



ACIAR
LEARN

ACIAR Learn

Course Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to the ACIAR Learn Course Guide, where you can find all the information you need to choose the courses that meet your learning goals and interests. We hope that this guide will help you make informed decisions about your learning and enrolment in ACIAR Learn courses. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at aciarlearn@uq.edu.au. We look forward to seeing you in our courses and supporting you in your learning journey.

About ACIAR Learn

As part of its international capacity development program, the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) has developed the ACIAR Learn program, an online learning program that supports the professional development of agricultural researchers around the world. Participants learn through bite-sized online lessons that can be accessed through their smartphone, tablet, laptop or computer. This means researchers can learn anywhere, at any time, at their own pace.

Whether you are a researcher, a practitioner, a policy maker, or a student, you will find courses that are relevant and useful for your work and support increased effectiveness in research.

Eligibility requirements

If one or more of the following apply, then you are eligible to join ACIAR Learn:

- You are currently working* in a partner country on an ACIAR funded project or small research activity
- You have previously worked* in a partner country on an ACIAR project or small research activity that has completed in the last 24 months
- You have completed OR are a current scholar of (i.e. are currently undertaking) one or more ACIAR capacity building programs:
 - John Allwright Fellowship (JAF)
 - John Dillon Fellowship (JDF)
 - Meryl Williams Fellowship (MWF)
 - Pacific Agricultural Scholarships and Support – Climate Resilience (PASS-CR) program (including University of South Pacific Scholarships)
 - Master Classes delivered through The Crawford Fund
 - Alumni Research Support Facility (ARSF)
 - Pacific Biosecurity Partnership
 - A previous ACIAR Learn course or program

** This applies to anyone who is working or has worked on an ACIAR project or small research activity, whether employed directly through the project or activity, or involved through a partner or affiliated organisation.*

Benefits for prospective learners

If you are a prospective learner, ACIAR Learn will help you:

Learn and discover

- Gain valuable research skills
- Learn from previous ACIAR projects, your ACIAR Learn peers and experts in the field
- Receive up to six months access to [UQ library](#)* (up until November 2025) which gives you access to a range of key resources including journal articles, databases referencing software and style guides, self-paced online modules and more (* upon completion of your first ACIAR Learn course, as an ongoing participant of the ACIAR Learn program).

Build new networks

- Connect with peers from around the world
- Expand your breadth of knowledge and perspective
- Exchange resources, best practice knowledge and lessons learnt
- Give and receive career advice and support
- Build long lasting professional relationships.

Be recognised

- Receive a course completion certificate
- Be publicly recognised on ACIAR communication channels
- Have the chance to be highlighted in public profiles showcasing your work and engagement with the program
- Receive additional consideration for participating in future ACIAR research projects and scholarships or fellowships.

Benefits for Project Leaders

By supporting researchers, ACIAR Learn also benefits their projects. Through ACIAR Learn, project leaders will be able to see their team engage in their professional development, build their skills, learn from previous ACIAR projects, and expand their professional networks.

If you are a project leader, ACIAR Learn will:

- Support the professional development of your project team
- Increase your team's access to resources and knowledge
- Build rapport between your project team members across career stages
- Promote enhanced understanding and implementation of gender and social inclusion within your team and in your research context.

Benefits for research institutions

ACIAR Learn also provides valuable opportunities for research institutions.

By encouraging researchers affiliated with your research institution to complete ACIAR Learn courses, your institution will benefit through your researchers:

- broadening their research networks and building a stronger relationship with ACIAR
- strengthening their research skills for future projects.

How to sign up for ACIAR Learn

Those eligible for ACIAR Learn can [register for the program here](#). For help registering for the program, please refer to our [registration guide](#).

Further information

Read more about ACIAR at www.aciar.gov.au/aciarnlearn.

Sign up for the [ACIAR Learn newsletter here](#).

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at aciarnlearn@uq.edu.au.

General course information

Course list

Course name	Course type
Digital Communications for Research	Elective
Facilitation Skills	Elective
Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Research	Foundational
Interdisciplinary, Critical & Participatory Approaches to Research for Development	Foundational
Introduction to Academic Writing	Elective
Mentoring Skills	Elective
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in Research	Foundational
Policy Influencing Skills	Elective
Principles of Ethics in Research	Foundational
Qualitative Research Methods	Elective
Quantitative Research Methods	Elective
Research in the Field	Elective
Research Proposal Skills	Elective
Science Communication	Elective
Scientific Data Analysis & Interpretation	Elective
Values-based Leadership	Elective
Writing an Empirical Journal Article	Elective

What is required to complete a course?

