

SciLifeLab Training Hub Guide for Short Form Courses

This guide is for instructors, teaching assistants, and those coordinating training to use as a starting point. It provides an overview of steps and actions that need to be taken to provide **consistent and high-quality training** under the SciLifeLab umbrella.

Introduction

Whether it's bringing together experts, regular training of researchers, or rapid development of a needed skill for life scientists, training is an important way to build the community within SciLifeLab and across Sweden.

The checklist below provides a simplified summary, with detailed description of the activity in the following section.

The SciLifeLab Course Checklist

	Activity	Time to course	Support contact	More info.
Months in advance				
1	Choose date(s) and format	>9 months prior		
2	Book lecture/seminar/lab space	>9 months prior	Local site admin	
3	Determine course fees	>4 months prior	Host university	
4	Create a space to host training	>4 months prior	Training Hub	A
5	Create course website	>4 months prior	Training Hub	B
6	Create learning objectives + curriculum	>4 months prior	Training Hub	A, C
7	Create a course-specific email	>4 months prior	Data Centre	
8	Update course content	>3 months prior	Training Hub	
9	Announce your course	>3 months prior	Training Hub	C
10	Select participants	>1 month prior		C
Weeks in advance				
11	Send acceptance emails	>4 weeks prior	Training Hub	C
12	Organize fika/lunch/dinner	>4 weeks prior	Local site admin	
13	Organize venue access	>2 weeks prior	Local site admin	
14	Create course schedule	>4 weeks prior		
15	Send practical info to participants	>4 weeks prior		
16	Make course material accessible	1 week prior	Training Hub	D
17	Send invoices	1 week prior	Host university	
18	Pre-course setup	1 week prior		
During the course				
19	Obtain consent for recording	Start of course	Host university	
20	Gather participant signatures	All course days		
21	Generate course certificates	Last course day	Training Hub	E
22	Course evaluation – short form	Last course day	Training Hub	E
After the course				
23	Archive course information	<1 month after		
24	Wrap-up meeting	<1 month after		
25	Course evaluation – long term	>6 months after	Training Hub	E
26	Course reporting	Annual	SciLifeLab	

Detailed information

1. Choose date(s) and format

Dates for a course should be one of the first things decided, even if they are preliminary. In addition, the dates, the format of the course should be decided – will the training be held onsite, online, in multiple sites simultaneously, or will you take a hybrid approach?

2. Book lecture/seminar/lab space

Locations available and routines for room booking vary by SciLifeLab site. Contact your local site coordinators for assistance, and ensure the room is available on the course dates as early as possible. Check the course space for equipment, size, and access to projector/audio equipment at the time of booking. Ensure you find out requirements for building access for participants and instructors alike.

3. Determine course fees

Costs are incurred during courses for materials, lunch/fika, etc., and planning for how these costs will be covered is essential prior to announcing your course. Is your course free of charge to participants? Does your host university have regulations for handling course fees? What is the fee for industrial participants, if the course is open to them?

The Training Hub recommends that online courses be free of charge and that international academic participants pay the same fee as other participants, if applicable.

Within the SciLifeLab community, typical course fees per participant are 3000 SEK for a 5-day course, and 2000 SEK for a 3-day course. Fees are invoiced to institutions and not individuals. No-show participants are recommended to be invoiced for the course fee.

4. Create a space to host training

Decide where your training materials will be hosted while you develop them. This can be a Github repository, a Google Drive folder, or a Learning Management System (LMS). We recommend course coordinators and instructors look at the accompanying [Guide for Hosting Course Content](#) and ensure that their course design aligns with FAIR and Open Science principles.

5. Create course website

Create a space where you can make the course materials openly available on the internet. The Training Hub has templates to create course websites and can support course instructors in using these under the [SciLifeLab Training Github](#) organization.

6. Create learning outcomes + curriculum

Once you have a space for hosting and delivering your material, create (or update) the content for the course. The Training Hub recommends starting with creating Learning Outcomes for the course, and support for this can be found accompanying this guide. Ensure you are engaging all course instructors in this process.

7. Create a course-specific email

Contact the SciLifeLab Data Centre for a course-specific email, unless the course has an existing email address.

8. Update course content

Ensure that your course content is updated and an overview can be found by potential participants on the course website.

9. Announce your course

Course announcements for SciLifeLab training are made on the [SciLifeLab Training Portal](#). For recommendations on announcing and opening registration for your course, see the accompanying [Guide for Announcing a Course](#).

10. Select participants

When registration has closed for your course, select participants or send acceptance emails to all participants who have registered so far. Doing this in a timely manner is important for your participants to be able to have travel approved and booked in time.

