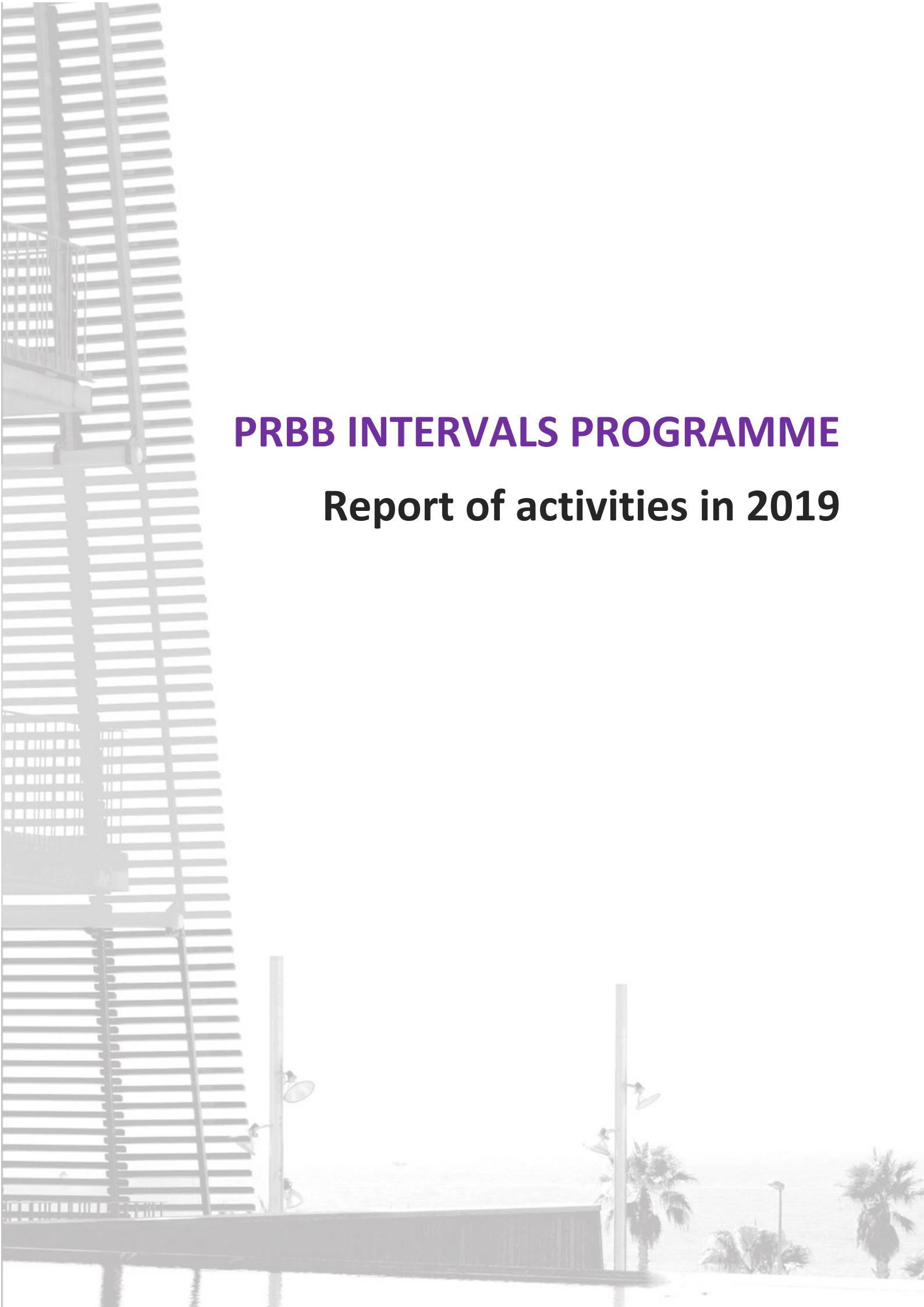

PRBB INTERVALS PROGRAMME

Report of activities in 2019

The Intervals story

In the PRBB *Intervals* programme we are part of a burgeoning movement in science globally, that is finding new ways to work and progress human knowledge. Values such as trust, caring and authenticity are needed more than ever today, as we face a barrage of ethical and existential issues that threaten our survival. The new way of doing science seeks to ensure that individual human qualities are valued highly, that trust and caring underpin our relationships and that openness is as important as competition.

