

PhD Open Evening 2017

Sciences

Part 1: 5.00pm – 5.45pm

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An aerial photograph of the University of Sussex campus, showing various buildings, courtyards, and green spaces. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text is centered over the image.

The PhD journey

Dr Jeremy E. Niven
Senior Lecturer in Zoology

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Starting your journey



Finding the right project

NewScientist
Science
AAAS

nature
International weekly journal of science

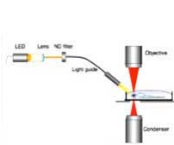
FindA PhD

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Lab : School of L. X

Home > About us > Schools and departments > School of Life Sciences > Neuroscience > Lagnado Lab > Homepage

Lagnado Lab



Research Publications Extras People and contacts


Welcome to the Lagnado Lab

We are investigating two neural circuits that are involved in the processing of visual information - the retina and the visual cortex. The question that guides our research is "how do synapses in the visual system contribute to the extraction and transfer the information in a visual stimulus?".

A PhD studentship is available now. Apply by 15th July 2017.

How do synaptic machines function within neural circuits? We have developed fluorescent reporter proteins by which the electrical activation of synapses and the resulting output - vesicle fusion - can be monitored across hundreds of neurons simultaneously. By applying multiphoton microscopy to transgenic zebrafish and mice expressing these reporters we can observe synaptic activity in vivo as the visual system responds to stimuli. Most of our work has investigated the retina of zebrafish, but we are now also working on the synaptic basis of computations in the visual cortex of mice. Our general aim is to understand how the short-term plasticity of synapses contributes to the control of tuning and responsivity within these circuits. We are particularly interested in "network adaptation" - changes in the way that visual stimuli are processed by the neural circuit according to the recent history of activity.

Our approach to investigating these questions involves a combination of techniques, including electrophysiology, molecular biology, multiphoton imaging and computational modelling.



Contact



[Prof. Leon Lagnado FMedSci](#)
Professor of Neuroscience
School of Life Sciences
University of Sussex
Falmer
Brighton BN1 9QG
Tel: 01273 877431
e-mail: l.lagnado@sussex.ac.uk

Positions

Post-doctoral Researchers

Positions are currently available and enquiries are welcome. These positions will be funded by the Wellcome Trust and the BBSRC. If you are interested in the questions that we are asking and have

Finding the right supervisor

MARRIAGE vs. The Ph.D.



Marriage



Ph.D.

Typical Length:	7.5 years	7 years
Begins with:	A proposal	A thesis proposal
Culminates in a ceremony where you walk down an aisle dressed in a gown:	✓	✓
Usually entered into by:	Foolish young people in love	Foolish young people without a job
50% end in:	Bitter divorce	Bitter remorse
Involves exchange of:	Vows	Know-how
Until death do you part?	If you're lucky	If you're lazy

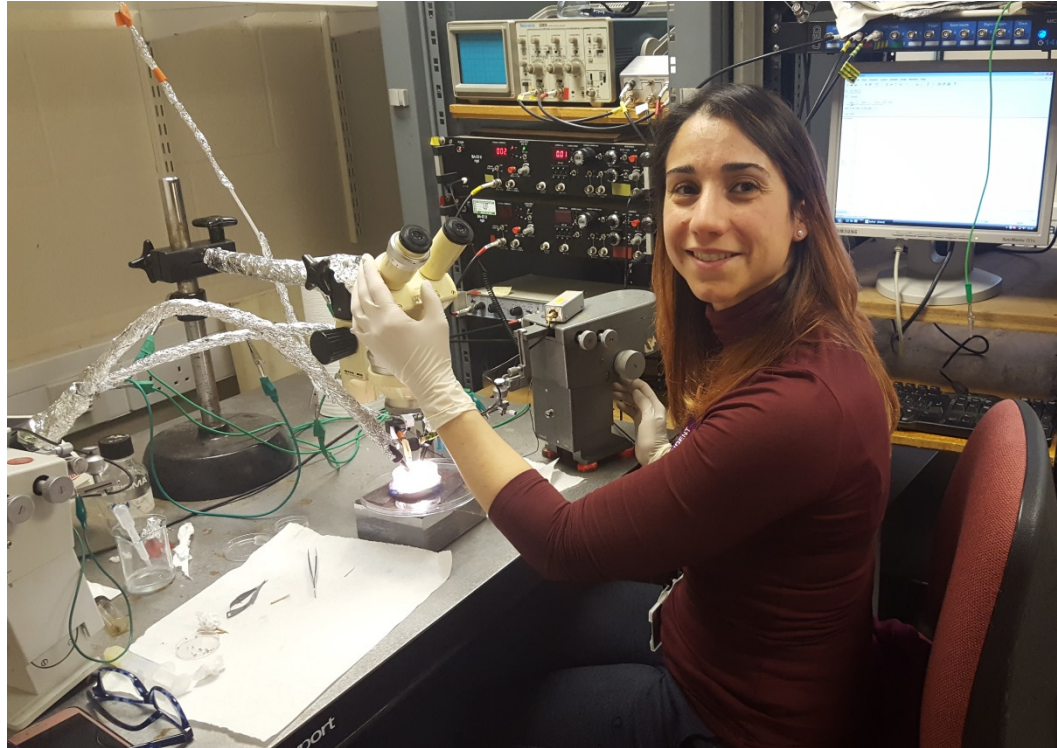
WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

