Meeting minutes 19 Jan 2022

PDA meeting 19 Jan 2022

In attendance: Elaine, Yaamini, Maggi, Tzu-Ting, Svenja, Mike, Eesh, Hannah, Janet

Called to order 12:06

Topic of the day: planning events/workshops

- How do we choose speakers? At these meetings, discuss options, ensure that we have a good diversity of people representing a range

  - don't just send email blasts to faculty, target requests

  - also don't want to overburden junior faculty, minorities, women, etc who get asked to do this more often

  - this will likely be a dynamic process as we go through workshops through the year; keep track of who says yes/no, if they decline can always ask if they would be interested at a later date

  - since we're on zoom, we can get people who aren't local ie alumni

  - all past workshop panelists are listed in the spreadsheet

    - maybe people from last year can get first dibs on participating in same panels this year since it's always easier to do something the second time

    - but also, having some new people is good so that participants who were here last year can get something new out of them

- Do we offer honoraria for these things?

  - No, it's been totally voluntary thus far - reward is a CV line

  - Only offer small things ie small gift cards to some people, mostly external (more of a thank-you than an incentive)

  - Thank-you notes are also nice (esp handwritten ones)

- Logistically, how do we buy things like food and/or gift cards?

  - tends to be very ad-hoc, no special process

  - Janet is involved, but exactly how it's done varies depending on the event

- Documents from PDA google drive: could we make some sort of public repository with persistently useful information to share with postdocs?

  - Hannah will look into this

- Ideas for events:

  - (put them in the spreadsheet)

- Svenja/Maggi: leading the academic job application workshop in the fall. This is a big undertaking, definitely needs multiple people to run
  - lots of materials available from previous years
- Negotiations/interviews could be a separate thing or things, potentially in the winter/spring to time with peoples' application cycles
  - Negotiations could be more of a peer support group
    - can poll postdocs to see who is interested
    - could tap alumni to get panelists
    - Hannah will look into this
    - Janet has a postdoc "alumni" spreadsheet - can give suggestions for people to tap depending on what we want
- non-academic positions workshop? Janet usually sets that up with MIT folks
  - non-academic workshops tend to be in summer
  - in the past, fewer people have shown up for non-academic stuff, particularly more intensive workshops on that job-seeking process; that's why the academic jobs events have tended to dominate
  - do we have statistics on the types of jobs WHOI postdocs end up in? Janet has a general idea (in her spreadsheet); HR is supposed to know from exit interviews but doesn't tend to share that info. Broadly speaking, we place way more people in academic roles than the national average for postdoc programs
- Short day-in-the-life series on what it's like to do different types of (non-academic) jobs would be very cool
  - another thing JP students might be interested in
  - Janet notes that JP doesn't tend to like working with PDA unless we pay/contribute money?
- bringing in external people rather than just tapping WHOI folks: could be nice?
  - specifically for job stuff, soft skills expertise (like, how to handle a dinner meeting?) could be useful and might be info we couldn't get as easily from WHOI scientists
  - Janet is willing to take the lead on this particular invite for a soft-skills workshop, provided we don't mind if it takes a while to look up info and think about prices
    - Mary ??? (didn't catch surname, sorry)
    - Karen Kelsky (The Professor Is In, https://theprofessorisin.com/workshops-and-seminars/)
      - some of the practical aspects of job applications, but also a lot of stuff on the soft skills of interviewing and campus visits
      - costs: could be $400 for institutional pre-recorded webinar, which we could pair with a group discussion (but this would not be interactive with the speaker) (things are

different with covid/zoom, maybe that's just what we get)

- - - Brene Brown (Dare To Lead) (also quite high profle, not sure if we could get her (or afford her speaking fees))

  - - Could we team up with MIT to do this? Would need to talk to Lea Fraser, have her bring it to the JP reps

  - For some soft skills stuff, we could get good feedback from WHOI people - academic interviews are often with people like department chairs, and we have those around here. Could set up by discipline, tap ed coordinators and maybe an HR person to do mock interviews in smaller groups (Mike)

  - Can we have a fun event? Maybe outdoors in summer?

    - - yes we can! Eesh will think about it

  - Yaamini suggests "How to postdoc in 18 months" workshop, ie how to balance all the competing demands on your time and actually get something done in a very short period of time

  - When is the postdoc symposium? Fall sometime

- As we plan all these events, maybe survey all the postdocs on: would you want to attend this event, when in the year would you want it?

  - note that people will respond one way and then act another way (ie not show up)

  - For planning any of these events, note that June/July/August, people are often away in the field

Action items:

- sign up for things in the events spreadsheet

- If we want to find any particular resources from past workshops, ask Janet

- If anyone still can't access the google drive, we can get your email/gmail added with edit permissions - Hannah can do this, so can anyone else who currently has access to the shared folder

- Hannah will draft a poll on negotiations event/possible peer group for those who are currently interviewing for jobs/anything else we want to poll everyone about and share on slack before sending out

  - If there's interest in a negotiations panel, Hannah will look into potential negotiations panelists (talk to Janet about alumni to invite)

- Hannah will look into a way to put persistently useful PDA documents/info for postdocs in some public repository (PDA website? github/markdown? elsewhere?)

- Janet will look into soft-skills workshop external people to potentially invite, and ways to maybe get the money to bring them in (collab with JP/MIT?) (timeframe: May)

- Mike will look into mock interview possibilities with people within WHOI (department chairs, ed coordinators, HR people), will talk to Janet about how we want to format this/how in-depth it should be

- also think about when in the year to do this - the people we'd like to invite are probably busy doing real interviews right now anyway

- Eesh will look into fun summer events; there is funding for food for such things (provided we follow covid restrictions)

- Maggi might be interested in organizing non-academic stuff - will start looking into it?

- Yaamini will start planning this "how to postdoc in 18 months" workshop - timing is tbd?

- Maggi and Yaamini will start planning a social outdoor event (walk/hot cocoa?) for sometime soon

- If anyone is in a linkedin alumni group, tell Janet about how it's structured

Next meeting will be next month, date and time TBD

adjourned circa 13:15