Selection criteria should be made clear in the registration information, and while in certain courses (eg, expert courses that bring together international knowledge) there may be alternate criteria, the Training Hub generally recommends that researchers affiliated with Swedish institutions have priority over international applicants, and that the most qualified applicants take priority.

Some suggested criteria for selection include meeting prerequisites, motivation to attend the course, gender balance, and geographical balance.

11. Send acceptance emails

Once you have selected your participants, prepare a list and send out acceptance, waitlist, and non-acceptance emails. For templates that can be used to communicate with course participants, see the accompanying Reply Templates. The Training Hub recommends asking accepted participants to confirm their attendance at this stage.

12. Organize fika/lunch/dinner

Once you have an estimated number of course participants, contact your host university or site coordinators for information on providing food during your course – if there are recommended catering services or restaurants for a course dinner.

13. Organize venue access

Requirements for venue access will vary between universities and sites, so ensure you contact the site coordinators to arrange access to your course.

14. Create course schedule

A finalized, detailed course schedule should be sent to all participants, or be posted so as to be easily accessible on the course website.

15. Send practical information to participants

Along with the course schedule information, send out any practical information related to the course – building access, transportation instructions, course dinner information, etc. can all be useful to provide.

16. Make course material accessible

All materials used for the course should be made available online where possible. The metadata for your course material should be full and complete at this point, adhering to the SciLifeLab FAIR materials standards.

17. Send invoices

If your course has a fee, send invoices for participants to their paying institution, using the routines recommended by your host organization. Ensure that all accepted and confirmed participants have submitted complete invoicing information.

18. Pre-course setup

Before the course, ensure all materials and access have been gathered, including Zoom rooms for digital courses. If the course requires installation of software or technical prerequisites for running code, an online or live pre-course setup helps the participants to ensure everything works before the course starts – University IT departments are responsible for ensuring proper installation and rights.

19. Obtain consent for recording or photography

If you are recording lectures or other material from the course with the intent to make these available online (either for the participants or the general public), obtain consent from the participants to record, store, and/or publish them.

20. Gather participant signatures

To make a record of attendance, which can be useful for reporting or certificates, collect participant signatures for each course day, or keep a daily log of participants if using an online course format.

21. Generate course certificates

The SciLifeLab Training Hub hosts a web app for creating course certificates. Prepare these on the last day of the course, and send to participants if they have fulfilled the criteria for receiving a certificate.

22. Course evaluation – short form

Evaluation is invaluable in tailoring courses to suit the changing needs of the community, and should be offered in two stages. For short-term feedback, the Training Hub has a template to collect feedback immediately at the end of the course.

23. Archive course information

Once the course is complete, the folders or repositories where the course material is stored should be cleaned and archived, ensuring that all relevant files are included in the course setup for use in subsequent deliveries. Instructor reflections are recommended to be incorporated.

24. Wrap-up meeting for instructors

A wrap-up for evaluation of the course delivery is encouraged soon after the course ends. Instructor reflections on how future courses could be improved is suggested to be collected and stored with the archived course information. Involve external experts that were involved in the course as necessary, and document feedback inclusively.

25. Course evaluation – long term

Long term feedback surveys should be sent 6 months after the course ends, and only to participants agreeing to receive the long-term feedback survey. Long-term feedback captures how the skills, knowledge and abilities imparted during the course are being used, and are invaluable for tailoring future courses. The Training Hub has a long-term feedback template available for use.

26. Course reporting

The last step in delivering a course is to report this course activity in the SciLifeLab yearly reporting. Ensure that information is complete on number of participants, dates courses were held, and the platforms or units that were involved in creating and delivering the course.

References.

- A. Bruna Piereck, Jill Jaworski, Nina Norgren, Elin Kronander, Kristen Schroeder, Alexander Botzki, Jessica Lindvall (2024). The ELIXIR FAIR training material by Design course. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.13773159. Module referenced is https://elixir-europe-training.github.io/ELIXIR-TrP-FAIR-Material-By-Design/chapters/chapter_03/
- B. SciLifeLab Training GitHub Organization <https://github.com/SciLifeLab-Training>
- C. SciLifeLab Training Hub Resources for Course Planning, <https://doi.org/10.17044/scilifelab.28194329>
- D. SciLifeLab Training Hub Metadata Standards for Open Educational Resources. <https://doi.org/10.17044/scilifelab.28512794>
- E. SciLifeLab Training Hub Course Certificate App. Available at <https://training-certificate.serve.scilifelab.se/app/training-certificate>
- F. SciLifeLab Training Hub Resources for Evaluation of Learning, <https://doi.org/10.17044/scilifelab.28512722>

Have questions? Connect with us at traininghub@scilifelab.se