- Read publications
- Ask questions
- Talk to current PhD students

Loving what you do



Patience & Perseverance



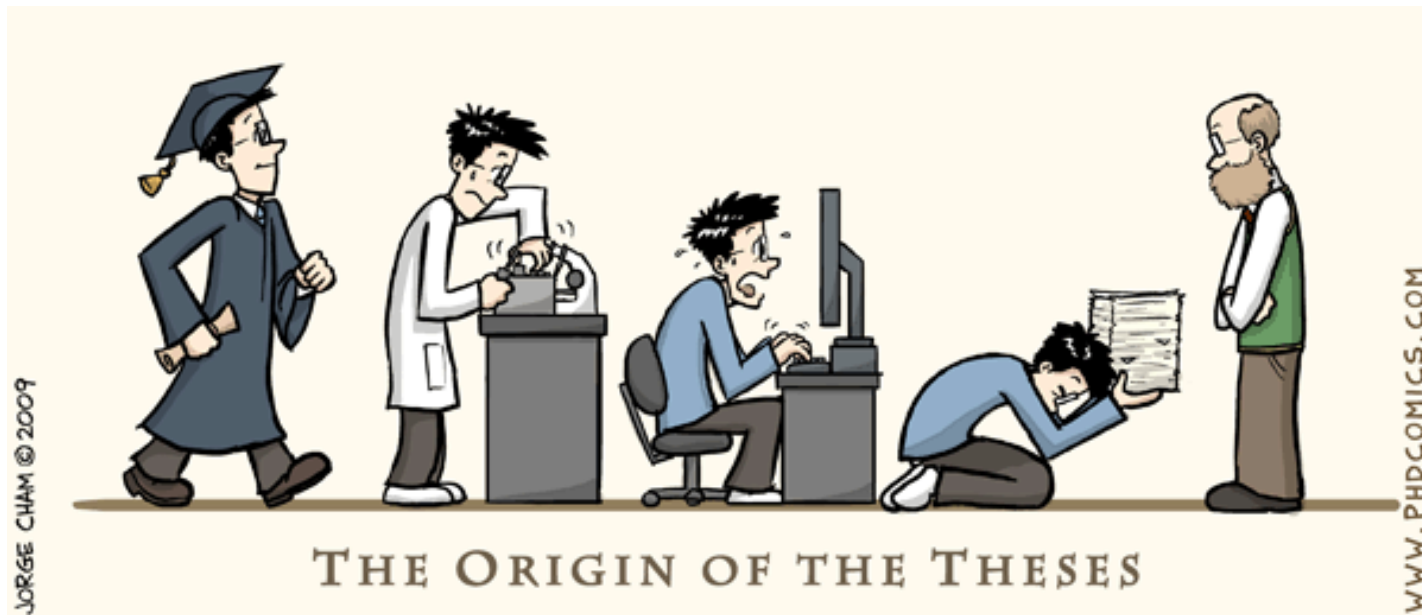
Hard work is essential...

