

PBL RETREAT 2024 - SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

MIND MATCHING WEDNESDAY:

Goal: Promoting Internal Collaboration at the Lab

Description:

People are matched up into 9 sets of 2 based on their interests (if Ambra does not join: 7 sets of 2 and 1 set of 3!). They each get a minute to tell each other about their own research question. Then each answers the questions: How can you help me? How can I help you? (e.g., think about contributing to the scientific direction or the methods). We could instruct them to use the last minute of the round to ask themselves/each other the question if they would like to collaborate (to make that option more in reach, at least psychologically).

Timetable (11-12:20):

- 10 min - intro by Dota: explanation and dividing people into groups (11:00am)
- 30 min - round 1 (11:10am)
- 10 min - switch duo's (11:40am)
- 30 min - round 2 (11:50am)
- 10 min - closing by Maartje (12:20pm)

Tasks:

- Dota: prepare the matches of the two rounds based on keywords in the questionnaire (avoid matching people who already work together).
- Dota: print the guiding questions and bring them to Rovereto (also print the list with the matches)
- Dota: prepares introduction with instructions for the group
- Maartje: prepares closing remarks

BIG QUESTIONS THURSDAY

Goal: Stimulating Lab Members' Exploration of Big Questions (for Grants)

Description:

The first part consists of two sequential panel discussions. One discussion will be with all the Post-Docs, talking about the process that led them to the research question that they used for their early career grant (mostly Marie Curie). Focusing on the things that helped them to come up with/shape the question rather than focusing on the (practicalities of) actually writing the proposal and applying. The other discussion will be the PhD candidates and RAs discussing the research question for a future grant they came up with on the questionnaire, and potentially discuss what challenges and helps them, what their needs are, etc. (and maybe a bit about what they learned from the Postdocs panel discussion depending on time and direction of the

panel discussion). We moderate the panel discussions and encourage questions from the audience.

The second part consists of a pressure cooker exercise in which 4 groups (2 groups of 4 and 2 groups of 5, if Ambra does not join 3 groups of 4 and 1 group of 5*) come up with a big future question together. Each group has to start the question differently, with: What...?, Why...?, How...? When/where...? The group you are in is decided by drawing cards with one of those starting words. To make sure the level of expertise/seniority is balanced in each group, there will be one Post-Docs/PI draw pile and another draw pile for PhD candidates/RAs. They write the questions on a poster and add some info on the methods used to answer the question and then a bit about the 'Why?' of this question (i.e., something in the direction of impact, rationale, or novelty). Then, each group will talk about their poster to the group. Technically, this is a pitch/presentation but unpolished → Rather a tool to share ideas about future research and talk about why these future directions interest us (at the same time, it is a pressure cooker exercise to just practice coming up with a question).

*maybe smaller groups are nicer: 3 groups of 4 and 2 groups of 3, but then we need to find 15 more minutes in the schedule)

Timetable (10:00 - 12:00; 13:00-14:00):

- 5/10 min intro by Floris related to (the importance of) thinking about big questions/future research directions (10:00am)
- 5/10 min setting up panel discussion Post-Docs (10:05/10:10am)
- 45 min panel discussion Post-Docs (10:15am)
- 5 min switch to panel discussion PhD candidates/RAs (11:00am)
- 45 min panel discussion PhD candidates/RAs (11:05am)
- 10 min Dota introduces part 2 (with draw to divide groups) (11:50am)
- [lunchbreak 12:00pm]
- 40 min pressure cooker brain storm and poster making (12:50pm)
- 60 min sharing with lab (15 min per group, including questions) (1:30pm, ends at 2:30pm)

Tasks:

- Maartje moderates Post-Docs panel discussion
- Dota moderates PhD candidates/RAs panel discussion
- Maartje adds some guiding questions for Post-Docs to think about to the info sheet
- Dota adds some guiding questions for PhDs/RAs to think about to the info sheet
- Dota will be god of intangible science resources (time management of pressure cooker)
- Maartje will be the bringer of material goods (poster supplies for pressure cooker)