



## COMMUNICATING RESEARCH TO STAKEHOLDERS

A Crawford Fund Master Class  
for senior agricultural researchers  
in the Pacific Region  
May 2014

### **THE CRAWFORD FUND:**

The Crawford Fund is a non-profit NGO in Australia with more than twenty years' experience in both training scientists in agricultural research and in communicating the results of agricultural research for development to a range of stakeholders and to the general public.

The Crawford Fund's mission is to increase Australia's engagement in international agricultural research, development and education for the benefit of developing countries and Australia.

In 2011, our first Master Class in Communicating Research to Stakeholders was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand and in early 2013 a second was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Each had approximately 20 participants from around 10 countries, with very positive evaluations. It is proposed that a third Master Class be offered in the Pacific in May 2014.

### **RATIONALE:**

There is a growing appreciation in agricultural research institutions in developing and developed countries alike of the need to confirm the efficacy of investment in agricultural science. This workshop will help agricultural scientists to tell the story of their work and its impact to a broad range of non-scientific audiences in funding agencies, other interested stakeholders such as farmers and extension agencies and to the general public through the media.

For many developing country institutions, the communication role falls to science staff who may have no training in communication and no additional communication staff. It is proposed that the Crawford Fund bring together its expertise and that of colleagues in Australia and the international research community, to hold a course to boost the capability of developing country research institutions to communicate their work to stakeholders (including funding and government agencies) and the general public.

### **MANAGEMENT:**

The Master Class will be managed by Cathy Reade, the Crawford Fund's Director of Public Affairs and Communication, with assistance by professional science media trainers, journalists from Australian and in-country media outlets, and staff as provided/needed from Australian and international development organisations.

**DURATION:** 5.5 days full-time, with preceding reception and closing dinner  
**NUMBERS:** Approximately 20  
**WHEN:** 25-31 May 2014  
**WHERE:** Fiji

## **CRAWFORD FUND MASTER CLASS IN COMMUNICATING RESEARCH TO STAKEHOLDERS**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

This training is for senior agricultural researchers/scientists (Deputy Directors General, Directors of Research, Program Directors and Project Leaders) at research institutions in the Pacific region who have or could take on the responsibility to facilitate improved communication on behalf of their organisation to stakeholders and to the media.

Australian research and development agencies and international agricultural research centres will be approached in the first instance for participants.

### **Participants will be required to:**

- Speak sufficient English to undertake the course including interview and writing exercises
- Have the support of their institution to attend and then introduce an improved or new communication effort on completion of the course
- Have examples of recent successful research results/stories from their institution to use in workshops
- Share with other participants the results of their efforts three months after the training
- Bring a laptop on which to work on materials as necessary.

### **TRAINING OBJECTIVES:**

The course will skill up senior scientific/research/ project staff, preferably those working on Australian development assistance projects, to boost the capability of their agricultural research institutions to communicate their research results and its impact to stakeholders and the general public. This will be achieved through provision of training, skills and resources to enable the participants to commence a limited but effective, targeted pilot communication effort when they return to their institutions.

Course participants will be given some scope to pick between a range of classes, while other topics will be taken by all participants, including:

1. the basics for developing a communication plan to suit target audiences and their needs
2. training in development of a limited number of communication tools to suit their target audiences such as e-newsletters, public events, fact sheets, one social media resource – these will be confirmed by survey of participants to allow preplanning of course content
3. training in how to work with journalists and the writing and management of media releases
4. training in presentation skills for a variety of audiences and
5. media training with working journalists to improve interview techniques.

### **TRAINING STRUCTURE:**

The training will be carried out in a mix of sessions. Some will be for the group as a whole; others will involve smaller groups to provide more personal input by trainers. The workshop will be highly practical and all participants will have the opportunity to practice new skills.

This includes discussing their work with journalists, speaking about their projects to the group, and drafting a communication plan that identifies key targets and the best way to reach them. Performances will be videotaped and individual tapes given to all participants so they can review their work.

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In addition to improved media and presentation skills, participants will leave with resources and completed products to assist them to commence or improve their existing communication efforts, including a draft communication plan, a completed press release and fact sheet related to one of their institution's recent research projects, a basic list of media in their country and other resources depending on the final choice of topics for the training.

## **PROGRAM:**

The program will be informed by a pre-event course content survey carried out as individuals are confirmed for attendance. This aims to identify the individual needs of the participants and their preferences on the skill/tools set they'd like to work on. A sample program (in brief) is below. Possible visits to radio or TV outlets will be considered and involvement of working TV, radio and print journalists will be included:

### **DAY 1**

#### Participants checked in

Welcome

Introduction to Crawford Fund

Importance of engaging stakeholders

Getting to know each other exercise

Official opening with reception

### **DAY 2**

#### Developing a Communication Plan:

For program outline see <http://www.econnect.com.au/workshops/planning-science-communication>. This practical and lively day takes participants through a 7-step process of planning your communication and includes case studies, discussion, presentations and planning exercises around target groups, messages, delivery and evaluation, and ends with an action plan to translate the day's work into a workable program.

By the end of the day, delegates will have an outline communication plan for their institution.

### **DAY 3**

#### Writing Fact Sheets and Media Releases:

Following a session explaining how to prepare and write a fact sheet, and using that to write a press release, policy brief or a newsletter or website item, the group will split into two with concurrent sessions on developing informative, enticing and well-written fact sheets and media releases (with subject matter from their institution's work) and managing press release outreach. See <http://www.econnect.com.au/workshops/writing-for-the-reader/>

By the end of the day each participant will have two completed draft documents: a fact sheet summarising the project and its significance, and a media release that summarises the essential qualities of the research in terms suitable for the media, and essentially ready for distribution when participants return to their institution.

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## DAY 4

### Media Interview Skills Workshops:

Following a session on interview skills, the group will split into two, with concurrent sessions on radio and TV interview skills including working journalists conducting interviews on a project of each participants' choosing from their institution, most likely related to the press release completed the previous day. See [http://www.econnect.com.au/ws\\_media\\_outline1.htm](http://www.econnect.com.au/ws_media_outline1.htm)

By the end of the course, each participant will have experience of interviews with TV, radio and print journalists in preparation for their return to their institution and distribution of their finalised press release. They will be provided with a DVD of their interviews for reference.

## DAY 5

### Introducing or Improving Communication Tools:

The group will split into two with two half day sessions on the two top preferences in a range of communication tools of value such as the use of e-newsletters, social media and public event planning.

By the end of the course, each participant will have improved their skills in two different communication tools to develop on their return to their institution.

## DAY 6

### Presentation Skills:

A day on improving presentation skills, to assist participants in understanding how to structure an effective presentation to meet both audience needs and their own objectives; develop some skills and confidence in delivering effective presentations and apply principles of message-design to effective presentations. See <http://www.econnect.com.au/workshops/presenting-science/>

By the end of the day each participant will have considered these aspects of a presentation, and will have practised new techniques in addressing the group. All participants will have a videotape of their performances for reference.

## **CLOSING CEREMONY**

There will be a special closing ceremony, with official representatives to make certificate presentations.

## **EVALUATION:**

Participants are required to complete a survey on the final day of the Master Class and provide a report on the results of their training three months after the event, including their efforts to implement their communication plan and the results of any stakeholder outreach undertaken in that time.