ACADEMIA



WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

...but it pays off



The lab environment



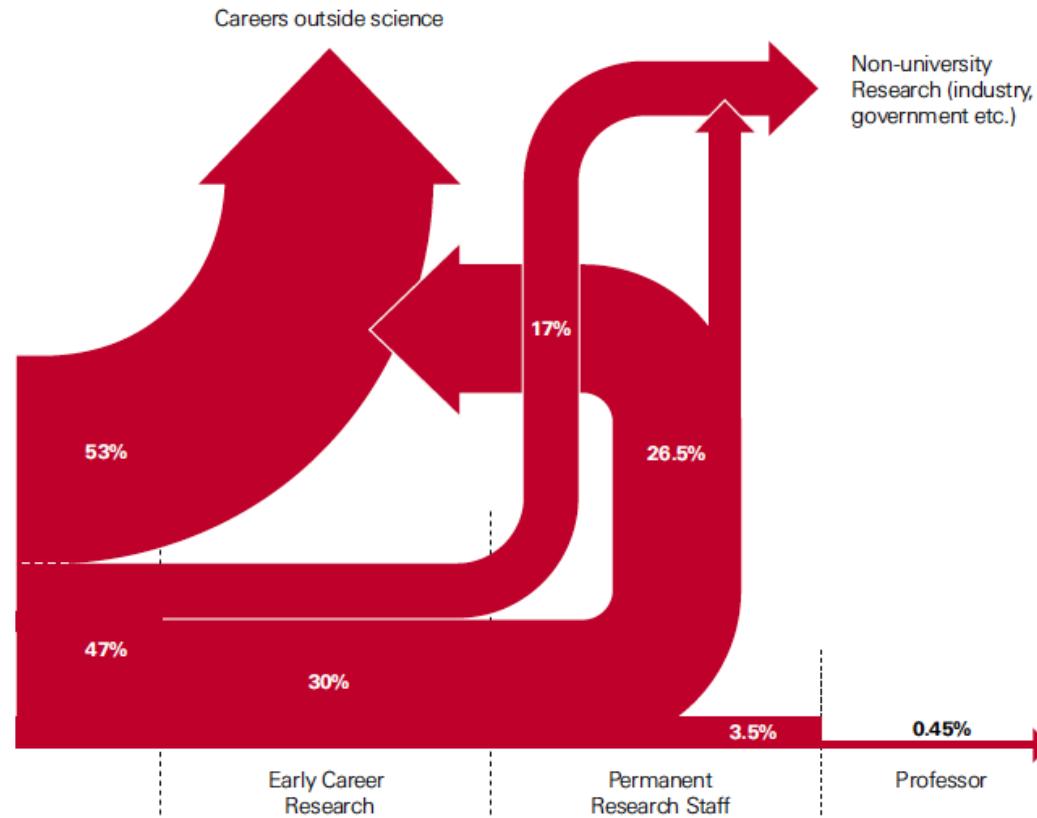
Along the way...



End of the journey?



What next?





