School of Medicine Science Communications Practicum

Science Communications Practicum Overview
Scientific communications play an important role in biomedical research, bringing cutting-edge research to a larger audience. The School of Medicine Science Communications Practicum is an opportunity for graduate students or postdocs with strong writing abilities to further develop their skills and produce a portfolio of published work with their byline.

Objectives
- The practicum is looking for candidates who are comfortable reading primary scientific literature. Students will learn how to translate technical information into readily accessible articles for publication.
- Students/Postdocs will learn to interview, write and edit articles and take photos in a journalistic style following Associated Press guidelines.
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- Students/Postdocs will learn to complete assignments on deadline.
- Students/Postdocs will gain exposure to different areas of scientific strength across OHSU and interact with a variety of principal investigators and labs.
- Students/Postdocs will learn to work collaboratively with professional writers, scientists and relevant stakeholders.

Required Skills
- Strong writing skills
- Ability to complete assignments on deadline

Benefits for the Student/Postdoc
- Gain training in scientific writing for a lay audience
- Gain experience in project management
- Gain experience collaborating with editors, stakeholders and interview subjects
- Produce a portfolio of published work with byline

Project Personnel
- Student/Postdoc Supervisor: Rachel Shafer, Senior Communications Specialist, School of Medicine
- Project Stakeholder: Mary Heinricher, Associate Dean for Basic Research, School of Medicine

Potential Projects
- School of Medicine Paper of the Month: Each month, Mary Heinricher, Associate Dean for Basic Research, selects a recently published study to be honored as the School of Medicine Paper of the Month. Students will rotate writing the Paper of the Month article, creating a written product that summarizes and highlights the importance of the research. Articles are published on the school’s public website and shared in a number of internal and external channels. To complete this assignment, students will work with Rachel Shafer and the PI/authors of the highlighted paper.
• Students/Postdocs may pitch and develop additional projects at the discretion of their practicum supervisor.

Application Requirements
• Letter of intent, outlining interest in the practicum, qualifications and preliminary goals.
• Letter from applicant’s PI indicating their support, acknowledging that the student fits the necessary requirements and can devote dedicated time to the practicum.
• Resume or CV
• Writing sample, preferably not primary scientific literature.

Practicum Details
• The practicum will last 12 months.
• Two trainees will be chosen each academic year.
• Students/Postdocs will rotate writing the School of Medicine Paper of the Month article.

Practicum Timeline
• Practicums will be announced Monday May 30th, with an application deadline of June 30th.
• All application materials are to be mailed to Jackie Wirz (wirzj@ohsu.edu)
• Rachel Shafer, Jackie Wirz, Michael Matrone, and Allison Fryer will review applicants. Two applicants will be chosen and notified by August 1.
• Students/Postdocs will begin September 2016.
• Successfully matched trainees and Rachel Shafer will work collaboratively to create an editorial calendar, which will include clear assignments and deadlines
• Students/Postdocs will submit the editorial calendar to the Career and Professional Development Center within one month of the practicum start date.
• Students/Postdocs will submit quarterly project updates, reporting on overall progress and any changes to the project.
• The practicum will conclude at the end of August 2017.
• The student/postdoc will work with their practicum supervisor to create a final portfolio, consisting of their assembled written projects during the course of the practicum.
• Following review of the portfolio, Rachel Shafer, Jackie Wirz, Michael Matrone, and Allison Fryer will issue a statement of completion and a letter of recommendation for the trainee.