**Cell EXPLORERS volunteer online Specific Activity module: Answering Questions & Introducing Yourself**

*Commonly asked personal questions during the Q&A activity*

Well done for completing the online specific activity module on **answering questions & introducing yourself**. This document is a template that you can use to prepare answers to commonly asked questions about being a scientist and your hobbies and interests.

When preparing your answers remember the 5 top tips in answering questions:

1. **Can** I answer this question?
2. Is there **enough scientific information** in my answer? Is it correct?
3. Am I using the **appropriate language?**
4. Can I use this as an opportunity to address some **misconceptions**?
5. Can I **involve** the person in this conversation?

For personal questions about you, points 3-5 are the most relevant!

**Common questions to prepare**

*Type in the text box to prepare your response. Similar categories of questions are grouped together.*

*Becoming a scientist*

**Why did you become a scientist/decide to study science?**

**Who inspires you? Who is your favourite scientist? Who motivated you to become a scientist?**

*When you were younger/at school*

**What was your favourite subjects at school?**

**Tip:** Try to avoid perpetuating stereotypes here. Remember tip 4 – can you use this as an opportunity to address some misconceptions? E.g., ‘My favourite subject at school was science – I always found it interesting. However, my friend at college Sandra did not like science at all school, their favourite subject was English. You do not need to have always liked science to study science at college’

**Were you good at science at school?**

**At what age did you get interested in science?**

**Tip:** Here is a good place to **explicitly address a common scientist misconception** that all scientists are ‘brainy’ or very good at school e.g., ‘some people think that all scientists are very brainy and good at everything at school. I actually was not always good at science at school, it did not come easy to me. But in secondary school I asked my teacher for help, and it got easier!.

**What classes did you pick in secondary school?**

**If you couldn’t be a scientist, what would you be instead?**

**What are your goals as a scientist?**

*Working as a scientist / the daily life of a scientist*

**What does a scientists’ daily life look like?**

**Tip:** In addition to doing experiments, remember to include other daily activities that some people would not necessarily think of when they think of a scientist working e.g. discussing with colleagues (often over coffee!), writing repots, doing work on the computer, designing cool posters for academic conferences, planning experiments, teaching students etc.

**Do you work in a lab?**

**Tip:** If you do mostly work in a lab, try to include some examples of real people you know that do not e.g. ‘When I am doing experiments, I work in a lab. When I’m analysing my results or writing, I spend time in my office. I know other scientists that do not do their experiments in a lab, like my friend John who is an ecologist – he tends to spend a lot of time in fields doing habitat surveys!’

**What is your favourite thing about being a scientist?**

**Have you ever had a breakthrough?**

**Tip:** Dealing with experiments not working out is a very common challenge that scientists face (often on a daily basis!). However, many young people think that if their experiment does not work out that this means that they have ‘failed’ or ‘did it wrong’. In your response, try to mention the idea that dealing with failed experiments is a big part of being a scientist, and learning from it and moving on is a good skill to have!

**How do you deal with things when they don’t go right?**

*Other questions*

**What is your favourite sport?**

**What other types of science are you interested in apart from the science you are doing now?**

**What would you like to do when you graduate?**