

Oksana Zayachkivska, Lviv National Medical University

I would run the seminars over one day again.

I think it's a great idea to pool funds with other institutions in our region, and we would like to do.

It would be nice to have some short promotional video to promote The Society during the seminar.

Choosing interesting topic and speakers was most difficult.

Exchanging knowledge, networking and common ideas was the best thing. Alongside making new contacts and getting more people interested in membership.

I will be applying for funds to run the scheme again and without funding from The Society we might not be able to run this series again.

For those looking to run a seminar or series for the first time, I'd recommend being brave and engage young people

Mala Shah, University College London

On this occasion we organised a series; I've previously organised a one-day symposium at the Royal Society and I would do this again.

We didn't pool our funds with other institutions in our region.

The Physiological Society is mentioned in all e-mails that are sent as well as on posters that advertise the seminars. We also put the logo on our website.

If The Society could send us a slide that we can add the title of the seminar and speaker details on, we could send this to all speakers and ask them to use them as their initial slide. Given that we have many international speakers, this would help promote The Society in other countries too.

Speakers are invited whose expertise and field of interest aligns with that of the department.

The scheme is rather straightforward to run

Inviting people of shared expertise and interest, allows us to enhance our knowledge and expertise. It also allows us to promote our work and establish new collaborations.

The ability of postgraduate and postdoctoral fellows to expand their knowledge and expertise is one of the main benefits.

We would apply to the scheme again.

Without the funds we'd be able to run a seminar series, but on a smaller scale.

For a new Rep organising a seminar/symposium for the first time, disseminate and promote the seminars as widely as possible to increase attendance. Some seminars will cost more than others (flight- accommodation- lunch/dinner etc....) so keep an eye on the costs and give an explicit allowance for each seminar on the email invitations. Book the accommodation yourself to keep the costs down. Enjoy the interaction with speakers.

Brian Harvey, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

We didn't pool our funds with any other institution, but would do so to attract a wider audience and international speakers.

We identified The Society's support at the beginning of each seminar, including on the presentation slide.

Our speakers were a mix of early stage researchers and senior professors with interests related to the department in Steroid Hormone, Epithelial and Ion Transport.

Poor attendance from staff and students, if the topic wasn't in their field of interest, was a big challenge.

Attracting excellent speakers using The Society's prestigious name and support was the best thing about the scheme.

Without The Society's support we would be able to run a seminar series, but with reduced numbers of speakers.

Identify your audience and speakers first and match them and decide early on which topics to support. Review type seminars are best for first time with at least one prestigious speaker would be my advice for a first timer.

Nuhu Sambo, Bingham University

The biggest challenge was overcoming local logistics; nothing is free.

The best thing was staff and students becoming aware of The Society and its benefits; many could not believe that the seminar was sponsored by The Society.

The biggest benefit was being able to raise awareness and interest of The Society.

We would find it very difficult to run the scheme again without this funding, and will definitely apply next time.

If this is your first time, my advice would be to get in touch with other reps for support.

Hannah Wilson, Leeds Beckett University

Our seminars were over one day, and I would definitely do this again.

I didn't pool any funds with other institutions but this is something I would be interested in doing.

The banner hadn't arrived at this point but we used posters and fliers and The Society was mentioned both at the start and end of the symposium. It would be useful to have some template slides with the logo on to use.

I am part of two departments, one which is newer and one older and this is the first time they were brought together. It also leading to anyone who wasn't already a member in my department becoming a member was the best things about running the scheme.

Without funds from The Society we wouldn't have been able to organise any seminars.

The biggest challenge was being unaware of which scheme to apply for or which member of staff was best to contact.

My advice would be to call The Society and chat through the options and how to get going with the scheme.

Jaime McCutcheon, University of Leicester

I didn't run it over one day, I can see the benefit of doing a more focussed one day symposium however, doing it weekly worked as it meant people didn't have to give up as much time and it was an opportunity for networking each week.

I didn't pool funds; I think it would be quite difficult as the other universities with reps in my region don't focus on neuroscience very much.

To promote The Society, the posters were very useful. We utilised the lots of digital signs around the campus to show the Physoc logo, as well as mentioning that seminars were Physoc funded whenever we could.

For our speakers, I went to the department for suggestions and looked out for speakers at conferences and through my own networks. I started off by asking female speakers to get them confirmed as it can be quite difficult to get a 50/50 gender split.

Most difficult was getting the focus right and getting people to come as we are quite a broad department spanning neuroscience and psychology. It's also quite difficult to get the timing right as they used to be 4-5pm with wine and nibbles after which worked really well however, they were moved to 3-4pm and this meant less people came. They are now 1-2pm and again this means there are less networking opportunities.

It's a good way to raise the profile of the university to visiting speakers and gives a positive impression. It also allows PhD students and post docs to be exposed to 'big names' in physiology.

My advice; invite female speakers first, think about ECRs and the impact on them, try to have some networking time after with refreshments and think about the timing and when most people can come.

Nadia Cerminara, University of Bristol

We promote The Society at the start of the series by the reps coming to the first seminar and introducing themselves and what The Society does, how to join, and what the benefits are. We also include the logo and thank The Society on all our email correspondence and posters etc. when advertising the seminars. We also explicitly thank The Society at the closing seminar. I'm not sure how much more we could do but I would love to hear more from other reps about what they do.

When selecting speakers, we try as much as possible to take on board suggestions from the School members and balance these against the interests of the School research themes, the gender split of our speakers, as well as invite people from a wide variety of institutes. We also try to invite people that we know are engaging speakers so that we can have a good turnout.

Balancing genders is a difficult one – we often find that it's difficult getting members of the School to actually suggest female speakers. It's also difficult to get women who are at a certain stage of their career to come to speak if they have family commitments. This is less of an issue if they can travel to and from Bristol in the one day.

Helping researchers within the School make new connections/collaborations with invited speakers, showcasing what Bristol has to offer to the invited speakers, members of the School and the undergraduates who attend the seminars enjoying the talks.

My advice; start planning early but not too early as speakers with teaching commitments will wait until teaching timetables are out before they will commit to a date, ask for suggestions from your School/Dept. of people to approach as a starting point, it is not as easy to plan a seminar programme as some people think so don't

underestimate the time you have to put in, try to make the programme as varied as possible to keep the wide ranging interests of your school happy, choose a smaller lecture theatre if you can as there is nothing worse than a lecture theatre that sits 250 people with only 80 people in there.

Tristan Pocock, University of Manchester, Ian Kay, Manchester Metropolitan University, Liam Bagley, University of Salford

WE ran a day long symposium; in the past we have held a seminar series; some are well attended but others not, which is a shame for the speakers.

Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Manchester and University of Salford pooled our funds to deliver the symposium; we had a good turnout from all three of the participating institutions. It was useful for participants to be able to network with people in the same field from other institutions. We will definitely look to pool our funds again.

It was good to have Physiological Society material on display at breaks, to have a slot for a speaker from Physoc to talk about The Society and to combine it with the Prize lecture. Some participants were not Physiological Society members – hopefully they were inspired to join. I think that having a selection of material highlighting the benefits of joining The Society (details of upcoming meetings/ workshops and travel grants) is good for promoting The Society.

It was a deliberate intention to invite speakers at different stages of their careers (from PhD students to established professors) and from a variety of research fields.

The best thing was getting so many people with an interest in Physiology together from across Manchester.

An up-to-date list of members would have made running our first seminar easier.

Our advice; establish a good working party early on and allow plenty of time for seminars (i.e. don't try to pack too many in)