Funding for PhDs in the Sciences

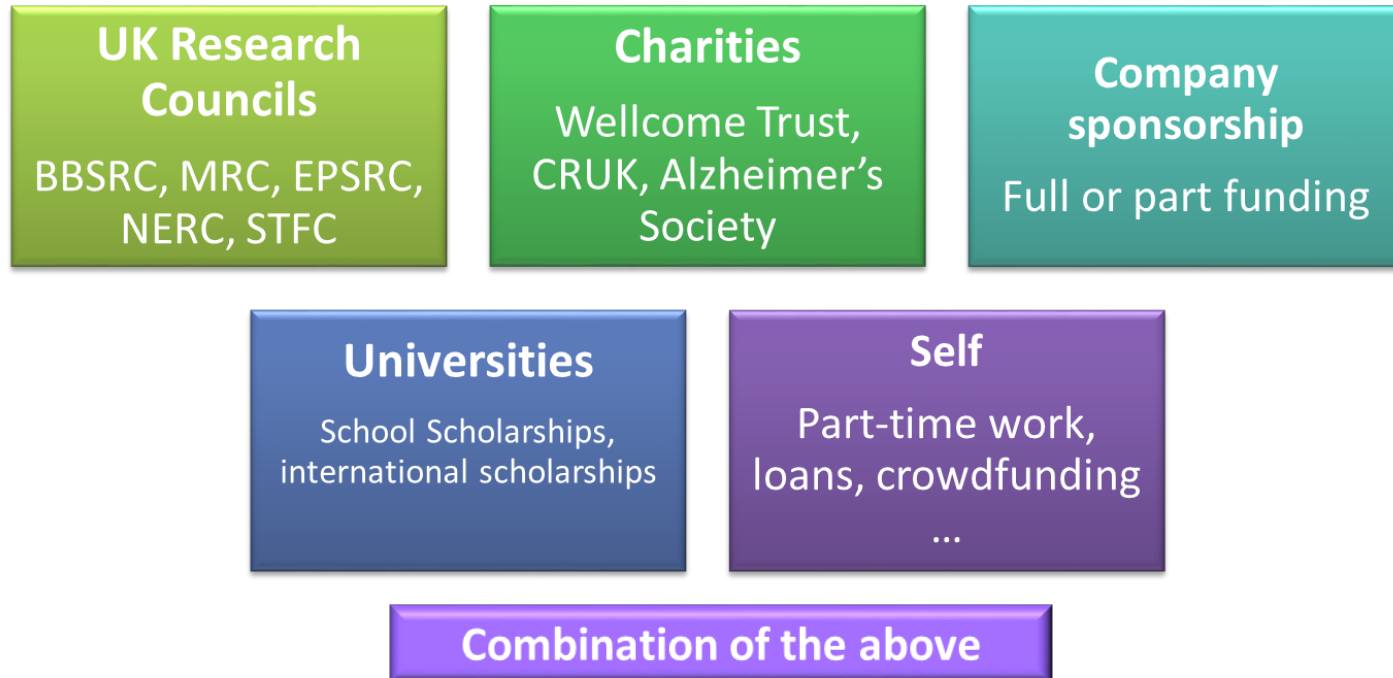
AMANDA BRITT
DOCTORAL SCHOOL

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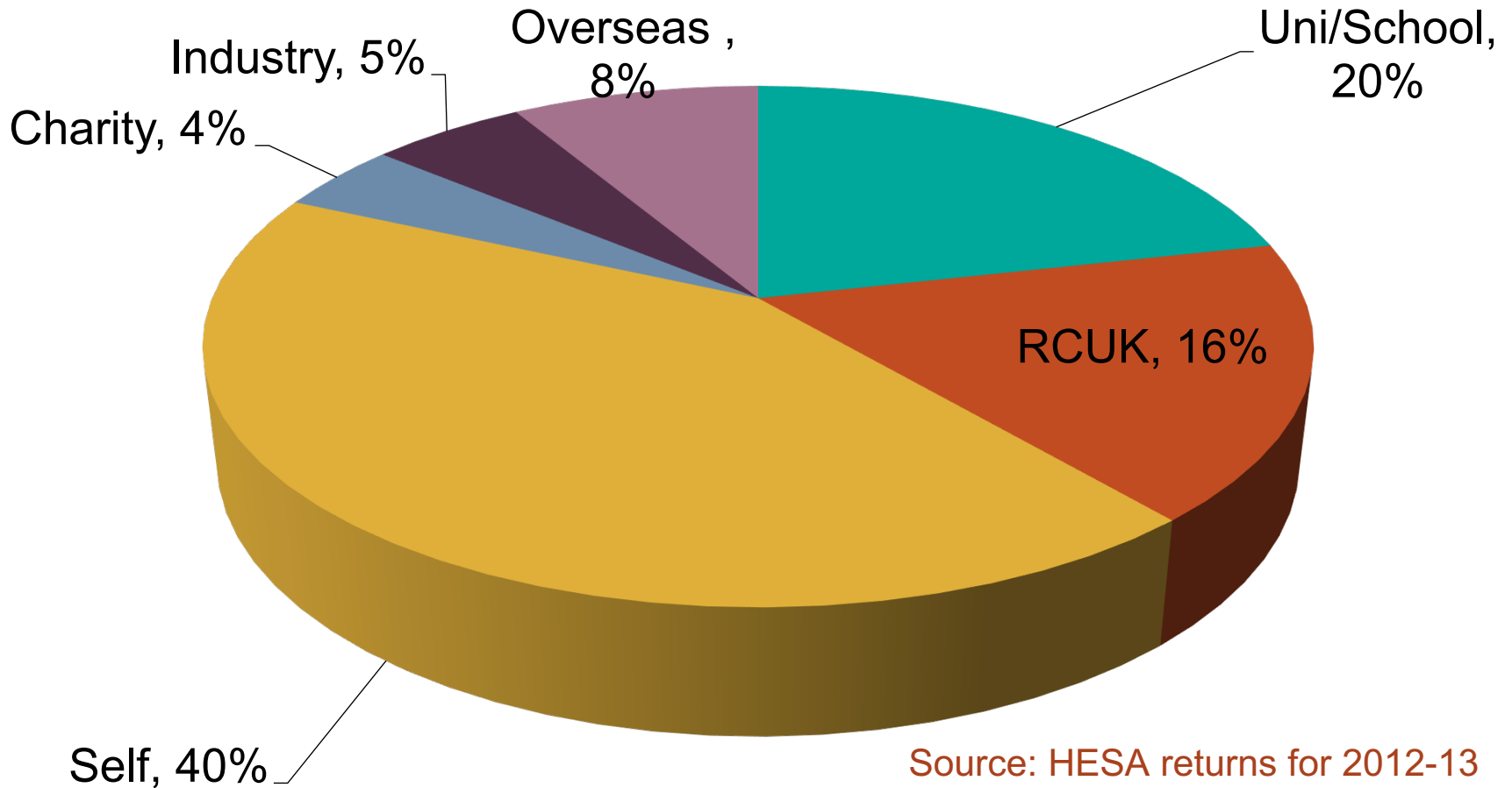
What do you need to fund a PhD?

- Doctoral fees – UK/EU £4,195 pa (2017-18) and overseas £19,200 pa (for 3, 3.5 or 4 years)
- Living costs – standard stipend currently £14,553 pa (2017-18)
- Research and training costs – e.g. lab consumables, conferences, travel... £1,650 - £5,000 pa

Who funds Science PhDs?



Who funds PhDs at UK Universities?



