

Michaelmas 2017

DEPARTMENT OF  
CHEMISTRY



# Chemistry Postdocs News



This newsletter is designed to recap postdoc meetings, ask for postdoc opinions and to let you know what is going on in the department and further afield. If you have any questions, ideas or comments, please get in touch, [holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk). Lots of the information is also on the postdoc portal: <http://postdoc.chem.ox.ac.uk/>.

## In this newsletter

### In this newsletter

#### Improving the induction process for new postdocs

Chemistry Buddies

Are you new to Oxford?

#### Staff meeting recap

Highlighting Postdocs

Monthly Recognition Award

#### Professional development and training

Career development reviews (currently)

CDRs – get involved in the trial!

Professional development training

Other courses you want to see?

#### Want to log your holiday?

#### Writing a fellowship application?

#### News from Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS)

OxRSS objectives

Housing

Want to get involved with OxRSS?

#### Course reviews – Postdoc2Postdoc

ECRs: How to write a fellowship application

So you want to be a PI?

#### Postdoc committee representatives

Safety

Equality and Diversity

Chemistry Consultative Committee

Oxford and MPLS Research Staff Societies

#### Useful resources

Mental Health First Aiders

#### Events

Past event

Want to get involved?!

#### Postdoc Portal and Twitter

## Improving the induction process for new postdocs

Following feedback from our postdoc meetings, a reoccurring theme is the need for a better induction for postdocs into the department.

#### We are tackling this in a number of ways:

- Streamlining the information sent out to new postdocs
- Putting more information online
- Setting up a Chemistry Buddies Scheme

If you have any ideas for further improvements, please get in touch!

#### *Chemistry Buddies*

Aim: to form a more cohesive postdoc network across chemistry and



improve the experience for new postdocs.

**The scheme:** to pair a new postdoc with an established postdoc that is in the same building but in a different group. We will ask you to meet up with your buddy for coffee or similar (preferably in the first couple of days).

We will organise termly events for new postdocs and their buddies. We are also planning a launch event so that you can hear more about the scheme.

To get involved: please email [buddy@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:buddy@chem.ox.ac.uk) with the following information:

Name, sub-department, building, supervisor, any weeks you know you will be away from Oxford.

### *Are you new to Oxford?*

If you have started in the last few months, and you think you would benefit from meeting an established postdoc, get in touch, and we will find you a buddy!

### **Staff meeting recap**

Mark Brouard (Head of Department) called a staff meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> July. He shared with us the plans for new buildings, new space, the new teaching programs and the strategic plan for the Department. He also celebrated successes from around the department including postdocs, specifically highlighting Jean-Charles Buffet and his award for 'going green'!

### *Highlighting Postdocs*

To be able to highlight postdoc achievements we need to know about them. If you have done something worth celebrating (or if you know a colleague who should be celebrated!) let us know – it would be great to feature postdoc successes in this newsletter and within the Department.

### *Monthly Recognition Award*

The department has a monthly award which recognises excellent pieces of work throughout the year by providing a £200 financial reward for your employee. Ask your line manager about this, or, get in touch to find out more.

### **Professional development and training**

We are working hard to improve communication about professional development opportunities and training.

### *Career development reviews (currently)*

All postdocs are entitled to a career development review (CDR) with their line manager (PI). If you have not had one, and would like one: there is a [review form](#) on the postdoc website. This form should be completed and sent to your PI. A meeting should then be arranged to discuss the form, including any training, conferences or support you require.

### *CDRs – get involved in the trial!*

Chemistry is in the process of developing an online CDR system. This system will be more transparent and will be initiated by HR. We are trialling the system this term; to be involved or for more information, email [holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk)

### *Professional development training*

A number of professional development courses are run each term. An up-to-date list is on the [postdoc website](#) and in the [MPLS booklet](#). These courses span leadership, management, social media, presenting, networking, teamwork, fellowship applications and more! Some are specifically aimed at postdocs / early career researchers. You are entitled to go to these training days, and they get really good reviews.

### *Other courses you want to see?*

What training courses do you want to see? The department is keen to set up training courses within chemistry. Let us know what training you need!

### **Want to log your holiday?**

TeamSeer is an online system where you can log your holiday days for authorisation by your line manager. This transparent system can be used to ensure you take the holiday you are entitled too. To get set-up, contact HR. If your group is already using TeamSeer, follow the [link](#).

### **Writing a fellowship application?**

Thinking about applying for Postdoc or early career funding?

Not even sure where to start?

Come and chat to Research Facilitation. We will be holding drop in sessions on **Monday mornings 10-11am** in the Research Facilitation office (ICL, ground floor, behind reception).

[Research-facilitator@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Research-facilitator@chem.ox.ac.uk)

### **News from Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS)**

Oxford Research Staff

Society holds a number of social events for researchers across the University. It also provides research staff with a voice at the university level. They hold termly meetings with at least one representative from each department.



There is lots of information about what's happening in their newsletters, which can be found on the postdoc website or [here](#) for the most recent version.

## OxRSS objectives

OxRSS has set out a number of objectives. We are working towards a number of these within chemistry. Here are a couple of the most relevant:

1. To support the creation of a staff induction event that is integrated between both the University and divisions.
2. To advocate for a policy that states that all research staff are entitled to a minimum of 10 days per year for the purpose of attending conferences, training and development events or for 'on-the-job training'.
3. To increase research staff awareness of the value of a Personal Development Review meeting, and to empower and inform them to make the most out of the process (e.g., request opportunities for mentoring, teaching, training, conferences, and college affiliations).
4. To encourage departments to provide suitable support for managers to engage in the Personal Development Review process meaningfully and in a timely way.
5. To lobby for systematic management training for Principal Investigators, and that such training is offered to staff who unofficially supervise other staff and students.
6. To lobby for more transparent information provided on career development and on criteria for promotions.