To complete a course learners must:

- 1. Complete the pre-course assessments.** A short series of multiple choice questions, the pre-course knowledge assessment and the pre-course skills self-assessment are mandatory to complete before you start the course.
- 2. Complete all units within the course.** Most courses have 2 - 4 units, each of which generally take approximately 1 hour to complete.
- 3. Complete the post-course assessments.** A short series of multiple choice questions, the post-course knowledge assessment and the post-course skills self-assessment are mandatory to complete after you finish the course.

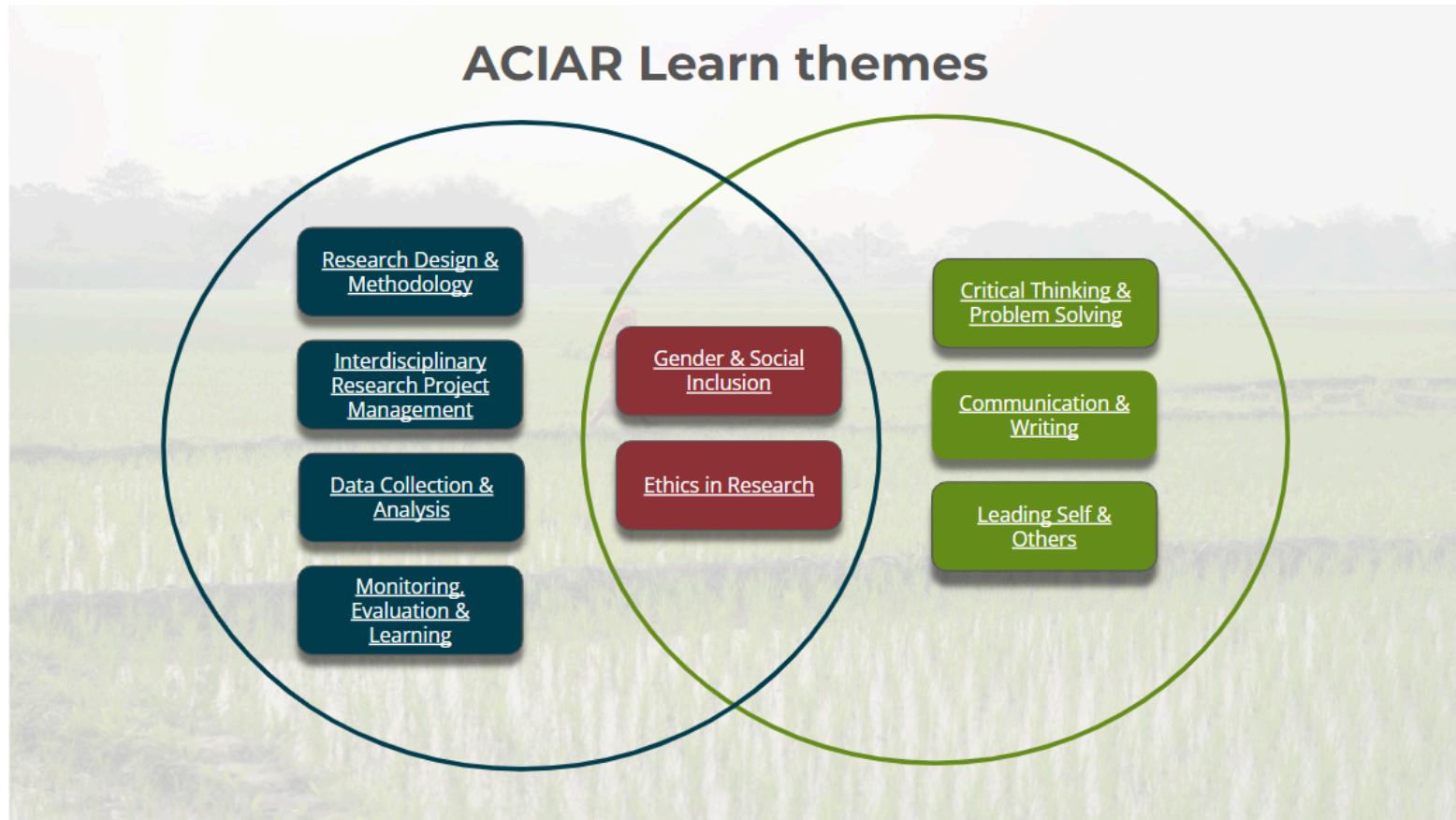
To successfully complete a course, ACIAR Learn participants will need to set aside time to continuously progress through their course. The average course (depending on the number of units) takes 2-5 hours to complete. All courses are broken into bite-sized lessons and are specifically designed to be completed over multiple sessions.