Source: HESA returns for 2012-13

Finding PhD Funding

Apply to the University not the funder

Sussex PhD Scholarship funding:

- <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/phd/fees-and-scholarships/scholarships/browse>

Other key sites: www.findaphd.com

- <http://www.postgraduatestudentships.co.uk/>
- <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/> <http://www.postgraduate-funding.com>

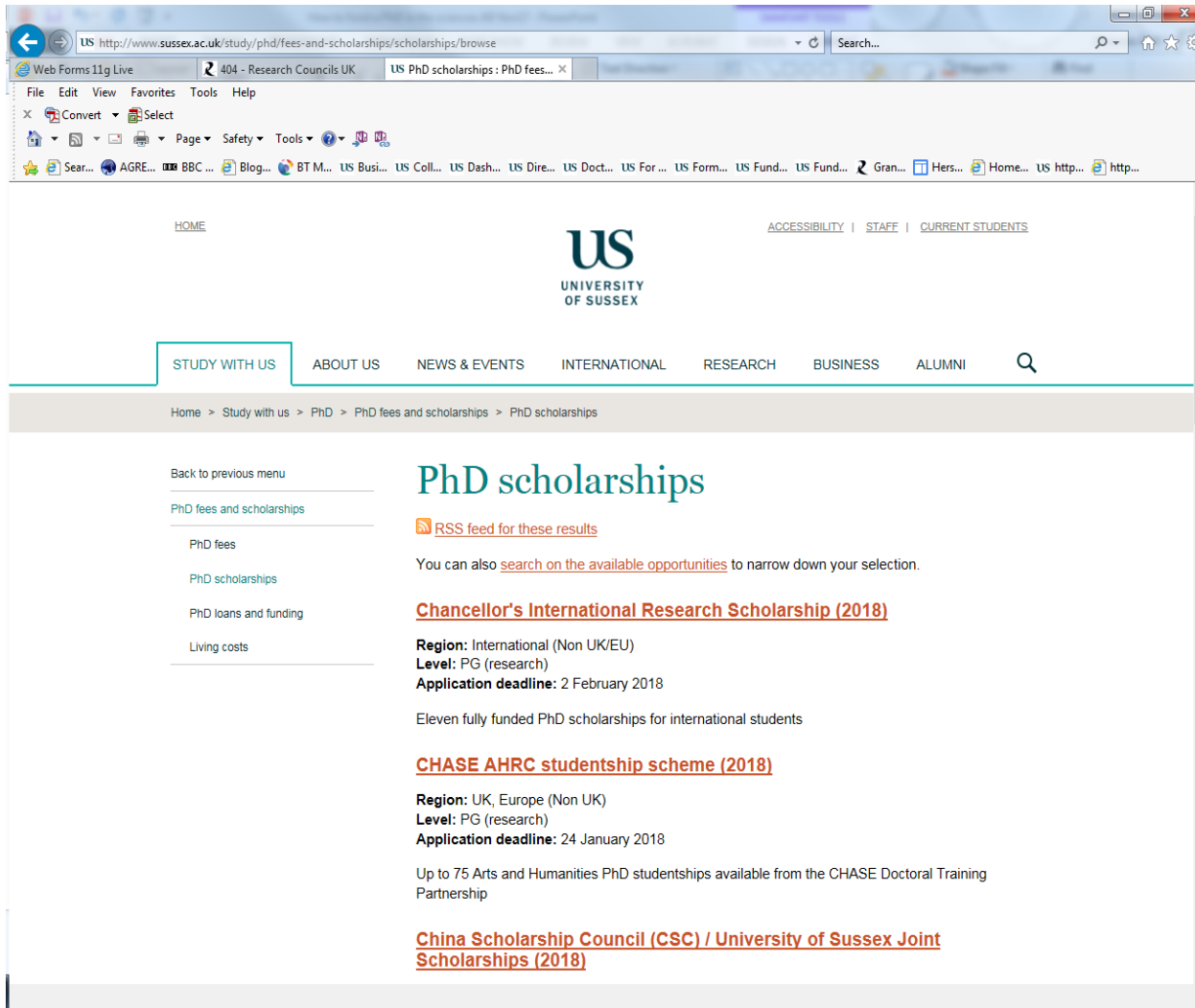
Science journals:

- <http://nature.com/naturejobs/science/>

Overseas Scholarships: schemes with China, Mexico, Chile

Sussex PhD Scholarships

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/phd/fees-and-scholarships/scholarships>



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the University of Sussex website. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/study/phd/fees-and-scholarships/scholarships/browse>. The website header includes the University of Sussex logo and navigation links for HOME, ACCESSIBILITY, STAFF, and CURRENT STUDENTS. A main navigation menu is visible with options: STUDY WITH US, ABOUT US, NEWS & EVENTS, INTERNATIONAL, RESEARCH, BUSINESS, and ALUMNI. A breadcrumb trail indicates the current page: Home > Study with us > PhD > PhD fees and scholarships > PhD scholarships.

On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with the following items: Back to previous menu, PhD fees and scholarships, PhD fees, PhD scholarships, PhD loans and funding, and Living costs. The 'PhD scholarships' item is highlighted.

The main content area features the heading 'PhD scholarships' with an RSS feed icon and the text 'RSS feed for these results'. Below this, it states: 'You can also [search on the available opportunities](#) to narrow down your selection.'

