



Post Doc Forum Meeting
Wednesday 28 March 2018, 12noon, FW11

Agenda

Membership

Daniel Bates	Ekaterina Kochmar
Alan Blackwell	Marwa Mahmoud
Claire Chapman (Secretary)	Andy Rice
David Chisnall	James Sharkey
Matt Danish	Zohreh Shams
Alice Hutchings	Caroline Stewart
Stephen Kell (Chair)	Noa Zilberman
Andrea Kells	

1. Apologies

Andrea Kells
Andy Rice

2. Welcome to James Sharkey and all RAs joining the open meeting

New members are invited to formally join the Forum from those attending this Open Meeting

3. Minutes of last minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held on 27 November 2017 are attached (2018-03-03)

4. Report on actions from last meeting

i. RA guidelines on applying for travel/conference funds in exceptional circumstances

Information is now included in the Wiseman Award scheme on the web.

<https://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/local/wiseman.html>

Can members suggest how this information can be made more visible?

ii. Finance Training for RAs and guidelines on Research Grants for web

Further discussion is needed as to what might be most valuable in terms of additions to the revised document. 4-5 volunteers are sought to meet together with Andrea Kells and Nicholas Ward to go through the draft document to identify any additions and further information needed.

iii. Cycle Parking

Proposals from MD and update on Cavendish Laboratory cycle shelter (CS)

iv. **How to improve the Progression of Post-docs beyond their current position in the Department**

a) Draft document of Post Doc career progression (2018-03-04iva) and proposed questionnaire (2018-03-04ivb) (ZS to report)

b) Tracking the career path of past student alumni (ZS to report)

Does this have any implications for the new Data Protection Act (CS to report)

v. **Admissions Selection help for Directors of Studies**

Publicising the date of Admissions Interview Training

Cecilia Mascolo and Andy Rice will hold a Computer Lab Undergraduate Admissions Training session on Friday 11 May, 1-4pm, FW11 which will qualify attendees to interview. This will run as part of the Research Skills Programme (bookable via Moodle under the ACS MPhil section). All PhD students and Post Docs are encouraged to attend.

5. Revising the naming of the Forum and its statement of purpose

Do members agree with the proposal to replace 'Post Doc Forum' with 'Research Staff Forum' and to be more explicit in the remit about the inclusion of Research Assistants in the mentoring scheme? (SK to report)

<https://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/local/committees/post-doc/>

6. Post Doc training fund

As of 02/04/18 all X5 costings under Directly Incurred Costs will now include a training budget of £500.00 per annum per Post Doc. This is mandated by the Research Operations Office and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

From October, grants will be billed against Post Doc attendance on internal training courses. There is no central way to track attendance of external events/courses so the recommendation is to check with/notify the PI before making a booking. Central guidance is still being sought and when clarification has been given, it will be circulated to all post docs. Do members have any concerns which need to be raised?

7. Lecturing opportunities for RAs, and what the Department might do to facilitate more of them.

Currently there is a little-publicised and quite restrictive department policy about guest (non-UTO) lecturers, but the reality is more complex. (SK to report)

8. Replacement of Chair for 2018-19

(SK to report)

9. Any other business

10. Date of next meeting

To be held in Michaelmas Term



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Computer Science
& Technology

Minutes of the meeting of the Post-Doc Forum held at 12noon on Monday 27 November 2017, in Room FW11, William Gates Building

Present: David Chisnall
 Claire Chapman (Secretary)
 Matthew Danish
 Musab Isah
 Stephen Kell (Chair)
 Andrea Kells
 Yousun Ko
 Ekaterina Kochmar
 Angeliki Koutsoukou-Argyrazi

Marwa Mahmoud
 Andy Rice
 Peter Robinson
 Mennan Selimi
 Zohreh Shams
 Sergei Skorobogatov
 Caroline Stewart
 Bihao Wang
 Noa Zilberman

1. Apologies

Daniel Bates
 Alice Hutchings

SK welcomed all post-docs to the first open meeting.

2. Minutes of last minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held on 3 July 2017 were approved.

3. Report on actions from last meeting

- i. **women@CL member who had not been appointed a mentor**
 CS still to follow this up.

Action: CS will continue to circulate the request for a mentee form to all new post-docs.

- ii. **RA guidelines on applying for travel/conference funds in exceptional circumstances**

CS reported that details of the Wiseman Award have been posted on the website which includes the possibility of the department contributing to travel/conferences for researchers who make a commendable contribution in the department.

Addendum: This item to remain on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting as to how this information can be made more visible to staff.

- iii. **Finance Training for RAs and guidelines on Research Grants for web**

Discussion took place on the previously circulated Financial Guidelines for post-docs produced by Nicholas Ward. NZ said that these are not departmental specific guidelines and apply to UTOs rather than the restrictions applied for post-docs. AK said the purpose of the document is to give new arrivals to the lab a general overview. SK proposed it would be helpful to run an interactive session for post-docs and AR suggested incorporating it into the Research Skills Programme. It was agreed we should hold a session in Lent Term to which all CL researchers would be invited to attend. The current document will be amended with NZs revisions and used as a working document in progress.

Action: AK and AR

4. Cycle Parking

Discussion took place on the pros and cons of introducing a card only access area in the bike shelter. It was agreed that the controlled card access would stop other university users using the shelter which would increase space. However, a fear of increased congestion levels at the access gates appeared to be one of the major concerns and it was felt that ease of access is crucial. There was missed feeling about whether we should have a lockable area. CS noted that variety of views made it difficult to move forward. MD agreed to produce some proposals and submit to CS for consideration via the relevant Committee.

