Developing the Communicating Astronomy with the Public (CAP) Training Program

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Accessible astronomy for everyone

The **IAU Office for Astronomy Outreach (OAO)** is a joint project of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ), under the auspices of the National Institutes of Natural Sciences (NINS) of Japan.

- **Build community through public engagement**
- **Professional development**
- **Global community of astronomy communicators**

Why Create the CAP Training Framework?

Growing global demand for structured training

Need for culturally sensitive approaches

OAO mandate to professionalise of astronomy communication



Rising misinformation and public mistrust

Demand for digital-first communication skills

Overview of All CAP Modules

Module 1

Core Principles of Science Communication

Module 2

Audience, Culture & Inclusivity

Module 3

Digital Communication Strategies

Module 4

Outreach Program Design & Management

Module 5

Crisis Communication & Professional Growth

Training Styles & Approach



Interactive learning & scenarios



Hands-on production tasks



Digital/ Hybrid delivery



Real-world astronomy case studies



Peer learning & feedback

Focus on Module 1

01 Core Principles of Science Communication

02 Pilot-tested with focus group

03 Foundation for all other modules

Module 1 – What It Covers

Definition & purpose of Science Communication

Communication vs Outreach vs Education

Evaluation & Monitoring (AEIOU) Framework

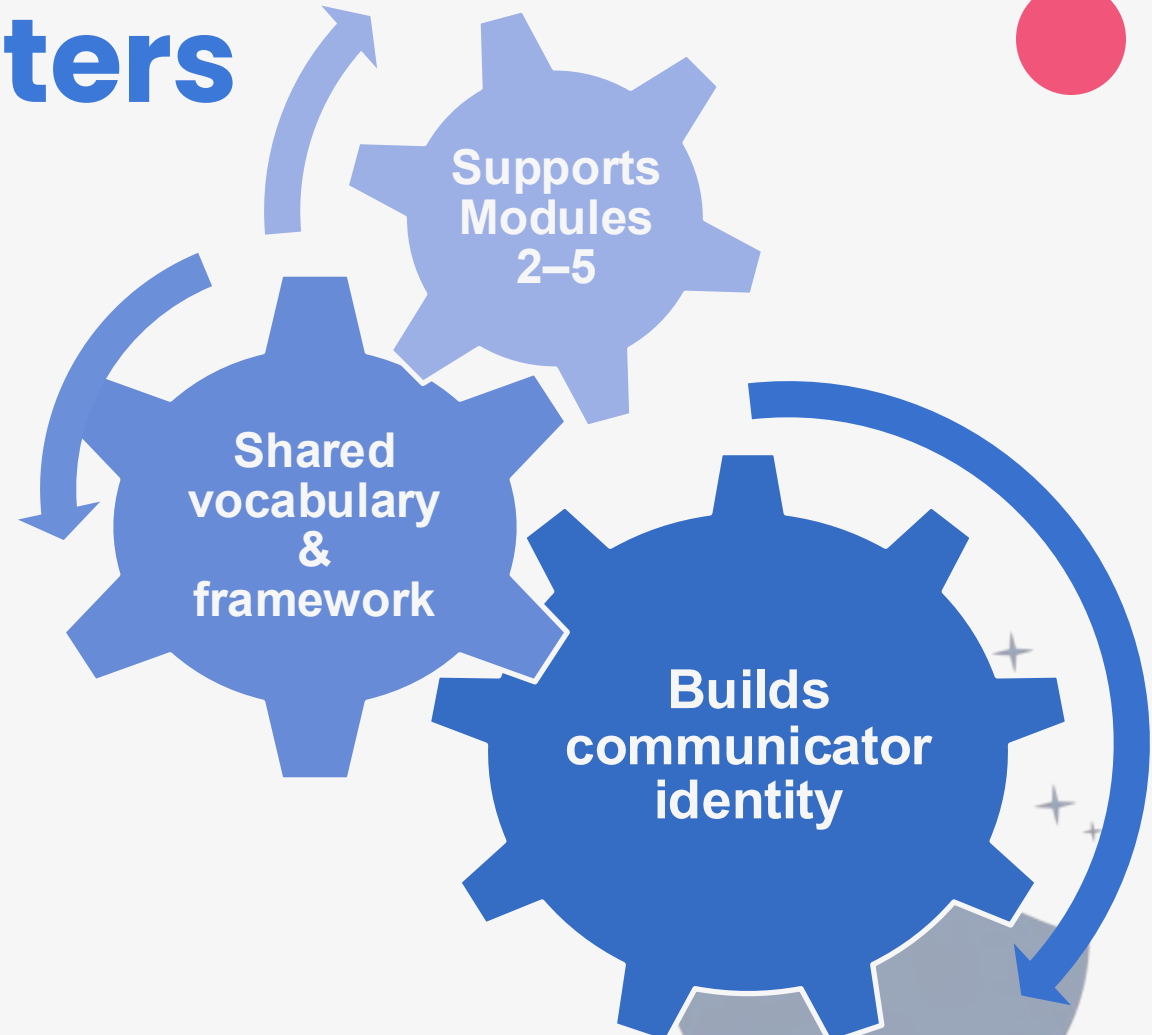
(Awareness, Enjoyment, Interest, Opinion, Understanding)

