

Diversity of Career Pathways in Science Symposium

RLI Evaluation – [REDACTED]

A one day symposium to celebrate and promote the diverse career paths, titled “Life and a career in Science” was held on March 8th 2017 as a joint venture between the School of Life Sciences and BSMS. This event was held to give researchers and students an opportunity to hear from a diverse selection of individuals about their scientific careers and the paths they have followed. This was an important opportunity, particularly for early-career researchers, to gain perspective about the many options aside from the traditional academic career path which are available and often not well understood or discussed within a university setting.

An excellent group of speakers were selected (see the program below), with a good mix of external speakers and internal speakers from Life Sciences and BSMS. The speakers came from diverse backgrounds and well represent many of the career paths open to researchers. The talks allowed the speakers to discuss not only their current work but importantly the decisions made and paths taken to reach that point in their career, providing an insight into the realities of life in a scientific career. The event was well supported by the University, with sessions chaired by members of the School of Life Sciences and the opening remarks presented by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Adam Tickell.

The event organisation was carried out by a team headed by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from the School of Life Sciences. Working as a part of this team and being involved in this event has been a hugely valuable personal experience, as well as providing a welcome opportunity for other early-career researchers to develop their understanding of the opportunities available to them.

Registration was opened to students, postdoctoral researchers and academic staff across Life Sciences and BSMS. 150 people attended, including a group of 20 6th form students as a part of the Widening Participation program. The event was considered a success by the organisers and the questioned attendees. Feedback was positive, with the talks described as “inspiring” and “interesting”, as demonstrated by the selected comments:

“A truly inspirational day. I hope that I can one day share such valuable advice and insight into a happy and fulfilling career. Thank you all.”

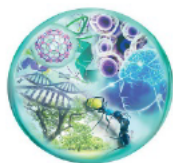
“Would recommend these talks to any postgraduate/undergraduate as a reassurance of ability when pursuing a career with HE qualifications. Such inspiring and diverse lives which all share one thing: PASSION.”

“Useful and informative day, with a really interesting group of speakers. Better than other similar events I have previously attended”

More detailed feedback is currently being collected through a short online survey of registered attendees, organised by BSMS. This data is not yet available for inclusion in this report.

In addition to the RLI award, this event was jointly funded by the School of Life Sciences, BSMS and Widening Participation. Funds from each source were pooled into a central budget code as they became available and were used collectively to cover the costs of the event. This included the travel expenses for the external speakers (in bold on the program), catering for the day and promotional materials. The administration of the event was carried out by the School of Life Sciences Office, with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in particular organising the budgeting and spending. The entire grant (£933) awarded from the RLI for this event was spent in this way.

This event was an exciting and valuable experience for both my personal career development and the career development of the wider early-career researcher community. I am grateful to the RLI fund for providing me with this opportunity.



Life and a Career in Science – 8th March 2017

9.30	Registration and tea/coffee
	Opening remarks and welcome by Professor Adam Tickell
	Professor Louise Serpell
	<i>Chairs: Professor Jonathan Bacon and Dr Ruth Murrell-Lagnado</i>
	Professor Melanie Welham - BBSRC
	Dr Louise Newnham
	Dr Shane Lo Fan Hin
11.05	Break
	Dr Hilde Lavreysen – Janssen Pharmaceutica
	Dr Jeremy Niven
	Professor Corinne Houart – King’s College, London
12.40 – 1.40	Lunch and slide presentation
	<i>Chairs: Professor Michelle West and Dr Erika Mancini</i>
	Dr Katy Petherick
	Professor Martin Gosling
	Dr Kiki Syrad – Great Ormond Street Hospital Children’s Charity
	Dr Lorraine Smith
2.50	Break
	Dr Arianne Heinrichs – Nature Reviews
	Dr Jorn Scharlemann
	Professor Gail Davey - BSMS
	Thanks and close - Professor Louise Serpell