## Housing

The affordability of housing in Oxford is becoming increasingly concerning to postdocs, and to the University. OxRSS recently set up a focus group to work with the University to find ways of getting more 'affordable housing' for postdocs.

## Want to get involved with OxRSS?

If you are interested in getting involved with OxRSS as a chemistry representative, email [holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk).

## Course reviews – Postdoc2Postdoc

We want to dedicate a section of the postdoc website for *Postdoc2Postdoc* advice and reviews. Here is one about a training course that Annie Colebatch attended earlier in the year.

## ECRs: How to write a fellowship application

This workshop was really helpful for anyone considering writing a fellowship application for grant funding or for individual fellowship applications. The session was very interactive, with exercises and feedback from other participants on writing and interview responses. For me the most helpful part was the talk given by a current fellowship holder, who was very open about his attempts, both successful

and unsuccessful, at securing funding and reasons why his applications had or hadn't succeeded.

## So you want to be a PI?

Last year I attended the "So you want to be a PI" course run by MPLS for post-docs. This is a short course, lasting only a few hours, however I found it very beneficial, in particular the provision of attendees with criteria they should aim to fulfil during post-doctoral years if they wish to be successful in lectureship and fellowship applications and in turn running their own research group. A section of the course was also dedicated to peer review of CV's from which I gained advice on improvements I could make and other tips on cover letters and interviews. The course also provided the opportunity to meet post-docs from other departments and so share solutions to problems that are common to all researchers at an early stage off their career.

## Postdoc committee representatives

We represent Chemistry postdoc views on a number of committees. We are always happy to answer questions and to talk about what's going on. There is always a lot happening, so get in touch if you would like to get involved!

## Safety

Organic Chemistry, [james.frost@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:james.frost@chem.ox.ac.uk)  
Inorganic Chemistry, [holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk)  
Physical Chemistry, [todd.mize@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:todd.mize@chem.ox.ac.uk)

## Equality and Diversity

The E&D group meets each term to discuss all matters relating to equality and diversity across the department. We aim to ensure every student and worker is represented and treated fairly and respectfully at all levels in the department. Within the Athena Swan Charter the Department of Chemistry has a Silver Award. The E&D group is currently working towards an action plan to maintain our Award in the next round of applications due early 2018.

If you have any queries or would like to raise any issues with the E&D group, please get in touch.



## Rhiannon Evans

Armstrong Group,  
Inorganic Chemistry  
ICL T17b  
Phone: 82612  
[rhiannon.evans@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:rhiannon.evans@chem.ox.ac.uk)

## Chemistry Consultative Committee

The Chemistry Consultative Committee (CCC) allows dialogue and discussion between the Department and its employees and DPhil students in relation to conditions of work. This committee has representatives from the various staffing groups so if you have something you wish to raise, please contact an appropriate representative. The group meets termly and a notice for topics to be raised at the meeting will go in the Departmental Newsletter.



### Dana-Georgiana Crivoi

O'Hare Group,  
Inorganic Chemistry  
CRL  
Phone: 85 133  
[dana-georgiana.crivoi@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:dana-georgiana.crivoi@chem.ox.ac.uk)



### Marco Balabajew

Perkin Group,  
Physical Chemistry  
PTCL, Room 30-09  
Phone: 75477  
[marco.balabajew@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:marco.balabajew@chem.ox.ac.uk)

## Oxford and MPLS Research Staff Societies

The research staff societies provide a voice for researchers at divisional (MPLS) and University level. Some of the OxRSS objectives are listed above.



### Holly Reeve

Vincent Group,  
Inorganic Chemistry  
ICL, T5  
Phone: 82600  
[holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk](mailto:holly.reeve@chem.ox.ac.uk)

## Useful resources

Postdoc portal: <http://postdoc.chem.ox.ac.uk/>  
MPLS training: <https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/courses-for-research-staff>  
Oxford Learning Institute: <https://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/courses/>  
OxRSS: <https://www.facebook.com/oxrss/>  
For new postdocs: <https://intranet.chem.ox.ac.uk/staff-induction.aspx>

## Mental Health First Aiders

The Department has two Mental Health First Aiders – Lynne Thorn, HR Manager, and Abbie Mucchecheti, Senior HR Officer, alongside the normal physical health first aiders. If you need urgent assistance or advice on a mental health issue, please contact Lynne or Abbie on 82698/82694.

## Events

### Past event

Thank you to the organisers of the Inorganic Chemistry poster session, and to everyone who came and made it a success.



### Want to get involved?!

It would be great to hold more events for Chemistry postdocs. If you have an idea for an event, but are not sure where to start – get in touch with Holly, Dana-Georgiana or Marco and we will try and help out!

We now have a small team of postdocs who are committed to improving the 'postdoc experience' across Chemistry – we have plans for social and training events in the pipeline!! Please email if you want to get involved ☺

## Postdoc Portal and Twitter

Our website and twitter feed are regularly updated with news and information relevant to postdocs. Link to the postdoc portal and online version of this newsletter