To face the future, scientists must have strength of character and a range of flexible personal skills to respond to unpredictable environments and multiple pressures: having excellent technical skills alone is no longer sufficient to be an excellent scientist. The ability to work with others, to listen, to be adaptive and tolerant of difference are all skills we learn through life experience, but they can be enhanced and enriched if we give them a little special attention.

Through its two foundational objectives the PRBB *Intervals* programme aims to provide learning opportunities for all staff that:

i) support self and professional development, to enable our staff to become more effective influencers, whatever their current or future role in society.

ii) encourage relationship building between individuals in all PRBB Centres, disciplines and sectors in science and beyond.

Our work in 2019

In 2019 the Intervals programme offered 36 workshops, 450 places in total. The feedback from attendees was very positive, and 90% of them rated the courses as *excellent* or *very good*.

The programme was organised into three thematic learning areas:

i) SELF: courses that focus on the development of inner personal skills such as thinking, creativity, and personal mastery.
ii) INTERPERSONAL: courses that focus on the inter-relationship between individuals – usually one-to-one but also in small groups or teams.
iii) SYSTEM: courses which focus on building skills that enable an individual to interact effectively with large groups and the public – both scientific and non-scientific, and to find their own way in the complex social system of science.

Balance between learning areas

The focus on each of the learning areas varies each year, depending on assessment of need and priority of different staff groups. One on-going concern is the development of team management and leadership skills in new Principal Investigators (PIs), as these young leaders are key influencers for the future of science. The *Intervals* programme therefore partners biannually with the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) to organise a leadership skills course for PIs: *Leading for Success in Science.* This workshop runs over 3 days in a venue outside the PRBB, and gives the participants an opportunity to experience a day retreat environment away from their labs and offices. In 2019 this course was offered to PIs from the PRBB Centres along with PIs from other local scientific centres. Fewer courses under the Interpersonal learning theme are held in the same year as *Leading for Success in Science*.

New courses

In 2019, two new courses were held. One under the Self skills theme – aimed to encourage creative thinking: *Dance your science* – and the other under the System skills theme, *Science in a nutshell* aimed to improve skills and flexibility in presenting science orally – in this case without powerpoint. Often with new courses, take up of places is lower than for other courses, especially when the new course is seen as innovative or challenging. This was the case for both of our new courses in 2019. *Dance your science* take up was just 47% (7/15) of places and *Science in a nutshell* was 67% (7/10).

In spite of relatively low take up however, participants had a very positive experience with 100% of participants from both courses rating the courses as either very good or excellent.

> *"The most inspirational course I have taken connecting body and mind."*
>
> *"To think out of the box you need to move out of the box."*
>
> *"It was an excellent experience! Moving your body allows you to improve your imagination! And also your abilities of communication to general public!"*
>
> Participants *Dance your Science*, May 2019

> *"In the era of digitalization, it is necessary and why not, nice and cheerful, to go back to the board and reinvent our presentations."*
>
> *"Very much needed course for all scientists independently of their career stage."*
>
> *"I'll be able to explain in a more concise and clear way my results in a chalk talk."*
>
> Participants *Science in a nutshell*, December 2019

Attendance

Take-up of places

In contrast with previous years, 2019 was a year in which there was a lower demand for places than anticipated, especially in the Autumn. There was no obvious reason for this lower demand, though it is possible that after a higher than average uptake in 2018 with the celebration of 10 years of the *Intervals* programme, experience in 2019 reflected a balancing out and time for consolidation.