This means learners can put aside a day to quickly complete a course, or set aside a few minutes each week and make effective incremental progress until the course is completed.

Program themes

To understand the relationship between the various ACIAR Learn courses, they have been categorized according to overarching themes. By selecting a particular theme, you will be presented with a compilation of related courses. From this selection, you can then explore the specific Learning Outcomes of each course.

Click [here](#) to learn more.



Course details

Digital Communications for Research

[Click here to enrol](#)

Course description

This course is designed to equip participants with the essential skills and knowledge to effectively utilise digital and visual communication tools for scientific research. Participants will learn how to capture high-quality images and videos, create engaging infographics and presentations, and effectively communicate their research findings online. This course is ideal for researchers and professionals who want to enhance their digital and visual communication skills and effectively share their work with a wider audience.

Course Convenor - Michelle Rowland



Michelle is an Instructional Designer with a passion for creating engaging and impactful learning experiences with a background in film and television production. Leveraging this creative background, Michelle transitioned to the education sector, where she now helps academics develop high-quality online learning resources.

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Facilitation Skills

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Course description

This course is designed to equip participants with the essential skills and knowledge to become proficient facilitators of capacity building programs. By delving into the nuances of training, facilitation, and coaching, participants will gain the ability to design engaging and impactful training programs.

Course Convenor - Dr Rebecca Spence



Rebecca has over 20 years' experience working with civil society and government leaders in a range of Asia Pacific countries. Her professional experience includes: delivering leadership skills training in developing countries; delivering conflict and fragility advisory services; gender and social inclusion advisory services; specialised training design in leadership for peace, and women, peace and security; capacity building; dialogue design; monitoring and evaluation; partnership brokering; and facilitation of high-level meetings and dialogues. Rebecca is currently team leader for the design and delivery of three ACIAR-funded leadership training programs which cater to agricultural researchers and scientists in 23 countries.

Course Convenor - Dr Phil Harrell



Phil is a sought-after public speaker, educator and consultant. Phil is a qualified Master Coach in Leading, Managing and Coaching by Values through the International Coach Federation. He has been presenting his unique and engaging style of leadership and management development training throughout Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific and SouthEast Asia for over 25 years. These have included the design and delivery of major organisational change initiatives, executive leadership development, strategic planning, organisational team building and project management consulting and training. Phil is currently supporting the University of New England's involvement with ACIAR funded projects.

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Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Research

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Course description

As a result of completing this course, participants will acquire the skills to articulate the application of gender dynamics within agricultural settings, assess and develop strategies aimed at tackling gender equity challenges prevalent in agricultural research, and gain the tools to enhance gender equity within their own research work.

Course Convenor - Dr Gomathy Palaniappan



Gomathy is a Senior Research Fellow and Lecturer at the School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability at The University of Queensland (UQ). Her work primarily focuses on socio-economic and gender research. She has played a key role in conceptualising and conducting research related to behavioural change among farmers, as well as gender equity and social inclusion in agriculture. She manages research on key cross-cutting issues of gender equity and socioeconomics in agrifood chains, focusing on improving food security and farmers' livelihoods in crops and vegetables, as well as Soil and Land Management for conservation agriculture.

She has expertise in using participatory techniques to foster capacity building in rural communities. Through her involvement in multiple projects by The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) in countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, Pacific Island countries, The Philippines, and Pakistan, Gomathy has gained extensive experience as a social scientist and gender expert/consultant. Her significant contributions to the advancement of socio-economic and gender research in agriculture are evident in her ability to establish and maintain strong alliances and strategic partnerships with research institutions in the countries where she has worked on ACIAR projects.

[Watch the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion courses promotional video](#)

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Interdisciplinary, Critical and Participatory Approaches to Research for Development

[Click here to enrol](#)

Course description

Agricultural systems are facing increasingly complex challenges to provide the world with safe and sufficient food and fibre. In addition, policy makers, researchers, professionals and producers alike need to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources and equitable opportunities for all. Addressing these challenges requires approaches to research and development that are interdisciplinary, critical and participatory. This course will enable participants to understand the principles and practices of such approaches, and apply them to the design and implementation of research for sustainable development initiatives within their programs and institutions.

