why we exist

(What are the challenges and opportunities that lead to this community's formation)

Challenges:

1. No matter how much the training behind a degree is updated and improved, the shelf-life of skills is getting shorter in a rapidly changing, more interdisciplinary world. As a result,

many life scientists and life science educators find they lack access to the training and skills they need to deliver the best quality research and education.

2. Short-format training has been used extensively in the life sciences. Evidence and collective experience shows that short-format training has challenges in achieving sustained learning, and we have difficulty understanding the long-term impact of this form of training. Because topics evolve quickly, it is difficult for us to iterate our materials and direct their sustained improvement.
3. We typically fail to create organizational structures (e.g. professional societies, journals, etc.) that could unite efforts, promote excellence amongst these trainers, or result in professional recognition and career paths.

Opportunities

1. Community of practice has been shown to develop and raise the level of professional excellence.
2. There is a vibrant community of professionals with expertise in the life sciences and other educational and research domains who have been delivering training, but have not yet come into grass-roots and individual-focused global community of practice and our power comes from the voice the community represents. Demand for training for life science students and professionals is high and it is likely that short format training (because of its agileness and flexibility) will be a primary mode of skill acquisition. Scientists and learners would likely demand the highest-quality training if there were consensus standards that identify and distinguish this training.
3. Technology enables formation of communities of practice at low cost and with high levels of equitable access