

IRE Training Committee 2022-23 Recommendations

Inclusivity/Representation Working Group

- General:
 - Surveys should include measurements of impact and efficacy of training.
 - **Staff will consider how to add diversity/inclusivity language to gather suggestions for future trainings.**
 - Targeted outreach: continuous targeted outreach to diverse groups (including Disabled Writers and, in the future, the Disabled Journalists Association)
 - **Committee members will share those resources/contacts with staff for outreach.**
 - COVID precautions: IRE should put together a COVID protocol for trainers and participants.
 - **Staff has already compiled these protocols on the training portion of the site and welcomes additional input in the future: <https://www.ire.org/covid-19-safety-protocols/>**
- Online Resources:
 - This working group has started compiling links and summaries for resources related to this topic (inclusivity/representation). IRE Board Member Lam Thuy Vo has pitched creating a website or a resource page on IRE's site specific to this topic, and she would like to work with staff to model it after this resource site she helped create: <https://iocresources.com/>
 - **Vo will next work with staff to explore what's already in place and how to build on that work, then create additional online tools for IRE members.**

Local Journalism Working Group

- IRE would take its training to two university campuses within NBCU's existing, diverse network of colleges and universities during the 2023-24 academic year.
Arizona State will be the first campus, aiming for a fall training schedule. As of February 2023, ASU, NBCU and IRE have already started meeting to finalize plans.
 - The training would take place in Fall 2023 on dates that are mutually acceptable to all parties. If the initial partnership is fruitful, we hope to propose a second training in Spring 2024.
 - The proposed schedule would include be a half-day in the afternoon or early evening, devoted to students at the chosen university, who would hear from journalists at the above-mentioned outlet/company about what it means to be an investigative reporter and learn tips for securing public records specific to student journalists.
 - Two training days (one full day; one half-day) to follow would offer deep-dive sessions for local journalists in the area, each designed to build fundamental skills they need to serve as watchdogs for their local communities, with an emphasis on historically underrepresented areas.
 - Sessions would cover best practices for diverse sourcing, interviewing, backgrounding and obtaining public records as well as gaining practical skills in using spreadsheets and building databases.
 - Interactive sessions would be led by IRE staff trainers, conducted with the help of experienced IRE members, including members from the above-mentioned outlet/company. These sessions would feature hands-on training, networking and small-group discussions to foster learning and mentoring.
 - Under this proposal, IRE would not have to pay a location fee. IRE would provide the curriculum and organize the event logistics.

- All students attending the initial-day event could do so at no cost, limited only by room capacity. For the professional days of sessions, IRE would provide fellowships for five faculty members and 10 students to attend at no cost. We anticipate that the cost for local journalists would be \$50-\$75, but that depends on how much funding IRE is able to secure from donors.

Advanced Training/Veteran (Longtime) Members Working Group

- Launch a multi-week (extended) pilot program of online workshops organized around a certain niche or topic identified through surveys to IRE members, collected and discussed by a task force to be appointed in Spring 2023 by the IRE board president. These topics could be beat oriented (investigating businesses, for example) or they could be oriented around a specific skill (fighting for public records, for example).

This recommendation may be rolled into the “professional certificate” or “online course” idea recently discussed as a partnership between IRE and the University of Missouri School of Journalism. While the certificate program will likely focus on different levels of experience – for instance, high school students – this specific portion would focus on professionals seeking to build on skills to a more advanced level (and would rely heavily on the work of the task force mentioned above).

- The course would encourage dialog and sharing of ideas, asking each cohort before the course begins to identify what they hope to learn/get out of the course.
- Launch a specific mentorship or training program with showcase days, “office hours” with presenters and possibly mentor/mentee pairings focusing specifically on investigative editors and investigative managers. This could build on the online and NICAR master classes on this topic, could be a series of “brown bag” type virtual events, and NOT be repetitive of the existing IRE mentorship program.

This recommendation will be discussed more with staff later in Spring 2023.

Recommendation Implementation Timeline

February 2023

- Committee chair (Josh Hinkle) reviews recommendations with executive director.

March 2023

- Committee chair presents action item recommendations to board for consideration/vote
 - *This step is only necessary for policy changes/funding items – to be determined during executive director conversation.*

April 2023

- Staff begins implementation of recommendations.

May 2023

- Committee chair reviews implementation timeline with staff.
- Committee meets to make suggestions for next year’s committee members.