Ethics, clarity & literacy

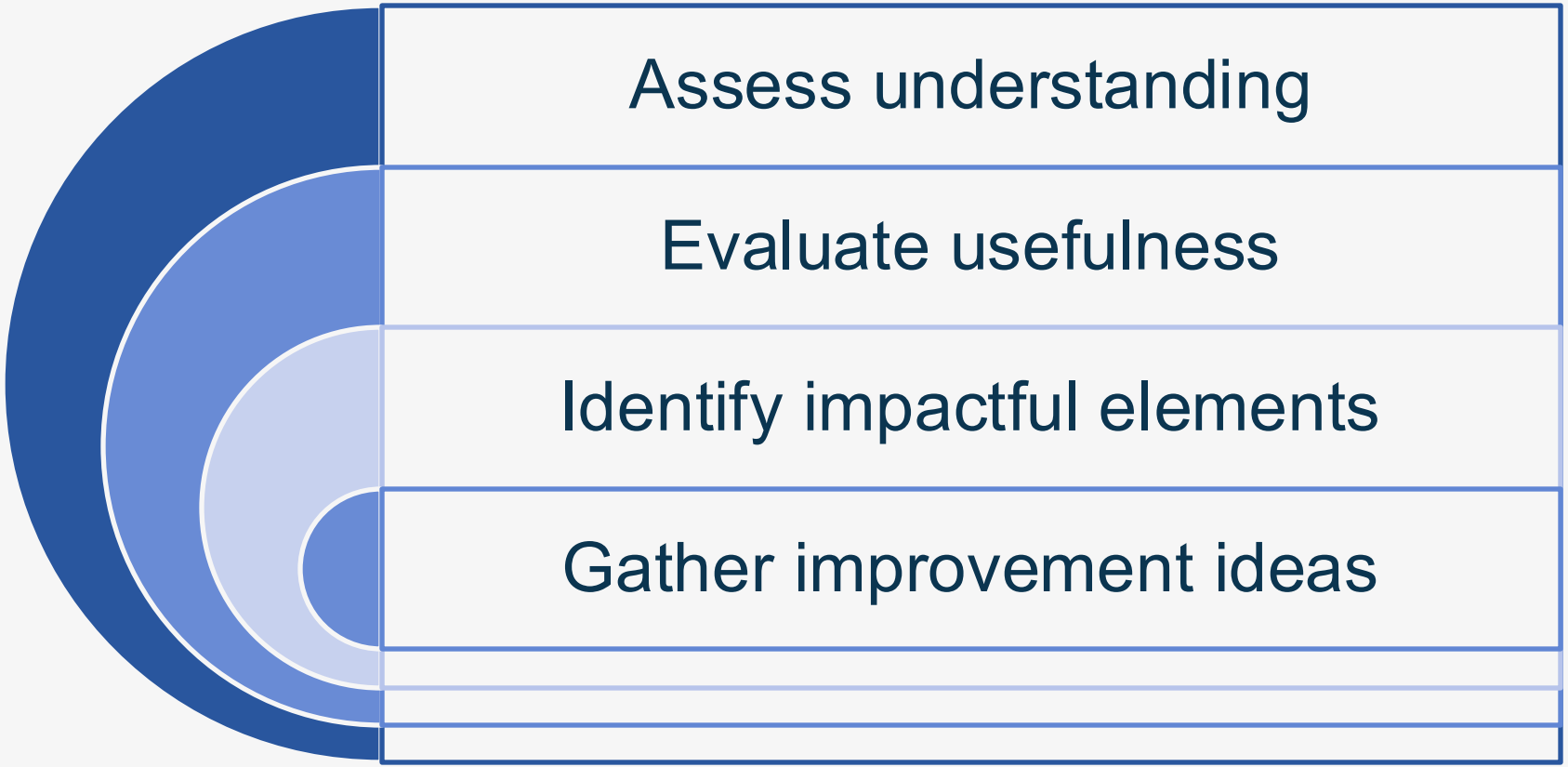
Storytelling foundations

Why It Matters

Module 1



Focus Group Goals



Learning Outcomes

- Clear understanding of science communication purpose
- How to identify audiences & outcomes
- Improved clarity & simplification skills
- Recognition of common astronomy misconceptions
- Greater confidence in their communicator role
- Importance of intentional design using AEIOU

Usefulness Ratings

- AEIOU framework = **most useful tool**
- Strong value in ethics + communication foundations
- High relevance to real outreach work
- Suitable for both beginners and experienced communicators
- 80% are confident they can design and lead a science communication activity

Most Effective Elements



Real examples from astronomy outreach



Clear explanations of jargon, clarity, and simplification



Storytelling introduction



