Welcome to April’s newsletter!! Spring is most definitely in the air and as the College closes for the Easter break, we hope everyone is looking forward to a well-earned rest and that you don’t eat too much chocolate.....

For more information about the Postdoc Development Centre (PDC) please visit our [website](#), follow us on Twitter [ImperialPDC](#) or contact us with any queries. Note that information about grants and fellowships is posted on our Twitter feed.

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**PDC IN FOCUS: Research Professional**

*Research Professional*

*Looking for a fellowship but don’t know which ones are available in your field? Want to improve your CV by applying for funding such as travel grants but don’t know what’s out there?*

If you have ever asked yourself any of these questions then [Research Professional](#) will give you the answers. It is an online resource, to which the College has subscribed, which has links to thousands of open calls from global funders. It allows you to make customised alerts to ensure you never miss a new funding call, including upcoming fellowships and travel grants. All you need to do is sign up from a College computer using your Imperial email address.

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**1. The PDC: Five year review – 2011 to 2016**

The PDC undertook a five year review in 2016. Below is the executive summary of the report.

The Postdoc Development Centre (PDC) offers bespoke development opportunities to maximise the potential of Imperial postdocs and fellows.
The PDC is the only institute of its kind in the UK, and is sector leading in defining best practice for the support and development of postdocs and fellows. Through its unique position at Imperial, the PDC provides training to fellows and postdocs on career progression, skills training, and application support. Ongoing engagement with both internal and external committees ensures that the PDC maintains its cutting edge.

**Over the past five years, the PDC has offered 2038 services for 9584 participants.**

PDC staff are involved in national and international networks to share and develop best practice. In addition, the Head of the PDC routinely provides expert advice to other institutions, and is a national representative on major funding bodies. The PDC is regularly consulted for its expertise.

Determined to maintain and build on its outstanding provision, the PDC is responsive to the needs of postdocs and fellows, and continuously scans the horizon for new developments. The PDC seeks out and acts upon feedback from postdocs and fellows, both formally (e.g. through the PDC Advisory Committee or via surveys and focus groups), and through informal discussions. The PDC has launched several new initiatives to refresh and renew its provision based on this feedback, including pop-up workshops, funders showcases, and the creation of new courses.

Postdocs at Imperial benefit from ten days training and development in their contracts, which has been championed by the PDC persistently over the past five years. In addition to the comprehensive programme of support provided through courses and workshops, postdocs and fellows at Imperial benefit from tailored support for individuals (e.g. one-to-one appointments and mock interviews), a Reps Network that reaches every department, and academic champions. By developing innovative services, the PDC has seen substantial growth in the number of postdocs reached. In 2011-12, 760 participants attended courses, workshops, and residential programmes, while in 2015-16, 904 postdocs and fellows participated in these services.

Similarly, the PDC’s outstanding provision of individual support has grown considerably, which has been supported by the creation of an Advisor position.

- In 2011-12, the PDC offered 193 one-to-one meetings and 80 mock interviews.
- By 2015-16 this number grew to 277 one-to-one meetings and 103 mock interviews.
Other areas of growth include the Fellows Forum and committee meetings, as well as the Junior Research Fellow programme, for which both the cohort and the number of activities has increased.

One of the reasons the PDC has made a significant and sustained impact is through the partnership building activities undertaken by the Head of the Centre. Support for postdocs is championed by the PDC through regular meetings with Heads of Departments and senior academics so that both postdocs and principal investigators are aware of and use the services available. Being a postdoc is not a career, and the programme of support provided by the PDC to this unique staff group at Imperial College has contributed to successful Athena SWAN applications at both the College and departmental level. The PDC aims to maintain its leading edge activities while sustaining growth in provision in 2016-17.

**Key Recommendations**

Detailed recommendations for each programme are summarised in Table 31. Key themes that emerge from this review indicate that the PDC should:

- Work to better meet the needs of fellows
- Develop additional support for postdocs who plan to leave academia
- Continue to be a cutting-edge department by engaging with national and international networks
- Continue to invest in ensuring all postdocs and fellows are aware of the PDC’s services, both through engagement activities such as the newsletter, and through departmental contacts
- Continue to offer the same volume of services (see Table 2)
- Improve administrative support for complex programmes (e.g. JRFs)
- Consider additional data tracking for postdocs through cohort studies or follow-up surveys for key programmes
- Choose selective areas for growth, as the PDC is stretched with its current programmes and staff
- Continue to respond iteratively to feedback
- Undertake an annual review to ensure recommendations are implemented and a high level of service is maintained

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 2 Annual Benchmarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>• 80 mock interviews</td>
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<td>• 250 one-to-one meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 45 meetings with JRFs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 900 participants on courses</td>
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<td>• 650 participants on workshops</td>
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<td>• 6 Reps Network Meetings</td>
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<td>• 45 events in departments</td>
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<td>• Termly meetings with the Postdoc Champions</td>
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### 2. Funders Showcase

**Funders Showcase - EPSRC**  
**Thursday 27 April 2017, 10:00 – 11:30, South Kensington Campus**

The event will include:

- A talk from Renee van de Locht, a representative from EPSRC – who will give details about the fellowships they offer and the application process
- Discussion with a current EPSRC fellow at Imperial – who will give a personal perspective of the application process
- A panel Q&A which is composed of the above. The panel will be able to answer your questions and provide hints and tips on successful applications

Come along to find out about the available fellowship schemes and to get advice on how to make your application successful.

