V Scholar Summit: Professional skills they don’t teach in grad school

HRA Session: Engaging Awardees, 10/21/2021
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V Scholar Summit: What is it?

Duration: Two-day event (in person 2016-2019; CX in 2020; Virtual event in 2021)

Who attends?
• V Scholars with current grants (75-100 invited, approx. 35-45 come); Asst. Prof <5 yrs.
• Invited mentors (past V scholars, VF Scientific Advisory Committee members)

Agenda components?
• Effective Lay Scientific Communication (Alan Alda Communications Workshop- Day 1)
• Other Professional Skills, variable (Grant Writing, Lab Management, Hiring Talent, Negotiating Contracts)
• Networking (Poster Session; shared meals)
• Driving Collaboration (Poster Session; Networking sessions on specific topics)
Staff time:
- 2-day event, plus 6 months advance planning, on-site staff
- Hired Communication Trainers
- Paid expenses for SAC & past V Scholar speakers (no honorarium)

Other expenses:
- Travel Grants ($2,500 allowable from their V Scholar Grant budget)
- Paid expenses for SAC & past V Scholar speakers

Total Conference Costs - variable depending on On-site/Hybrid/Remote
- 2019 In person (58K less 15K from sponsors): 43K
- 2021 Virtual (23K less 15K from Sponsors): 8K

Technology Costs:
- iPosterSessions ($8,545; will retain for in person meetings)
Anonymous Post-Summit Survey

Criteria evaluated
- Demographics of V Scholars (Year of grant, degrees, gender)
- Scoring of speakers and topics
- Would attendee recommend to others?
- Comments that inform the next session
2019 V Summit Survey Responses

Response Rate: 21 V Scholar attendees; 18 completed surveys (85.7% response rate)

Personal Demographics of Respondents: 56% Male, 44% Female; 11.1% PhD, 66.7% MD, 22.2% MD & PhD; 95% Asst Prof Level

Would you recommend the V Scholar Summit to another V Scholar? Yes (100%)

Would you attend another V Scholar Summit in the future? Yes (77.3%) Maybe (18.2%) No (0)

What do you think the most important component of this conference is and why?
• **Poster session/networking!** This was a great meeting to meet other V Scholars, but also get to know patient research advocates and senior faculty in the field. This opportunity will definitely help future interactions and collaborations.
• The **communications workshop** was the most important feature of this V Summit since this provides a unique opportunity for junior faculty to hone essential career skills. Very helpful toward identifying exciting ways to communicate our research.
• Listening to **patient advocate** and **advice on writing good grant**.

What topics would you add or exclude in future V Scholar Summits & why?
• Running a lab, management of time and people
• Grant writing session
• Effective time management and distribution of time and resources for early career faculty.
• Keynote from a well-established cancer biologist
• How to find our next faculty appointment
• Connect with patient advocate groups
• Dealing with mental health issues
• Succeeding in first job
This was hands down the most useful conference I have attended so far both from a professional and personal development standpoint. The tools and advice I gained from this meeting will be essential to my career trajectory going forward. Thanks so much for this incredible opportunity and for allowing me to join the powerful network of V Scholars!