Course Convenor - Associate Professor Elske van de Fliert



Elske is the Director of the Centre for Communication and Social Change at the University of Queensland (UQ). She also facilitates and teaches in the Communication for Social Change field of study of the Master of Communication program. She obtained a PhD in Communication & Innovation in 1993 from Wageningen University & Research, The Netherlands. Elske started her academic career at UQ in 2006, after two decades working in research, development and teaching positions in Indonesia, Vietnam, China and Sri Lanka, and across other countries in Asia and East Africa.

Elske's research interests include participatory development communication, facilitation of transdisciplinary research for sustainable and equitable development, and impact assessment of social change processes. Over the years at UQ, she has conducted research projects and consultancies in Indonesia, Timor Leste, Vietnam, Mongolia, Philippines and Azerbaijan. She has published widely on a range of topics related to participatory research and communication in sustainable rural development.

[Watch the Interdisciplinary, Critical, and Participatory Approaches to Research for Development course promotional video](#)

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Introduction to Academic Writing

[Click here to enrol](#)

Course description

This course will provide participants with a comprehensive overview of how to clearly and effectively communicate with an academic audience. Participants will learn about how to recognise and use the conventions of academic writing, and how to use and cite literature to support arguments. Introduction to Academic Writing is one of two academic writing related courses, the other being Writing an Empirical Journal Article. You can choose to do one or both courses, however it is highly recommended that you complete the Introduction to Academic Writing course prior to enrolling in the Writing an Empirical Journal Article course. You can choose to do one or both courses.

Course Convenor - Dr Kathryn Page



Kathryn is a soil scientist with over 20 years' experience. She has worked extensively on natural resource management issues relating to soil, including carbon and nitrogen cycling, the management of greenhouse gas emissions from soil, soil constraint management, and conservation agriculture.

Kathryn is passionate about science communication and helping other researchers communicate their findings to the broader scientific community. She has a strong publication record and extensive experience in developing written material for an academic audience. Kathryn regularly supports other researchers to write funding proposals, reports, and papers for scientific journals.

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Mentoring Skills

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Course description

The Mentoring Skills course introduces participants to the key aspects of creating and sustaining mentoring partnerships and gives participants the skills and knowledge necessary to understand the key processes and phases of developing these partnerships. The course introduces a mentoring model successfully used in ACIAR, government and private sector settings and provides a range of tools and resources for aspiring mentors and those who wish to be mentored. Participants are introduced to each stage of the model and by course completion will understand the steps necessary to enter into a Mentoring Agreement and sustain a mentoring partnership.

Course Convenor - Dr Rebecca Spence



Rebecca has over 20 years' experience working with civil society and government leaders in a range of Asia Pacific countries. Her professional experience includes: delivering leadership skills training in developing countries; delivering conflict and fragility advisory services; gender and social inclusion advisory services; specialised training design in leadership for peace, and women, peace and security; capacity building; dialogue design; monitoring and evaluation; partnership brokering; and facilitation of high-level meetings and dialogues. Rebecca is currently Team Leader for the

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consulting and training. Phil is currently supporting the University of New England's involvement with ACIAR funded projects.

[Watch the Mentoring Skills course promotional video](#)

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Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in Research

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Course description

A fundamental element of research is to both adapt the research scope based on findings and data, while also measuring the degree to which the research delivered on its objectives. Developing a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) practice within research is therefore a core skill of an effective researcher. This course will enable participants to articulate the primary function of MEL practice within their research; identify its core components; and the steps required to develop a MEL framework.

Course Convenor - Ms Alison Moore



Alison is an agricultural extension professional with 30 years' experience in community development with research experience in rural sociology. She has interdisciplinary science qualifications with a first degree in agricultural economics and a Masters in social planning and development. She has coordinated the community support program for Landcare in Queensland, Australia and has worked in Canada, Sweden, Finland, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands.

Alison is currently the manager of The University of Queensland's (UQ) Pinjarra Hills Research Precinct and most recently she has been a member of a UQ team delivering an ACIAR project with agricultural and veterinary universities in Myanmar. She lectures in postgraduate courses of evaluation, social planning/community development, extension and stakeholder engagement. As a consultant she has conducted evaluations including with the Queensland Farmers Federation, Queensland University of Technology, the non-government sector in Timor-Leste, European Union and both Australian and Queensland Governments.

