

LTW Pilot: Frequently Asked Questions

What Is an Episode? What Is an Act? How Long Is the Movie?

The Labs That Work program has four parts: a feature film (*A Tale of Two Labs*), online supplementary video content, online professional development activities, and lab-based discussions.

- The program is divided into **episodes**, each of which contains a film scene, related video content, and individual professional development activities. Each episode is designed to take no more than 20-30 min.
- The film is divided into three **acts** in a classic three-act dramatic structure, divided into component scenes that serve as the opening for each episode. The program is designed to mirror this structure.

When watched as a whole, the feature film is about 100 minutes long.

How Is the Program Structured?

The curriculum spans a period of weeks, so there is time for reflection and practice. This approach to professional development is rooted in adult learning research, and is designed for lasting, engaging, and meaningful personal growth to support cultures of excellence in lab science.

The online program is presented in episodes. There are built-in moments for lab and/or group discussions for participants to share their reflections and to practice skills.

Many labs choose to watch the entire movie before starting on the program's component episodes. Depending on the needs of your lab, this can be done individually and asynchronously or as a group.

What Is the Time Commitment?

This program takes about 15 hours to complete. There are 27 episodes and three act-based integration segments, for a total of 30 film-centered content segments online.

- The online portion for each episode—one scene from the feature film, one or more videos with experts or content information, and professional development activities in the private logbook—is designed to be completed within 20-30 minutes.
- At the ends of Acts One and Two, there are programmed lab-specific data management discussions with an LTW facilitator using a protocol known as iREDS (institutional Re-engineering of Ethical Discourse in STEM); these are synchronous discussions over Zoom facilitated by an LTW content specialist.

How Do the Lab Discussions Work?

For the discussion component, labs may choose to hold their discussions episode by episode or act by act.

Option A: Episode-Specific Discussions

Labs commit to an hour a week and proceed together; this means that participants are individually viewing the videos, completing the professional development activities online each week, and then the lab will gather to discuss one or two episodes a week:

- 24 lab discussion sessions, 20-30 minutes each every week, plus:
- Two additional 90-minute sessions for lab iREDS data management discussions (facilitated by an LTW content specialist)

Option B: Act-Based Discussions

Lab members complete the episodes and logbook work individually online, and then the lab will gather for less frequent and longer act-based discussions, spread across four lab discussion sessions and two synchronous online (e.g., Zoom) iREDS discussions:

1. Introduction (might be shorter than others)
2. Act 1 (90-120 minutes)
3. iREDS discussion online (90 minutes)
4. Act 2 (90-120 minutes)
5. Act 3 (90-120 minutes)
6. Follow-up iREDS discussion online (90 minutes)
7. Module 1 integration and synthesis (90-120 minutes)

Do I Need To Participate in Lab Discussions? What if It's Awkward?

The more you and your lab can find ways to discuss the material in the program, the better. If you don't have experience leading these kinds of discussions, there is a lab leader discussion guide. You can always get additional support from and discuss approaches with the Labs That Work group. Contact us through LTWPilot@hhmi.org.

What Happens When Lab People Are Coming/Going?

For lab members who will be finishing and leaving before your lab has completed the program...

We recommend that they start with the lab and get as much value out of it while they can. They will be able to continue to have access to the online portions as long as you approve it. The content is intended to be practical and of use in a career, so we hope they will find it so.

For lab members who join after your group has already started...

The online platform can be started independently at any time. We recommend they be asked to watch the entire movie independently, join your group process where you are, and that they independently go back and cover material missed, and discuss it with you at some appropriate point.

May Collaborators Whom I Consider Lab Members Participate?

Yes.

What Happens if I or Others Are Traveling and Missing Episodes?

The online program is always available, and the program is flexible. If lab members are missing discussions, ask them to stay up to date online, and to talk with other lab members to catch up on discussions, much as if they'd missed a class.

If you're missing a discussion, choose whether to postpone or have the lab continue in your absence, depending on how the group has been working together. Do you have someone trusted who can keep the momentum going, or would you feel more comfortable postponing until your return?

This program is intended to benefit you, your lab members, and your lab culture. Within the pilot parameters, please adapt in ways that work the best for those goals—and please keep us informed so we can learn from your experience for labs that follow later.

It's Not a Good Time for Us Now, Can We Do It in 6 Months?

No. This pilot is limited to this calendar year. If your schedule doesn't permit starting by June 1, you will be invited to participate in a later phase of the project.

Are the Surveys Confidential?

Yes. The University of Illinois Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved the evaluation protocol for this pilot, and it provides that all survey responses are confidential to the University of Illinois research team members only.

The pilot evaluation will be based on de-identified, aggregated data.

What Happens to the Information We Enter Into the Online System?

The logbook professional development activities are intended to be private and personal. The entries an individual makes in the online platform remain private to them, and can be exported at the end of the program so they can be saved. For individuals who prefer to work on their own computers, we are creating a downloadable fillable PDF option, and there is a static, downloadable PDF available now for those who prefer to work on paper or keep notes on a preferred digital program.