

FLP Coaching Group @ EPFL – pilot project

Description and objectives

The **goal** of the programme is to support participants in advancing on their individual career development objectives, to learn they are not alone, and that significant growth comes through the act of exchange and mutual support. While the programme includes a central core of career development, it also provides an opportunity to build skills and confidence in specific areas that are frequently an issue for women researchers at the outset of their career.

To address the goal, the design of this pilot programme integrates contact hours and out-of-contact hours. :

(1) Out of contact hours work: Participants will work on their personal action plan and diverse exercises outside of the coaching period that respond to their personal and professional aspirations , and

(2) During contact hours: Each participant follows the “Designing Your Career” series and chooses how to complement it, on the basis of their personal action plan and any related issues that might come up. The choice of complements run in parallel, with sessions focused on specific issues of professional development.

Outcomes for participants

Upon completion of this programme, our goal is for participants to be able to:

1. Identify their current professional profile, focusing on their existing strengths and those they would like to develop.
2. Establish a vision of their next career steps, based on individual interests and motivations, with concrete milestones to be achieved, during and after the programme.
3. Boost their confidence and develop skills relevant to their career and professional development, addressing individual issues that hold them back.
4. Engage with a supportive network of fellow women researchers, learning through sharing and witnessing with their peers.

Participation

- Each participant has a “budget” of 20 hours. In addition to the (required) intake and out-take sessions (4+2 hours), she follows the 10-hour Career Choices (DYL) stream, plus her choice of 2 mini-workshops to focus on specific issues in professional development.
- If she wants individual coaching (beyond her 20 hour budget), she needs to pay as usual.

Intake and out-take sessions

- Intake happens in late April / early May (before holidays) and out-take in late November. – Proposal: afternoon of Thursday 8th or Tuesday 13th May – Kristin/Chantal to confirm
- The **4-hour intake session** is required and interactive, designed to help participants take stock of where they are and map out what they would like to focus on during the programme:
 - Two 1-hour sessions of [Reflectory](#), using a game-based approach to identify strengths, interests, values, where you've been and where you'd like to head.
 - A 45 minute conversation around **leadership in career development**: what it means for a young researcher, how she can “lift” others as much as she “climbs” herself (and what does “climb” mean – is it necessarily an upward movement, how might it look as an exploration of different avenues? What do we understand by “ambition” and “success”?)
 - A 45-minute **personal action plan** exercise to identify goals for the programme, activities to sign up for. The action plan is composed on the basis individual reflections coming from their completion of the standard FLP registration form, the Reflectory journal, and discussions from leadership session, and explores goals for the next six months. The personal action plan is discussed and developed in exchange with peers and coaches, and in the light of support available through FLP, EPFL and Regard (among others).
 - A 15-minute administration session to clarify availabilities for the Designing Your Career series, and poll/discuss issues for small group sessions.
- The second and no less important goal of the intake session is to foster a sense of cohort and build trust among participants.
- Following the intake, participants will have a maximum of **two weeks to confirm** their **choices**.
 - Ingrid will set up two one-hour, online “**drop-in sessions**” where potential participants can dial in to discuss and explore the goals outlined in their personal action plan. This is a follow-up to the kick-off to resolve any outstanding concerns.
- The **2-hour out-take** session is composed in two parts:
 - Taking stock of where participants are at the close of the programme (interactive exercises) and what their next steps will be.
 - Possibly presentations from willing participants to talk about what they've learnt/experienced?
 - A roundtable “women in STEM” with women researchers, one in academia, the other in another sector, to discuss career issues.

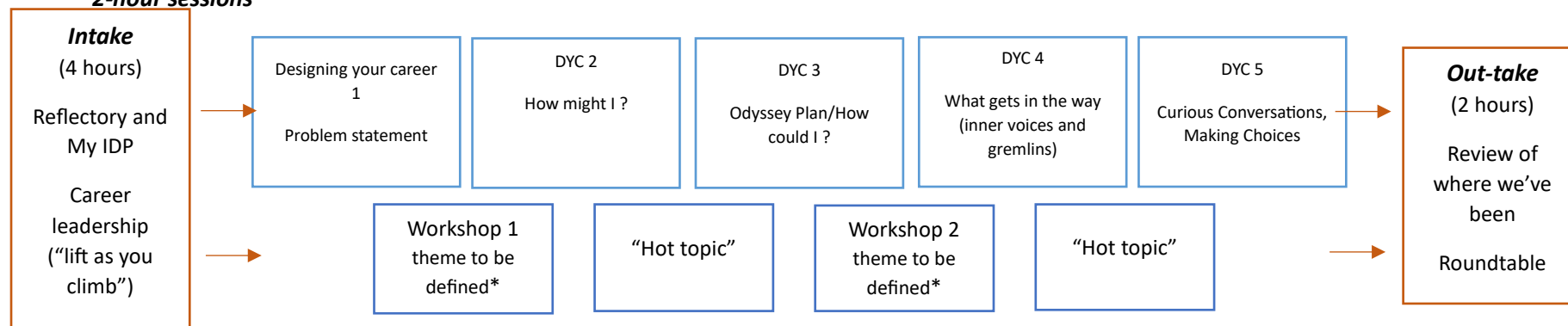
Designing your career series

- All participants engage in a series of five two-hour sessions focused specifically on career choices, based on the Designing Your Life model.
- Maximum 16 participants. Verity leads, with support for some sessions from Ingrid.

Small group series (“mini workshops”)

- The small group series begins after the intake session.
- Small group sessions are based on a minimum of 6 participants.
- Two small group sessions are scheduled over lunchtime, to facilitate those with caring responsibilities, and two in the late afternoon (e.g. 16:30-18:30), to facilitate those who have difficulty getting out of work.
 - The precise dates will be defined based on information provided in a poll by participants, indicating their preferences in themes and schedule. Once dates and times are settled, participants will receive online invitations for their chosen sessions.
- Topics and the hot topic “group coaching” format are explained on the intake session. Participants will then get the opportunity to indicate their preferences on an online form. Specific topics can cover transversal themes such as self-leadership and resilience, negotiation, procrastination, imposter syndrome, difficult conversations, networking with confidence...
 - Depending on demand, the small sessions can also focus on practical career-based themes that aren’t of interest to the whole group (e.g. applications beyond academia)
 - The hot topic format will allow for issues that were not envisaged at the intake period but which arise during the course of the programme.

2-hour sessions



*Possible workshop themes (to be defined during the Intake and with reference to existing FLP and EPFL offers) :

- Time management and productivity
- Procrastination
- Self-leadership and resilience
- Negotiation skills
- Applications beyond academia
- Difficult conversations
- Postdoc to professor

Hot topics: focus on a particular subject requested by the participants and defined during the career choices sessions or workshops.

Sessions can take place during lunchtime or in the late afternoon, to be defined during the "intake".