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Policy Influencing Skills

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Course description

Translating agricultural research into real-world impact requires active engagement between researchers and agricultural stakeholders. One pathway for translating science into action is through policy development. Through engagement with governments, farmers' associations, and industry players, researchers can advocate for innovative solutions uncovered by research to address challenges such as food security and climate resilience.

In this course, participants will familiarise themselves with essential skills and tools to contribute to influencing agricultural policy effectively. Through a blend of theoretical insights and practical case studies, participants will explore the policy process and stakeholder analyses, refine their policy engagement strategies, and develop their proficiency in policy analysis techniques. With these skills, participants can have increased knowledge and confidence to influence policy development and bridge the gap between research and practice, making meaningful contributions to food and agriculture systems.

Course Convenor - Dr Risti Permani



Risti is passionate about promoting food security. She has led multiple international research and development projects and capacity-building programs to support the food and agriculture sectoral development ranging from international trade, global value chains, and digital transformation in agriculture to policy evaluation. Risti has also served as an Expert Reviewer to assess multiple international development projects related to food security in recognition of her expertise in project management, the monitoring and evaluation framework and impact pathway. She holds a PhD and Master in Economics from the University of Adelaide, and a Bachelor of Science in Statistics (minor in Agricultural Economics) from IPB

University, Indonesia.

Risti is currently a Senior Lecturer in Agribusiness, the Bachelor of Agribusiness Program Coordinator, and the Chair of the Engagement and Advancement Committee at the School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability at The University of Queensland (UQ). In addition to over a decade of her academic career in Australia, Risti's deep understanding of cross-border research and policy engagement excelled during her time as an Assistant Director at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Integration Monitoring Directorate at the ASEAN Secretariat. She led her team to develop regional strategic action plans and deliver research programs that supported the deepening of regional economic integration, and service the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade negotiations. Risti also currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors at the Centre for Indonesian Policy Studies (CIPS).

[Watch the Policy Influencing Skills course promotional video](#)

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Principles of Ethics in Research

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Course description

As an Australian organisation commissioning research, ACIAR has a responsibility to ensure that all research - conducted within Australia or internationally - is undertaken ethically, applying best practices and approaches. This course will enhance participants' understanding of the importance of ethics in agricultural research, ethical considerations in agricultural science, and key standards and frameworks applicable to ACIAR projects.

Course Convenor - Emeritus Professor Richard Baker



Richard has been a passionate advocate for equity and fairness at the Australian National University (ANU). He has spent a professional lifetime at the University, and as Pro Vice-Chancellor (University Experience), he championed outcomes to support student and staff equity, Indigenous Reconciliation and the student experience.

Richard is a geographer with a passion for teaching and learning. He graduated from ANU in 1981 with a Bachelor (Honours) and a University Medal and was the first person at ANU to complete a joint Honours degree in Geography and Archaeology. He then worked as an archaeologist and oral historian, and completed his PhD at the University of Adelaide in cultural geography on the topic of Indigenous understandings of Australian history and geography. He returned to ANU in 1993 in a teaching position and in 1996 was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence. In 2002, he became the first person to win this award twice. He has also been awarded three separate national teaching awards.

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Qualitative Research Methods

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Course description

This course provides an introduction to qualitative research methods, equipping participants with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to be able to identify the role of qualitative research methods in interdisciplinary research projects, apply common qualitative research methods used in ACIAR research projects, apply best practice principles to analyse qualitative data in interdisciplinary research, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative analysis methods used in real world case studies.

Course Convenor - Ms Alison Moore



Alison is an agricultural extension professional with 30 years' experience in community development with research experience in rural sociology. She has interdisciplinary science qualifications with a first degree in agricultural economics and a Masters in social planning and development. She has coordinated the community support program for Landcare in Queensland, Australia and has worked in Canada, Sweden, Finland, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands.

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Quantitative Research Methods

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Course description

This course provides an introduction to quantitative research methods, equipping participants with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to be able to identify the role of quantitative research methods in interdisciplinary research projects, evaluate common quantitative research methods used in ACIAR research projects, apply best practice principles to analyse quantitative data in interdisciplinary research, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative analysis methods used in real world case studies.