To register for this Funders Showcase, please complete the [Qualtrics form](#).
3. Postdoc Reps – Upcoming Events

Have you met your departmental postdoc rep?
Do you know what events are being organised by postdoc reps for your department or campus?

If not, get involved and take a look at some of the upcoming events taking place across the College.

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10 May 2017, 15:00 - 16:00, G62 Committee Room, St Mary’s Campus

Want to find out how does the Pensions Scheme work?
How to prepare and secure your pensions when you move to another country?
What is the process to if you move to another job within the UK?
How can I save extra (tax-free) money for my retirement?

In this interactive pop-up given by our Pensions Scheme Officers, you will get a brief introduction on how the Pensions Scheme works. You will be able to ask all your questions including how to save extra money for your retirement and how to secure your Pensions after moving from Imperial. This session especially organised and tailored for PostDocs will give you the unique opportunity to get answers on what you always wanted to know about the Pensions Scheme to make the most out of it for your future retirement!

To register for this workshop, please complete this Eventbrite form.

Please contact your departmental rep if you have any suggestions or issues you would like them to raise at the next Postdoc Reps Network Meeting which will take place on 30 June 2017.

4. Is your thesis prize worthy?

Submissions are now open for 2017 entries.
For the fifth year in a row, the Science and SciLifeLab Prize for Young Scientists offers four recent PhDs a career-making opportunity. Could you (or your grad student) be one of them?

Recent doctoral graduates in the life sciences may submit a 1000-word essay based on their thesis work. Four winners, in different categories, will be selected for this international award.

**Application deadline: July 15, 2017**

The winners will:
- Be published by Science
- Receive up to 30,000 USD in prize money
- Be honored in Stockholm, Sweden during Nobel week

**Categories:**
Cell and Molecular Biology | Ecology and Environment
Genomics and Proteomics | Translational Medicine

5. **Wellcome Public Engagement Masterclass**

Wellcome Public Engagement Masterclass
Monday 26 – Wednesday 28 June 2017 (residential course)
Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton, Cambridge CB10 1RQ

The Masterclass will inspire and support you to develop an impactful, personalised and proactive public engagement plan. Under the guidance of public engagement professionals, you will explore the dynamics of engaging with different public groups. You’ll also be introduced to a range of tools to better measure the real impact of your public engagement activities.

The course combines mentoring and networking with public engagement professionals and funders, alongside workshop-style sessions, individual reflections, panel discussions and short talks. It will enhance your academic and transferable skills, including communication, team-working, inter-disciplinary collaboration, creative thinking and project management.

Cost: £545. A full bursary is available to Wellcome funded researchers to cover course fees and travel expenses.

Find out more and register [here](#).
6. University of Sheffield Researchers ask ‘is your PhD of value to you post-graduation’

Is your PhD of value to you post-graduation?

The University of Sheffield are trying to answer this question through recruiting people who can tell them how valuable their doctorate has been to them, in the years since they graduated. This ongoing research aims to address the underexplored concept of how doctoral graduates perceive the value of their doctoral study post-graduation.

If you would like to take part, please click here to read the study information sheet for participants and, if you are happy to proceed, the 10-15min survey can be found here.

The survey closes on Wednesday 31 May 2017 at 17:00.

7. Postdoc Development Centre Courses

Below is a list of courses with available places over the next few months. Please follow the links to sign up or email PDC-Support with any queries. Additionally, details about all of our courses are available on our website, including a calendar of courses for 2016-17.

25 April  Getting Your Next Job (Postdocs in Life Sciences & Medicine)
10 May  Making the Most of Your Postdoc
15 May  Interviewing for a Position outside Academia
16 May  Lectureship CVs: What You Need to be Working Towards Now to Succeed in 5 Years
24 May  Interviewing for an Academic Position
02 June  Time Management for Postdocs
09 June  Innovation and Industry: Effective Project Implementation
16 June  Science Communication: Reaching a Wider Audience
23 June  Writing Tools for Research Publication Success
27 June  Voice Projection for Effective Lecturing
05 July  Great Presentations for Great Results

pdc-support@imperial.ac.uk  www.imperial.ac.uk/pdc/