Courses that were most difficult to fill were mainly in the Interpersonal skills thread. This may be because of a perception - arguably erroneous - that the focus of these courses, while important, is less pressing to every day work needs than topics such as communication skills and critical thinking. Perhaps a case of the well-known phenomenon of the 'urgent' taking precedence over the 'important'. Unfortunately, one workshop in *Peer Mentoring* had to be cancelled due to insufficient take-up of places.

Balance between groups

In spite of the slightly reduced uptake of places, the gender balance improved somewhat although men still did not take up places proportionate to their representation in the community. The balance of pre-docs to post-docs also improved and there was an improved uptake to courses by participants from the IMIM, although they are still taking up only 21% of places when they are entitled to 28%.

In 2020…

In 2020 the *Intervals* programme will continue offering high quality training and adapting to the evolving needs of the research community.

Collaborating with other programmes

Intervals will continue joining forces with other training programmes to offer more places on our most popular courses to the PRBB community. Specifically, *Intervals* will extend its collaboration with the Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) CÍCLIKS programme by offering more scientific writing and oral presentation skills workshops so that more PhD students have the opportunity to access this training.

Taking care of wellbeing

Despite being highly stimulating and challenging, there are some characteristics of the scientific environment that can affect emotional and mental well-being of researchers. Since its origin *Intervals* has provided training to help science professionals to improve not only their interpersonal skills but also to help them to better manage their time, stress levels, feelings and emotions. In line with this, in 2020 the *Intervals* programme, along with other PRBB initiatives, will continue to contribute to maintaining and improving the wellbeing of the PRBB community

Open to new ideas

Intervals aims to offer top notch training opportunities in transversal skills for professionals working in the PRBB. We are always open to new ideas that can make our programme more relevant and adapted to the needs of today's researchers and scientific support staff. Should you have any proposal we'll be very glad to hear from you!

Thanks

Many thanks to all our participants, and especially to our trainers and collaborators:

José Antonio Aguilar, Berta Alsina, Michela Bertero, Joaquim Calbó, Salvatore Cappadona, Luca Cozzuto, Malte Engel, Reimund Fickert, Jaume Fatjó, Susan Frekko, Fernando Gallego, Harris Gordon, Manuel Irimia, Anna Janic, Sašo Kocevar, Gavin Lucas, Maria Lluch, Romilde Manzoni, Alicia Marín Muniesa, Andrés Martín, Brian McCarthy, Eric May, Pau Millet, Alexandros Nikolaou, Roser Pinyol, Sonja Reiland, Pilar Rivera, Tobias Rodrigues, Carles Ruiz, Marta Sallés, Louise Schubert, Anna Segarra, Ruben Ventura and Leo Zunda.

Elinor Thompson and Eroteida Jiménez
The *Intervals* Programme, PRBB February 2020

Tables & Figures

Comments from participants

TABLE 1 Overview of the activity

Overview of activity	
Number of courses/workshops	36
Number of places	451
Number of attendees	404
Number of individuals registering but not attending	14
Number of individuals	296
Number of individuals attending more than one course	75

TABLE 2 Number of registrations, percentage of occupancy and number of attendees of each course

