

Report by the E4 Student Advisory Board, following meeting December 2022

Revisit actions from last meeting: management response

The SAB acknowledges and appreciates the actions undertaken by DTP management since the last report.

Point 1. Videos made portraying student's lives are almost ready and will be used next application season. Students suggested having an event to display the videos and suggested April as an option for the event.

Point 2. Some changes on the website suggested by the students in the 2021 meeting have been addressed.

Point 3. Regarding training options, students agreed to talk to their fellow students. Options were discussed. Students agreed that teams, email, and the webpage are good communication outlets and all three should still be used with no need of any additional platform. Options like wiki or sharepoint were suggested by Stephanie and Kyle but students didn't seem to think that an additional outlet would be useful, on the other hand a comment of extra outlets being confusing was raised.

Point 10. From 2021 meeting a new grant writing course and scientific writing workshop for 2nd years open to all years will be offered.

From these workshops the following feedback was provided:

-Feedback from 1st years: The cohort has heard nice comments from older generation students about the workshops. Since we are just starting with our research most students didn't attend the workshop but we do hope these become available again next year when it will be more suitable for the cohort's needs once we are in second year.

-Feedback from 2nd years: Overall, the comments are positive. People found both workshops generally helpful. For some they were more of a reminder of what they already knew. For others, the workshops were very helpful and delivered at a good time as they begin to get to the stage of paper publishing and grant writing. Some things that could be added to improve them:

- Talk about ways to make the papers content understandable and accessible.
- Differentiating between what makes papers/grants good vs great.

- More practical elements: e.g., looking at grants or running through a grant process. ECCI had something like this (which was great!), but there was not enough time to go through it.
- Add an additional section to the grant writing workshop with someone at a similar career stage (eg. Post doc) who can talk about their experience.
- Discuss different grant writing approaches for small grants vs. Larger grants as it was felt like the workshop was directed at larger grants and people are currently applying for smaller grants

Point 13. A survey to understand students' needs and prior knowledge was used to assess the cohort prior to some workshops and seminars, particularly the ones for the second half of the first year's training.

Point 14. From 2021 meeting a qualitative methods workshop was introduced. Open to all years. Students suggested that 1st and 2nd year training calendars could be passed to all years to be able to attend seminars and workshops that are different from previous years and that could be of interest.

Point 16. In 2021 meeting compassionate leave was raised, so far it has been passed as sick leave but compassionate leave is still being discussed since it must be addressed and approved by NERC.

Student Advisory Board Feedback for the Management

Extended Frontiers (EF)

- Discussion ensued over if EF should have a theme to it, there was not a clear consensus. It was agreed upon that second-year students can come up with a theme and find speakers at the beginning of the second year in a small gathering that could be organized by the DTP in September.
- Timings of the EF could be pushed towards the second semester, where invites are sent out by October with EF commencing in the spring.
- Students organizing the EF should aim to include more Master or Undergraduate students (although reaching out to these groups has to be done by the PhD students themselves, not the DTP organization board)

Recruitment

- By default, supervisors will no longer be invited to the interviews, but there is the possibility of extending an invitation.

- Pre-approval for international students will be (hopefully) removed.
- The wording of pre-approval should be clarified on the website.
- E4 will be extended by 1 year of recruitment.

Frontiers

- Reminder that frontiers should encompass a range of topics, not just geoscience areas.
- It was suggested that the frontiers run for two hours, with the first hour comprising the talk, and the second hour is used for questions and a short talk on the career trajectory of the speaker.
- Alternatively, speakers can be given the option of doing a workshop during this time.

Imposter Syndrome Workshop

- Student board will ask around to see if this is a widely wanted talk or workshop:
As for 2nd years, there is interest on having this workshop.
- Possibly second year + PhD students can talk about their experience and how they deal with imposter syndrome.

Finance

- RTSG's codes haven't been updated but students could still make use of their money.