Three scholarship listings are shown:

- [Chancellor's International Research Scholarship \(2018\)](#)**
Region: International (Non UK/EU)
Level: PG (research)
Application deadline: 2 February 2018
Eleven fully funded PhD scholarships for international students
- [CHASE AHRC studentship scheme \(2018\)](#)**
Region: UK, Europe (Non UK)
Level: PG (research)
Application deadline: 24 January 2018
Up to 75 Arts and Humanities PhD studentships available from the CHASE Doctoral Training Partnership
- [China Scholarship Council \(CSC\) / University of Sussex Joint Scholarships \(2018\)](#)**

Scholarships for 2018-19 start

- School Scholarships from the Schools of:
 - Maths, Physics and Astronomy (late January 2018 deadline)
 - Psychology (Jan 2018 deadline)
 - Engineering and Informatics (deadlines vary)
 - Life Sciences (December 1st earliest deadline)
- Sussex Neuroscience 4-year PhD Programme (Jan 8th 2018)
- EPSRC scholarships (chemistry, engineering, computing, quantum physics, maths) – advertised spring 2018
- STFC scholarships (astronomy and particle physics) + SEPnet data science studentships
- Alzheimer's Society Doctoral Training Centre (psychology and biochemistry)
- Sussex China Scholarships 2nd February 2018 in all disciplines.

International Students

- **Chancellor's International Research Scholarships 2018**

- Up to 11 PhD scholarships for overseas students

www.sussex.ac.uk/study/phd/fees-and-scholarships/scholarships/view/795

- **China Scholarship Council (CSC) / University of Sussex Joint Scholarships (2018)**

- Up to 10 PhD scholarships for Chinese students

www.sussex.ac.uk/study/phd/fees-and-scholarships/scholarships/view/796

Briefing in **Jubilee Lecture Theatre** 7.10 to 7.30 this evening

Employment and Other Funding

- Talk to your employer and consider:
 - A part-time doctorate (available in certain subjects)
 - A secondment to complete a PhD
 - The Sussex Collaborative Doctoral Scholarships where a company and the University pays 50% each

The **Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding** is a searchable database of smaller scholarships with tips for applications.



Part-time employment

- Many postgraduates take paid employment while pursuing their studies
- University employment opportunities – e.g. small amounts of teaching
- With a thriving tourist industry, Brighton is an ideal place to earn extra money to support your studies
- Non-EU students can usually work up to 20 hours each week in term time and full-time in vacations
- Full-time Research Council students should undertake no more than 180 hours work per annum
- Jobs are regularly posted on our Careers and Employability Centre website:

www.sussex.ac.uk/careers

UK PhD loans for 2018

- PhD loans of up to £25,000 are now available to self-funded UK students on **all types of doctorate** at **universities across the UK**.

UK PhD Loans - updated details	
What?	Student loans for PhD-level qualifications lasting up to six years in all subjects.
How much?	Up to £25,000, not means-tested.
Who?	English-resident UK nationals aged 59 or under without Research Council studentships.
Where?	Any UK university.
When?	Available in 2018.
Repayment?	6% of income over £21,000 per year. Combined with Masters loan debt.

www.findaphd.com/funding/guides/uk-phd-loans-scheme.aspx

- **Career development loans** (up to £10k) for UK-based students are available to pay for courses and training that help with your career or help get you into work

www.gov.uk/career-development-loans

Thank you

Email: a.d.britt@sussex.ac.uk



Applying for PhD study

Miles Willey
Head of Research Student Administration

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When to apply to Sussex

- You can begin your PhD in September, January or May
- The online application system is open all year round
- Make sure you look out for funding deadlines:
 - The main bulk of Research Council 'Doctoral Training Partnerships' are open between October 2017 and January 2018 – however,
 - Individual Studentships are advertised through the year
- If you are an international student, leave at least three months before start dates to apply for your visa to study in the UK.

Where to apply (1)

Psychology PhD

Choose to start in September 2018, January 2019 or May 2019

[Start in the academic year 2017/18 instead?](#)

Key information

Entry requirements

How to apply

Our supervisors

Funding and fees

EXPLORE OUR RESEARCH

Key information

Duration: 4 years full time, [6 years part time](#)

Start date: Choose to start in September 2018, January 2019 or May 2019

From crowd behaviour to perception and studies of the brain – you'll work with experts who will guide and support you through your research project.

Sussex is one of the largest and most diverse centres for the study of psychology in the UK. You'll work in an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment, within a community of postgraduate students, postdoctoral researchers and field-leading faculty.



Where to apply (2)

[HOME](#)



[ACCESSIBILITY](#) | [STAFF](#) | [CURRENT STUDENTS](#)

[STUDY WITH US](#)

[ABOUT US](#)

[NEWS & EVENTS](#)

[INTERNATIONAL](#)

[RESEARCH](#)

[BUSINESS](#)

[ALUMNI](#)



[Home](#) > [Study with us](#) > [PhD](#) > [How to apply for a PhD](#)

[Back to previous menu](#)

[How to apply for a PhD](#)

[Entry requirements for UK applicants](#)

[Entry requirements for international applicants](#)

[Tips for applying for a PhD at Sussex](#)

[Your offer and confirming your place](#)

[Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\)](#)

[Admissions policies for PhD degrees](#)

How to apply for a PhD

We are looking for ambitious, talented and motivated students. You'll have the passion to make new discoveries, the drive to test new theories, and the willingness to go above and beyond.