	# Registrations	% Take-up	# Attendees
SELF SKILLS - Personal mastery, emotional intelligence, thinking skills			
Personal mastery and emotional intelligence			
Mindfulness - a taster for science professionals - 2 editions (Spanish & English)	30	Waiting list	30
Peer mentoring in biomedicine - Postdocs	7	88%	6
Search inside yourself (SIY) - inteligencia emocional y liderazgo para científicos	12	Waiting list	11
Time management in science: how to get the best out of your day	12	Waiting list	11
Thinking creatively and critically			
Dance your science - Kinaesthetics for cognitive agility	7	47%	7
Pensar en imágenes: facilitación gráfica para solucionar problemas científicos	12	Waiting list	12
Sharpen your reasoning skills: logic and critical thinking for scientists - 2 editions	22	Waiting list	22
The science of the unexpected: improvisation for scientists	12	Waiting list	10
TOTAL	**114**		**109**
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS - Building relationships			
Cross-cultural working: understanding diversity for enhanced scientific performance	11	73%	11
Difficult conversations in research: how to make them easier	12	Waiting list	11
Effective team playing in science – how to get the most out of your team - Early & mid-career staf	9	90%	9
Interview and job application skills in science	9	75%	9
Leading for success in science*	6	Waiting list	6
Negotiating with confidence, inside or outside science	12	Waiting list	12
Project management for scientists	16	Waiting list	16
Train-the-Trainer: becoming a dynamic facilitator in research	8	53%	8
TOTAL	**83**		**82**
SYSTEM SKILLS - Relating to the system beyond the workplace			
Writing			
Becoming a scientific writer: Putting the "Why" before the "How"- 2 editions	24	Waiting list	24
How to write a scientific article** - 4 editions	60	Waiting list	59
How to write a postdoctoral research proposal	12	Waiting list	10
Speaking			
Elevator pitch - the science of concise communication	10	83%	9
Explaining your research to ANYONE - inside or outside science	12	100%	10
How to design a visually stunning scientific poster	12	Waiting list	12
Say it so it stays: oral presentation skills for scientists - 3 editions	30	Waiting list	30
Science in a nutshell – the heart of a chalk talk	8	67%	7
Técnicas actorales para la comunicación científica	12	Waiting list	12
10 keys to creating great visual aids for scientific presentations	12	Waiting list	12
Careers			
Business opportunities in science and beyond	14	Waiting list	13
Job opportunities in science related sectors	15	Waiting list	15
TOTAL	**221**		**213**
TOTAL	**418**		**404**

*** In collaboration with BIST and CRG - Intervals places only*

** In collaboration with CÍCLIKS programme*

TABLE 3 Summary data of attendees' ratings of each aspect of *Intervals*' courses

	% of maximum possible score weighted			
Reaction sheet questions	**2019**	**2018**	**2017**	**2008 -2016**
How would you rate this course overall?	**88**	87	87	85
How would you rate the relevance of this workshop to your professional development?	**87**	85	87	83
How well did the workshop meet your expectations?	**85**	85	85	82
What is your overall rating of the trainer(s)?	**93**	93	92	90
How would you rate the trainer's competence/experience in relation to the subject?	**94**	93	94	91
How would you rate the trainer's interpersonal and presentation skills?	**93**	93	92	89
How would you rate the relevance and usefulness of the training materials?	**84**	83	83	80
How would you rate the venue for this course?	**79**	77	79	78
How would you rate the overall organisation of the workshop?	**89**	88	89	85

FIGURE 1 Summary of scores for all courses – *How would you rate the course overall?*