Course Convenor - Dr Gunnar Kirchhof



Gunnar is a Principal Research Fellow and Senior Lecturer at the School of Agriculture and Food Sciences (AGFS) at The University of Queensland (UQ). As lecturer of Land Resources Sciences at UQ, he has both led and collaborated on over half a dozen projects, and supervised numerous research staff and students. His research has focussed on topics including soil–water relationships; conservation agriculture and irrigation scheduling; soil erosion; water and nutrient balances; dry-land salinity management; and water recycling. Gunnar combines over 35 years of academic research, teaching and consulting experience, including designing and leading 12 Australian Government-funded Australia Awards short courses on topics such as Dryland Farming and Irrigation for Water Resources Management for Agriculture.

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Research in the Field

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Course description

After completing this course, participants will have developed their knowledge of field research and be able to apply best practice principles to field and farmer surveys and to experimental design. The course will also cover sampling methods used in agricultural research and key considerations when collecting seed, soil and water samples.

Course Convenor - Dr Yash Dang



Yash is Principal Research Fellow at The University of Queensland (UQ) who possesses extensive experience in soil and nutrient management. He is currently leading a national project on low-cost carbon stock estimation using proximal and remote sensing. He is also leading the northern grains region in national Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) projects to identify and manage soil constraints, conservation agriculture, strategic tillage and sustainable land management practices. While his research spans the areas of crop production, much of his research focuses on soil constraints. He has also coordinated soil carbon and soil quality projects in Queensland cropping soils.

Yash has great faith in engaging with the farmers to develop collaborative, participatory research projects to address soil health issues. He also has strong interest in proximal and remote sensing to identify constraints at farm and national scales for site-specific soil and nutrient management.

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Research Proposal Skills

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Course description

ACIAR and other international agricultural research organisations commission research from collaborators. Being able to develop a research proposal is therefore highly relevant to achieving collaboration on research projects. In this course, participants will understand and apply strategies to: formulate project ideas and locate funding opportunities; identify specific grant requirements, assemble a project team, and define broad project aims and activities; and structure and write a proposal document for maximum clarity and impact.

Course Convenor - Dr Kathryn Page



Kathryn is a soil scientist with over 20 years' experience. She has worked extensively on natural resource management issues relating to soil, including carbon and nitrogen cycling, the management of greenhouse gas emissions from soil, soil constraint management, and conservation agriculture.

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Science Communication

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Course description

In this course, we will explore why, to whom and how we can and should be communicating our science. We will unravel the various functions that science communication serves within the agricultural knowledge and information system, and for society at large. We will also review and practice how to design effective communication for specific audiences, using a variety of platforms and modes of communication, including written, verbal, visual and mixed formats.

Course Convenor - Associate Professor Elske van de Fliert



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Scientific Data Analysis & Interpretation

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Course description

Being able to analyse and interpret data is a crucial skill in an effective researcher. This introductory level course will enable participants to identify tools and processes to strengthen their data analysis and interpretation, have increased confidence to apply data analysis and interpretation, and identify areas for ongoing improvement.

Course Convenor - Dr Vivi Arief



Vivi is a Lecturer in Biometry in the School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability (AGFS) at The University of Queensland (UQ). She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Bogor Agricultural University (Indonesia) and has aMAGRSt and PhD in Plant Breeding and Quantitative Genetics from UQ.

Her research focuses on the area of interface between statistics and plant breeding. Her current research involves providing statistical support for Australian Grain Industries and in-silico breeding using computer simulation.

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Values-based Leadership

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Course description

Leadership skills are key to effectively managing research projects and teams to drive outcomes. As a result of completing this course, participants will be able to define values-based leadership, identify their personal leadership and effective communication practices within the contexts of their team, have an increased understanding of program management and strategic thinking, and have increased confidence to lead research teams.

Course Convenor - Dr Rebecca Spence



Rebecca has over 20 years' experience working with civil society and government leaders in a range of Asia Pacific countries. Her professional experience includes: delivering leadership skills training in developing countries; delivering conflict and fragility advisory services; gender and social inclusion advisory services; specialised training design in leadership for peace, and women, peace and security; capacity building; dialogue design; monitoring and evaluation; partnership brokering; and facilitation of

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[Watch the Values-Based Leadership promotional video](#)

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Writing an Empirical Journal Article

[Click here to enrol](#)

Course description

Formerly named Writing an Academic Report, this course will provide participants with a comprehensive overview of how to clearly and effectively communicate with an academic audience. Participants will learn how to write clear and impactful scientific reports, and how to negotiate the publication process. Writing an Empirical Journal Article is one of two academic writing related courses, the other being Introduction to Academic Writing. You can choose to do one or both courses, however it is highly recommended that you complete the Introduction to Academic Writing course prior to enrolling in the Writing an Empirical Journal Article course.

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