Reflective exercises



Worksheets and templates

Participant Quotes



"Changed how I see my role"

"Understand difference between outreach and communication"

"AEIOU makes planning easier"

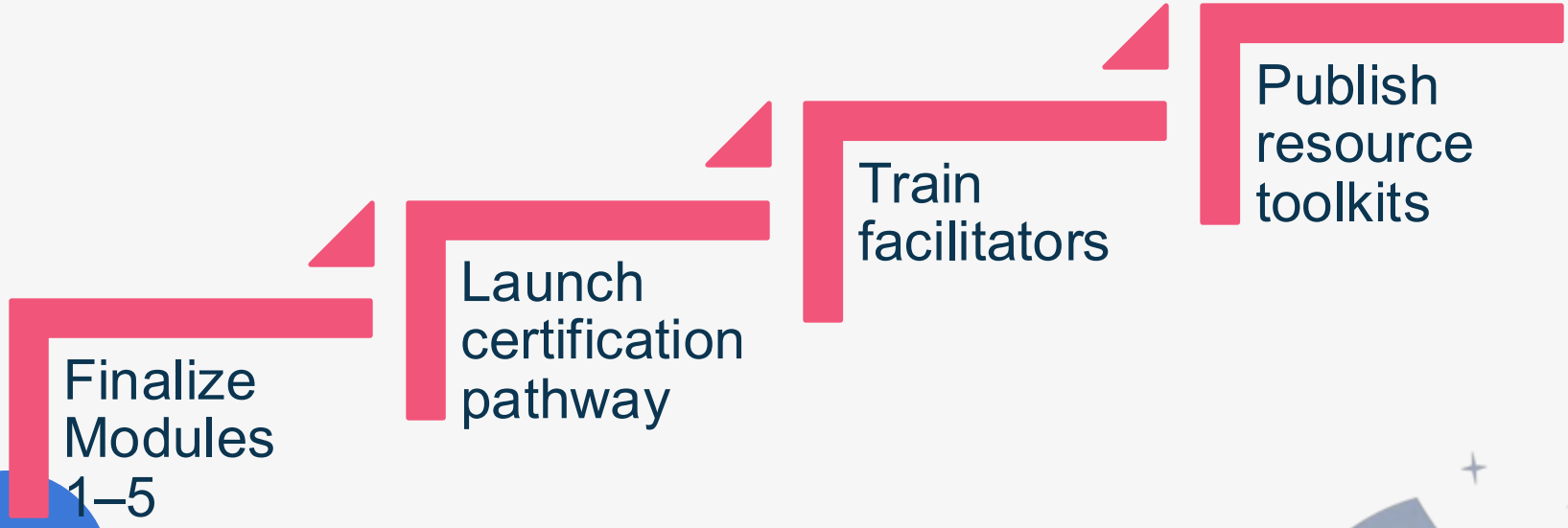
Requested Improvements

- More astronomy-specific examples
- More global case studies
- More templates & worksheets
- More micro-activities

Next Version

- Expanded examples from global regions
- Enhanced storytelling activities
- Short video explainers
- Stronger digital integration

Future Plans



Conclusions

The CAP Training Program:

- Responds to real global needs
- Provides professional, research-informed training
- Builds capacity for astronomy communication worldwide
- Is strengthened by the focus group’s insights

Thank you!

Do you have any questions?

iauoutreach.org

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