

Dear Physics, We Need to Talk

Physics needs broader communication skills, and an appreciation of this can help the field, as well as your own career

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The key to any good relationship lies in communication. Physics provides the tools that allow people to exchange its self-amplifying discoveries, from radios to quantum cryptography. But as they continue to advance in speed and efficiency, these tools also accrete more of our individual attention with their novelty, and not necessarily value. Physicists are offered ever more and better ways to share their discoveries, yet as a community are experiencing arguably the most isolation (and even hostility) from the general public of the century. But where there is need, there is opportunity. Impact is made at many scales from a continuum of ways, each facilitated by the successful sharing of ideas. Regardless of what problems you find yourself solving, communication will be key factor in their efficacy. Thankfully, physics principles can help solve communications problems, too. Applying principles of normalization, amplification, and signal-to-noise in communication opportunities can help break the barriers of ideas, whether to broaden your career or the greater appreciation of physics in the world.



Bio: Julia Majors is currently a physics writer at the American Institute of Physics. She earned her PhD in physics from the University of California, Irvine, in 2015 where she played with and studied ultrafast laser-stimulated processes of metallic nanostructures. Julia found her way to lasers as an undergraduate at the University of Texas at Austin where she conducted research in atomic optics after a brief stint with high energy physics and neutrino hunting. She serves on the Public Policy Committee of The Optical Society and uses physics communication as an excuse to spend more time on social media, where she hosts regular Periscope “shows” about physics.