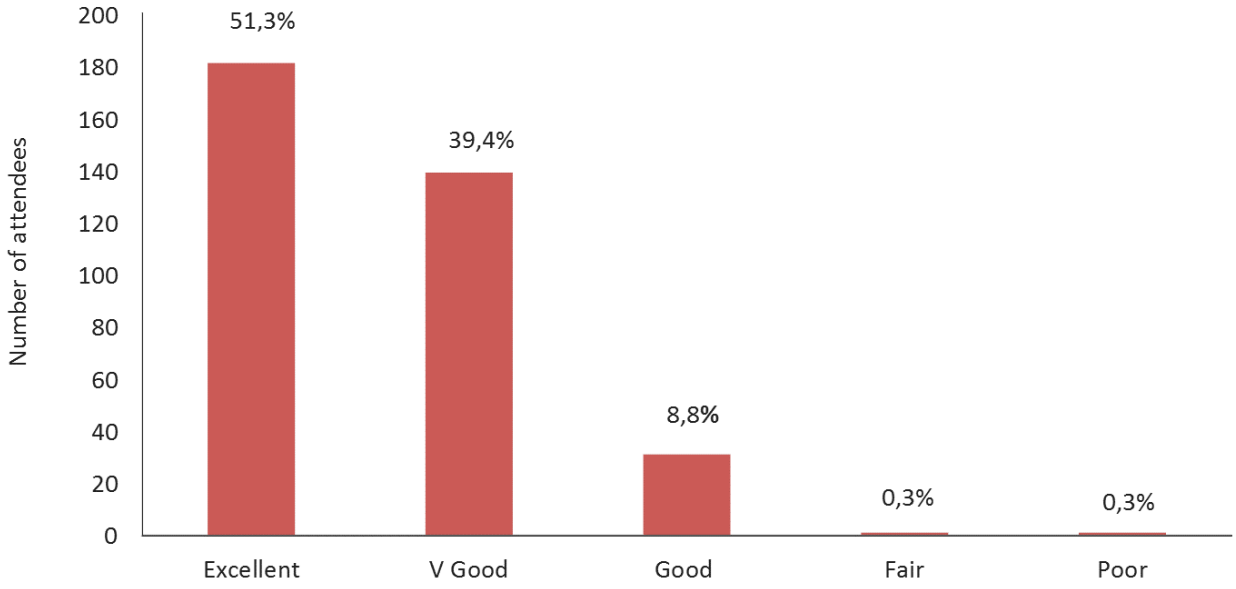

TABLE 4 Number and percentage of attendees by institution

Attendees' institutions	**% PRBB residents***	**2019**	2018	2017	2016	2015
CRG + CNAG	31	121 (30%)	165 (30%)	124 (28%)	137 (30%)	136 (32%)
CEXS-UPF	25	82 (20,3%)	127 (23%)	76 (17%)	65 (14%)	91 (22%)
IMIM	28	86 (21,3%)	86 (16%)	88 (20%)	103 (23%)	83 (20%)
ISGLOBAL	7	56 (13,9%)	72 (13%)	90 (20%)	71 (16%)	41 (10%)
IBE	5	43 (10,6%)	55 (10%)	52 (12%)	37 (8%)	24 (6%)
EMBL-Barcelona	2	2 (0,5%)	19 (3%)	--	--	--
Consorci PRBB	3	6 (1,5%)	13 (2%)	4 (1%)	16 (4%)	14 (3%)
EXTERNAL**	--	8 (2%)	17 (3%)	--	--	--
CMRB	--	--	--	2 (0%)	11 (2%)	7 (2%)
FPM	--	--	--	7 (2%)	12 (3%)	27 (6%)
TOTAL		**404 (100%)**	554 (100%)	443 (100%)	452 (100%)	423 (100%)

** From PRBB 2018 demographic data*

*** Scientific writing courses - Collaboration with CÍCLIKS programme*

TABLE 5 Number and percentage of attendees by post

Attendees' post	**2019**	2018	2017	2016	2015
Predoc	**195 (48,3%)**	291 (53%)	181 (41%)	159 (35%)	181 (43%)
Postdoc	**115 (28,5%)**	116 (21%)	117 (26%)	151 (33%)	105 (25%)
Senior Invstgtr	**18 (4,5%)**	23 (4%)	31 (7%)	34 (8%)	25 (6%)
Clinician	**6 (1,5%)**	1 (0%)	14 (3%)	6 (1%)	9 (2%)
Tech & lab staff	**29 (7,2%)**	47 (8%)	27 (6%)	42 (9%)	32 (8%)
Admin & support	**16 (4%)**	27 (5%)	16 (4%)	17 (4%)	16 (4%)
Management	**10 (2,5%)**	39 (7%)	30 (7%)	26 (6%)	36 (9%)
Not classified	**15 (3,7%)**	10 (2%)	27 (6%)	17 (4%)	19 (4%)
TOTAL	**404 (100%)**	554 (100%)	443 (100%)	452 (100%)	423 (100%)

TABLE 6 Percentage women/men

	Men	**Women**
Attendees to Intervals	**33**	**67**
Per position:		
Researchers	34	66
Predocs	30	70
Postdocs	37	63
Senior researchers	44	56
Clinicians	50	50
Technicians	45	55
Manag, Admin & Support staff	19	81
Not classified	27	73

	Men	**Women**
PRBB resident	**41**	**59**
Per position:		
Researchers	50	50
Predocs	44	56
Postdocs	44	56
PIs	67	33
Technicians	32	68
Admin	32	68