How do I apply?

For most of our PhD degrees you apply using our online application service.

You can [set up an account](#) or [log in to start your application](#).



Entry requirements

- Our courses require either a first or upper second class undergraduate honours degree in a relevant subject area
- Many courses also require an MA or an MSc, or evidence of work experience/further study in the subject area
- Specific English language requirements for each course are listed in our prospectus, and University of Sussex doctoral courses online

What should your application include?

Completing the application form

Follow our guidance to help you complete each section of the application form:

Personal details +

Address +

Education and qualifications +

English language +

Relevant experience +

Supporting documents and references ×

You must provide:

- research proposal
- degree certificates
- transcript of your grades
- your English language qualification, if appropriate
- two academic references - including one from your most recent university. Or you can provide contact details for your referee and we will email them.

Academic interests +

Submitting the application +

Monitoring the application +

Submitting more than one application +

Choosing a supervisor

COURSE	FACULTY	ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	SCHOLARSHIPS AND FEES
<h2>How to apply</h2> <p>If you'd like to join us as a research student, there are two main routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ browse scholarships and funded projects in this subject area■ find a potential supervisor and propose your own research project. <p>Find out how to apply for a PhD at Sussex</p>			

EXPLORE OUR RESEARCH

COME TO OUR OPEN EVENING

Faculty

Explore our research interests and find a potential supervisor.

ATOMIC, MOLECULAR AND OPTICAL PHYSICS	+
EXPERIMENTAL PARTICLE PHYSICS	+
THEORETICAL PARTICLE PHYSICS	+

HOMEUS UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEXACCESSIBILITY | STAFF | CURRENT STUDENTS

STUDY WITH USABOUT USNEWS & EVENTSINTERNATIONALRESEARCHBUSINESSALUMNIQ

Home > About us > Schools and departments > School of Life Sciences > Research

Homepage

About the School

Undergraduate

Postgraduate

Research

News and events

Seminars

Showcase

People and contacts

School of Life Sciences

Research

Research lies at the heart of the School of Life Sciences and underpins our outstanding Undergraduate and Postgraduate taught courses, and our vibrant programme of Postgraduate Research.

Life Sciences' research activities are organized around five subject group

- [Biochemistry and Biomedicine](#)
- [Chemistry](#)
- [Evolution behaviour and environment](#)
- [Genome damage and stability](#)
- [Neuroscience](#)

However, collaboration and cross-disciplinary research cut across these groups at all levels. Our collaborations extend to other Schools in the University, including the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, and to other Universities and Research Institutes world-wide.

If you are a postdoctoral researcher please refer to the [research staff page](#) which has comprehensive information about all aspects of being a member of research staff at Sussex including information about careers, funding, practical support and policies.

Institutional Strategic Support Fund

The Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF) is a joint award by the [Wellcome Trust](#) and the University, to support our translational research strategy.

Research Groups

- [Dementia Research Group](#)
- [Energy and Materials Chemistry](#)
- [Evolution Research Group](#)
- [Gene Expression Research Group](#)
- [Laboratory of Apiculture and Social Insects \(LASI\)](#)
- [Neurodegenerative Disease and Ageing Research Centre](#)

Research Centres

- [Genome Damage and Stability Centre](#)
- [Centre for Computational Neuroscience and Robotics](#)
- [Sussex Neuroscience](#)
- [Sussex Drug Discovery Centre](#)

Facilities and Resources

In Life Sciences we have the following facilities.

- [Electron Microscopy](#)
- [Mass Spectrometry](#)

Choosing a supervisor

- Once you have identified a potential supervisor, make contact and discuss your proposed project with them
- Take their advice: they will be part of the decision on whether to offer you a place at Sussex (and you will need to get used to them offering you advice throughout your studies...)
- It is important to build up a relationship with your supervisor as early as possible
- Your supervisors will ultimately be appointed by the relevant School depending on your specific project and their expertise.

Selection process

- Your academic and English language qualifications as well as your fee status (whether you should be paying Home or Overseas tuition fees) will be assessed by admissions staff
- Your research proposal and personal statement will be assessed by academic staff in the relevant School of study
- You will probably be invited for an interview
- You should expect to hear back from us within 8 weeks of submitting your application.

What is selection based on?

- Previous qualifications, or professional equivalence
- A topic the University is able to Supervise
- A topic with sufficient depth to produce new knowledge (a Doctorate)
- Background knowledge of the proposed topic and why it should be investigated
- Motivation: why Sussex and why a PhD / Professional Doctorate?

