“I've gained an awareness of a vast area of bioscience that, at this stage of my career, I would otherwise be unlikely to get an opportunity to explore and learn about” fed back one delegate on a bespoke course developed by the Biology and Biochemistry Department for the Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

When the IPO contacted the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) team to enquire about some bespoke training, we arranged for senior managers to meet the Head of the Biology & Biochemistry Department to discuss requirements and have a tour of the University’s laboratory facilities. Over the next few months, four academics developed a stimulating mix of lectures, workshops and laboratory sessions designed to meet the specific needs of IPO’s team of patent examiners. We also provided a bespoke area on the University’s virtual learning environment for pre-course reading, lecture material and as a forum for discussion. Skype calls between the academic team and IPO senior managers ensured that the clients felt confident that the resulting training programme would meet their needs.

The format of the course, with three consecutive Thursdays on campus during January and a further two days held at the employer’s premises in March, optimised the learning experience for delegates whilst minimising the disruption to the client’s work schedule. Dr Stefan Bagby, Lead Academic, commented that “it was stimulating to interact with a group with a perspective different from that of our undergraduate students.”

Professor Rod Scott, Head of Biology & Biochemistry, describes the course as “a wonderful example of how academia can have impact in the real world, where needs constantly change and professional development is a necessity.”

Dr Denise Cooke, Head of CPD, says “we are keen to receive enquiries from employers and work with them and our academic experts to develop bespoke training courses which share the University’s expertise with a wider audience”.

To find out more about the opportunities to develop bespoke professional development courses, go to http://www.bath.ac.uk/cpd/
The Centre for Photonics and Photonic Materials (CPPM) at the University of Bath, well-known across the scientific community for its expertise in photonic crystal fibres, opens its doors to researchers and engineers from around the world when offering its intensive two-week professional development course.

The Fabrication of Photonic Crystal Fibres course is an opportunity for delegates to learn from the Bath group of professors, academics and technicians who are amongst the world leaders in this area.

All stages of the fabrication process are explained in a series of dedicated lectures and small-group workshops. In the laboratory fibre fabrication is carried out by the delegates themselves under close and supportive supervision.

Dr Derrek Drachenberg, from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the USA, comments that the “course provided me with improved process practices which I expect to increase productivity on our future projects”.

Lead Academic, Dr William Wadsworth, emphasises how “University staff, students and researchers enjoy the interaction with highly motivated participants from around the world.”

Over the two weeks, delegates have the opportunity to explore the UNESCO World Heritage City of Bath. In addition, they have access to all the University’s campus facilities including the library, Sports Training Village and the Institute of Contemporary Interdisciplinary Arts.

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