** From 2018 PRBB demographic data*

TABLE 7 Percentage women/men – breakdown per course

	% Men	% Women
SELF SKILLS - Personal mastery, emotional intelligence, thinking skills		
Personal mastery and emotional intelligence		
Mindfulness - a taster for science professionals - 2 editions (Span & Eng)	20	80
Peer mentoring in biomedicine - Postdocs	67	33
Search inside yourself (SIY) - inteligencia emocional y liderazgo para científic	27	73
Time management in science: how to get the best out of your day	36	64
Thinking creatively and critically		
Dance your science - Kinaesthetics for cognitive agility	29	71
Pensar en imágenes: facilitación gráfica para solucionar problemas científicos	42	58
Sharpen your reasoning skills: logic and critical thinking for scientists - 2 editi	27	73
The science of the unexpected: improvisation for scientists	40	60
SELF SKILLS	**31**	**69**
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS - Building relationships		
Cross-cultural working: understanding diversity for enhanced scientific perfo	45	55
Difficult conversations in research: how to make them easier	18	82
Effective team playing in science (Early & mid-career staff)	44	56
Interview and job application skills in science	33	67
Leading for success in science*	33	67
Negotiating with confidence, inside or outside science	33	67
Project management for scientists	44	56
Train-the-Trainer: becoming a dynamic facilitator in research	38	63
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	**37**	**63**
SYSTEM SKILLS - Relating to the system beyond the workplace		
Writing		
Becoming a scientific writer: Putting the "Why" before the "How"- 2 editions	42	58
How to write a scientific article** - 4 editions	31	69
How to write a postdoctoral research proposal	60	40
Speaking		
Elevator pitch - the science of concise communication	22	78
Explaining your research to ANYONE - inside or outside science	30	70
How to design a visually stunning scientific poster	17	83
Say it so it stays: oral presentation skills for scientists - 3 editions	40	60
Science in a nutshell – the heart of a chalk talk	29	71
Técnicas actorales para la comunicación científica	33	67
10 keys to creating great visual aids for scientific presentations	25	75
Careers		
Business opportunities in science and beyond	23	77
Job opportunities in science related sectors	33	67
SYSTEM SKILLS	**33**	**67**
TOTAL	**33**	**67**

*** In collaboration with BIST and CRG - numbers only from Intervals participants*

** In collaboration with CÍCLIKS programme*

TABLE 8 Source of trainers

Source of trainers	**2019**	**2018**	**2017**	**2016**	**2015**
PRBB Institutions - Senior staff	15	9	10	13	19
External (Spain)	15	15	13	12	11
External (Europe)	4	2	4	5	5
TOTAL	**34**	**26**	27	30	35

Some comments about the contents and organization of the PRBB INTERVALS program:

General

- Great organization!
- Great initiative and opportunity to learn/improve fundamental skills that we need as scientists.
- Son una oportunidad muy buena para mejorar muchos de los aspectos que todo científico debería saber.
- I liked how Intervals courses help young researchers to improve in different disciplines.
- Thank you for your great job. I feel very privileged to be part of Intervals.
- Very useful for professional development.
- I love Intervals courses, they are excellent!
- Congratulations for the great organization.
- Good initiative and topics, useful for all levels of scientist.
- Thanks for the opportunity and effort!
- Very good and consistent.
- They're excellent.
- The organization was perfect.
- I think they are fantastic and very helpful.
- Very useful, one of the best features of the PRBB.
- I love Intervals!
- As always, congratulations for the good job, training quality and motivation!
- It's really cool. Thank you for the opportunity of doing this courses.
- All amazing.
- Excellent program.
- Thank you a thousand times for that!

Availability/Accessibility

- More places in courses that are full already.
- It's hard to attend a full day session, some are very interesting, but if possible could be split into more and shorter sessions?
- More editions should be available along the year.
- More places. I liked all the courses I've done, but I would like to be able to participate in more.
- In general the Intervals courses are great, but there is a lack at places. An increase in the number of editions will be perfect.