Action: MD

5. Progression of postdocs in the Department

NZ requested it would be helpful for forum members to propose actions to improve the progression of postdocs beyond their current position in the Department. ZS agreed to produce an initial draft document.

It was questioned if data is collected on the career destination of past post-docs. CS said it is not done at a department level but we request completion of an exit survey available via the School of Technology office, which is submitted direct to the Human Resources Division. DC recommended that an exit interview with an academic in the Department who is not their PI/Line Manager should be held.

AR suggested we should ask Jan Samols about this as she tracks the career paths of past student alumni via *The Ring*. ZS will contact Jan Samols to find the best way forward.

MD cautioned that it may breach the new data protection law to collect this information and CS agreed to investigate the new guidelines.

Action: ZS and CS

6. Next Social Event for Mentors and Mentees

SK and DB will continue to lead these events. The week commencing 11/12/17 was proposed for the next social tea. It was agreed all lab post-docs should be invited and encouraged to attend. AKA agreed to assist SK as DB will be away. CC will order the refreshments.

Addendum: The date of Monday 11 December at 4pm has been agreed for the tea.

Action: CC

7. Any other business

- i. It was reported that a Research Assistant should be represented at the forum. AR suggested James Sharkey and SK will contact James to see if he would be willing to do this.

Action: SK and AR

- ii. Admissions Selection help for Directors of Studies
DC asked if post-docs can assist with College Admissions Interviews. He said it is compulsory that appropriate training is undertaken beforehand, but due to the infrequency of this training; it should be undertaken as far as advance as possible. This will ensure that assistance can be given in the 2018 admissions round. ACR agreed to advertise the next training course to post-docs so that they could train well in advance of next year's admissions. DoSs will be told they can call upon trained post-docs if they require help.

Action: DC/ACR

8. Date of next meeting

To be held in Lent Term and arranged by Doodle Poll.

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Postdoc Career Progression Report

Zohreh Shams and Noa Zilberman

March 15, 2018

Abstract

This document provides an overview of career progression support for postdocs in university and departmental level, and makes some recommendation about how this support can be enhanced.

1 What already exists

1.1 University level support

1. PPD: <https://www.training.cam.ac.uk/cppd>
2. Career service for postdocs: <http://www.careers.cam.ac.uk/pdoc/>
3. PdOC: e.g., College Affiliation Guide: https://www.pdoc.cam.ac.uk/guides/PdOC_College_Affiliation
4. OPdA: e.g.,
teaching (<https://www.opda.cam.ac.uk/career-development/teaching-opportunities>)
and funding opportunities (<https://www.opda.cam.ac.uk/career-development/funding>)
5. Postdoc induction event

1.2 Departmental support

1. Mentoring scheme
 - Ring
 - women@CL
 - Postdoc mentoring scheme (for newcomers)
2. Tailored talks: e.g., Successful scholarship applications and Career panel¹

2 What can be added

1. Welcome event in the lab: they can be conducted once a year in October, something like women@cl welcome event
2. Social and research events with industrial researchers (arm, MSR, Amazon, etc.): We have talked to Jan Samols about whether companies in supporters' club might be interested in such events and how such events can be organised. She does think they would be of interest to some of the Supporters - especially if postdocs are receptive to recruitment opportunities. However, prior to investigating possibilities with companies further, she wants to know if there are specific research groups that would be particularly interested in events. She can then see if companies are interested in hosting a talk/workshop etc which could also include time for networking.
3. CS-specific career workshops: We have talked to postdocs' career advisors¹ to see if we can run some events in collaboration with them. These events can include

¹These events were both organised by women@CL and they were not specific to postdocs.

- high level information such as what are the career paths for the postdoc, which will be delivered by career advisors; and
 - more specific discussions and panels about specific career paths for postdocs in CS (e.g., consultancy, industrial research, etc.). The panelists are most likely previous postdocs who moved on to careers close to the theme of the event.
4. Exchange with other (sister) universities to for example, circulate available job adverts and organise networking events
 5. Wiki-like page for postdocs, including all university and departmental resources related to career progression, e.g.,
 - getting involved in teaching
 - getting college affiliation
 - career progression, e.g., promotion
 - from RA to SRA
 - from RA/SRA to fellowship
 - to UTO

3 Questionnaire

We are proposing to send out a questionnaire to postdocs, with the aim of answering the following questions:

1. Are postdocs aware of the resources available for their career progression at university and departmental level?
2. Which of the recommendations in Section 2 are of interest?
3. Which research groups might be more keen on exploring industrial opportunities offered by supporters' club?

A draft of the questionnaire can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdzLVVv4VGhUKK-kbTfBtznjjJDCo-4MAyVBhpg/viewform?c=0&w=1>

Postdoc Career Progression

What is your research area? (e.g., the research group are you in)

How many years of postdoctoral experience do you have?

Are you familiar or have you used any of these services/events in the past?

Personal and Professional Development (PPD) training programs

Career service for postdocs

Postdocs of Cambridge Society (PdOC)

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPdA)

Postdoc induction event

Departmental postdoc mentoring scheme

Departmental postdoc social tea event

Are you interested in any of the following services or attending any of the events?

Show and tell research events (industrial and postdoc tailored)

Show and tell research events (academic)

Social and networking events (industrial)

Social and networking events (academic)

Mailing list for academic job ads

Wikipage including all university level and departmental resources related to postdocs

Special theme discussion panels (e.g. successful fellowship applications)

Expression of interest in getting involved in the organisation of any service/event listed above:

Further suggestions about enhancing postdoc career progression support: