

CAREERS IN ACADEMIA

organized by

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Workshop Summary

Generally, the workshop succeeded in accomplishing its goal of better preparing post-docs for their upcoming job searches for academic, tenure-track positions.

Meetings with the facilitators revealed the following observations:

- The length of the workshop was three days. While this represented a compressed schedule from the first workshop, with fine-tuning, the organizers believed it was an adequate time allotment.
- More careful selection of the junior faculty panelists is needed. Identifying people at various institutions and, if possible, at different levels in the pre-tenure process would be beneficial. The two panelists were not typical, and this made it difficult for the post-docs to relate their situation. There was a consensus that having three panelists would be better.

Also, it was difficult to secure panelists for the junior panel and it was recommended that this process occur earlier in the workshop planning.

- The round-table discussions went on for too long. The organizers suggest an abbreviated form of this activity, say 20-30 minutes, allowing people to go off to work/meet but also permitting some to stay and continue more specific discussions with the round-table hosts.
- The workshop organizers would find it helpful if the AIM staff could be responsible for the logistical aspects of the workshop preparations: reminding the organizers to choose panelists by a certain date, inviting the panelists and keeping track of the responses, etc. Now that the workshop has been run twice, it should be easier to develop a standard procedure for the workshop preparations.
- The job talk practices were viewed highly by all post-docs and appropriate time should be allocated to this activity in the schedule. The post-docs also found it to be valuable to be part of a group, all of whom were helping each other to develop their job talks.
- There was a request by the post-docs to have been informed before their arrival to the workshop that they would be required to present the first ten minutes of a 'job talk.' Some were caught by surprise and felt that this aspect of the workshop would have held more value had they had a talk already prepared. In this regard, we should inform participants that they will be called upon to talk about their research (both as part of the cocktail speech and the job talk).

FINAL REMARKS:

Many of the organisers/facilitators have since been contacted by several of the post-docs to review more recent application materials. This is seen as a positive response to the workshop and the mentoring that occurred, but also represents a significant added commitment by the facilitators that should be made clear to both AIM staff and future facilitators.