Queries

- For technical queries, contact:
onlineapplications@sussex.ac.uk
- For queries about your application, contact
researchstudentoffice@sussex.ac.uk
- Admissions information desk in Jubilee G32.

Good luck!

Miles Willey
Head of Research Student
Administration
m.willey@sussex.ac.uk

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Life as a PhD Student

Mahmoud Bukar Maina



Mahmoud Bukar Maina

Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience

**“From the chromatin to protein synthesis: The role of Glutamate,
Amyloid beta and Tau in Alzheimer’s disease”**

A typical Week as a PhD Student

➤ Experiments

(Home – Lab – Experiments – Lunch – Experiments – Reading – Home)

➤ Experiments

(Home – Lab – Reading – Experiments – Lunch – Experiments – Sports – Home)

➤ Experiments

(Home – Lab – Reading – Lunch – Reading – Social – Home)

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➤ Experiments

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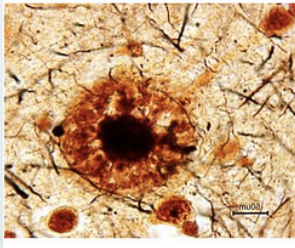
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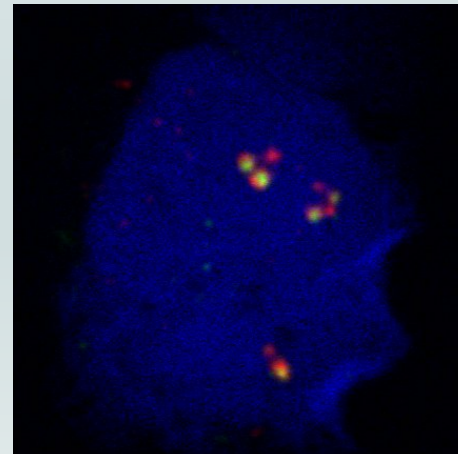
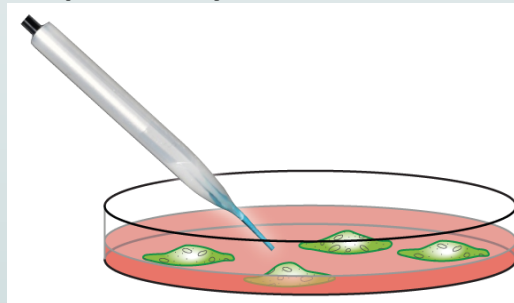
➤ Experiments

(Home – Lab – Reading – Lunch – Reading – Social – Home)

Amyloid Plaques



Prepared amyloid



Challenges of doing a PhD

- **More independence, unlike bachelor's or master's degree**
 - **Managing your time**
 - **Experiments don't always work**
 - **Can become repetitive and occasionally boring**
 - **Balancing your work with friends/family**
 - **Publishing & Reviewers**

Rewards of doing a PhD

- **Makes you confident in yourself**
 - **Discovering new things and making contribution to knowledge**
 - **Meeting and learning from others**
 - **Attending conferences and meeting top guys in the field**
 - **Grants, Publishing & Outreach Activities**

Some Experience

Football Group

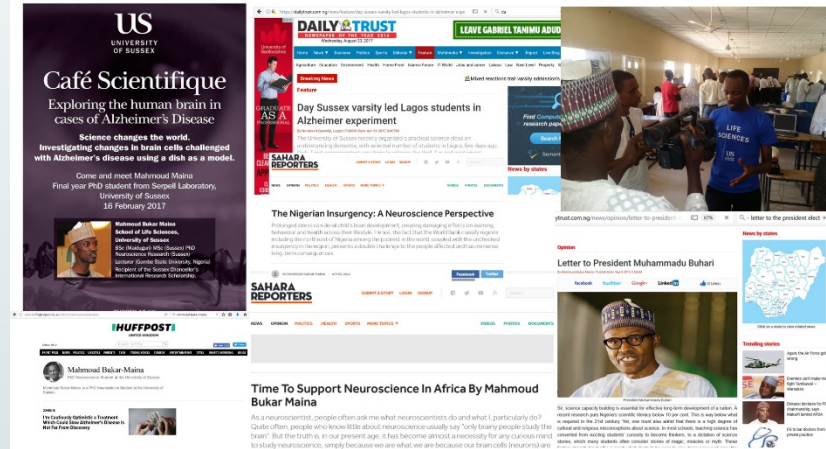


Islamic Society



Nigerian Society





TROND Outreach Team



Nigeria outreach spree continues!

Our outreach coordinator Mahmoud has been on an outreach spree the past few weeks, from Lagos to Yobe State, Nigeria. He and his team are inspiring future generation of African Scientists through hands-on activities ranging from protein assays, fly fractionation, DNA modelling to cell modelling. During these events, student from nine (9) secondary schools learned to conduct experiments and present their findings, with quiz competition at the end, for which, the top schools received microscopes as prizes. More to follow soon!



Share this:



Uganda 2017

