

How to be a strong applicant

Practical advice for undergraduate and master's students on writing applications and interview skills for postgraduate scholarships

Wednesday 4 November 2020, 13.00-16.00

MS Teams Live Event – [click to join the event as an attendee](#)

PROGRAMME

<p>13.00-13.10 Welcome and overview of how the afternoon will work</p>	<p>Prof Laki Buluwela FoM Academic Lead for Doctoral Degrees Programme Director for Imperial Medical Research Council Doctoral Training Programme (MRC DTP Studentships)</p>		
<p>13.10-13.40 Short presentations</p>	<p>Dr Liz Elvidge, Head, Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre (PFDC) The Rules of the Game</p> <p>Ms Victoria Sood, Careers Consultant, Imperial Careers Service Communicating with impact: using positive language to persuade and inform</p>		
<p>13.40-13.50 Panel Introductions</p>	<p>Meet the panel All panel members</p>		
<p>13.50-14.00 Break</p>	<p>10-minute break</p>		
<p>Panel members:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Prof Eric Aboagye, Professor of Cancer Pharmacology & Molecular Imaging Department of Surgery and Cancer</p> <p>Prof Laki Buluwela, Academic Lead for Doctoral Degrees Faculty of Medicine</p> <p>Dr Liz Elvidge, Head, PFDC Imperial Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Prof Myra McClure, Professor of Retrovirology Department of Infectious Disease</p> <p>Dr Sophie Rutschmann, Senior Lecturer Department of Immunology and Inflammation</p> <p>Ms Victoria Sood, Careers Consultant Imperial Careers Service</p> <p>Prof Alan Spivey, Professor of Synthetic Chemistry Department of Chemistry</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Prof Eric Aboagye, Professor of Cancer Pharmacology & Molecular Imaging Department of Surgery and Cancer</p> <p>Prof Laki Buluwela, Academic Lead for Doctoral Degrees Faculty of Medicine</p> <p>Dr Liz Elvidge, Head, PFDC Imperial Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre</p>	<p>Prof Myra McClure, Professor of Retrovirology Department of Infectious Disease</p> <p>Dr Sophie Rutschmann, Senior Lecturer Department of Immunology and Inflammation</p> <p>Ms Victoria Sood, Careers Consultant Imperial Careers Service</p> <p>Prof Alan Spivey, Professor of Synthetic Chemistry Department of Chemistry</p>
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<p>14.00-15.30</p> <p>Panel Discussion: The Reviewers' Perspective</p> <p>Questions will be taken from the audience in advance and via the Q&A function in the chat.</p>	<p>Preparing for your application</p> <p><u>Areas for discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a suitable programme • Knowing your field vs a broad research outlook • Should you approach prospective supervisors before applying? • How much you need to know about the institute and scheme • The importance of choosing the right referees 		

	<p>Writing an effective application</p> <p><u>Areas for discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What scorers look for in an application • What makes an application stand out? • How should a personal statement be structured? • How detailed should a personal statement be? • What not to include <p>Delivering a good interview</p> <p><u>Areas for discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What panellists look for in a candidate • How to prepare for interview • Should you research the panellists? • General do not's
15.30-16.00	<p>Summary and closing remarks</p> <p>Prof Laki Buluwela</p>

PANEL PROFILES



Professor Eric Aboagye is Professor of Cancer Pharmacology & Molecular Imaging and Director of the CRUK-EPSC-MRC-NIHR Comprehensive Cancer Imaging Centre. He joined the college after a PhD at the CRUK Beatson Laboratories in Glasgow, UK and post-doc fellowship at The Johns Hopkins University & Hospital in Baltimore, USA. His group is interested in the discovery and development of new methods for experimental and clinical cancer molecular imaging. In the past 5 years, the team has invented and translated three novel cancer diagnostics into human application. He has acted as an advisor to GE-Healthcare, GSK, Roche and Novartis. Professor Aboagye was recipient of the 2009 Sir Mackenzie Davidson Medal and was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of

Medical Sciences in 2010. Academy Fellows are elected for outstanding contributions to the advancement of medical science, for innovative application of scientific knowledge or for conspicuous service to healthcare.



Professor Laki Buluwela is the FoM Academic Lead for Doctoral Degrees, Deputy Director of the Imperial College Graduate School, Programme Director for Imperial Medical Research Council Doctoral Training Programme (MRC DTP Studentships) and Professor of Cancer Medicine. Following graduation with a BSc and PhD in Biochemistry from the University of London, Professor Laki Buluwela went to the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge as a Research Fellow and member of staff, working with Professor Terry Rabbitts, FRS and Nobel Laureates Dr Cesar Milstein. In 1993 he joined Professor Charles Coombes in

the Department of Oncology at Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School, which is now part of Imperial College London. Dr Buluwela has been interested in developing in-vitro models for the study of mammary gland morphogenesis and growth, using primary human mammary epithelial cells. As part of this work, he has developed a particular expertise in isolating and purifying both normal and malignant mammary epithelial cells,

which have been used in studies of gene expression comparing normal and tumour cell types. His most recent work has centred on developing new techniques for manipulating key genes in cell models and the development of new therapies for Breast Cancer, work that has been carried out in collaboration with Professor Simak Ali and Professor Charles Coombes.



Dr Liz Elvidge is Head of Postdoc and Fellows Development providing strategic leadership and direction to the support and development of postdocs and fellows at Imperial. She has a PhD in Glacial Geomorphology and postdoc work in magnetostratigraphy. Liz first became interested in the training and development of researchers during her first postdoc. She has been at Imperial for 12 years. In 2015 she was awarded the Dame Julia Higgins Medal for ‘outstanding support for female early career researchers and academics’. In 2017 she published a book – ‘What every postdoc needs to know’ with two researcher development colleagues.



Professor Myra McClure holds the Chair of Retrovirology and is Director of a UKAS-accredited Molecular Diagnostics Unit. She is an Honorary Consultant in GUM and was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians in 2017 for services to Medicine. She was Dean (non-clinical) of the Faculty of Medicine from 2003-6, non-clinical Consul for Medicine 2012-15 and Senior College Consul 2015-17, and up until this year headed the Section of Retrovirology and Genito-Urinary Medicine (GUM). Her research interests are in HIV diagnostics, the role of virus infection in type 1 diabetes and foamy viruses. She has been a major contributor to the understanding of these atypical retroviruses and to their development as vectors for gene therapy. Her interview experience is extensive; she chairs the Faculty of Medicine Admissions Panels at Imperial, the Wellcome Trust 4-Year PhD Programme in Infectious Diseases, and the Imperial MRC DTP studentship Selection Panel.



Dr Sophie Rutschmann joined Imperial in 2006, following a post-doc at The Scripps Research Institute in San Diego. Currently she is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Immunology and Inflammation, where she leads the MSc in Immunology. She is also the Academic Lead for Postgraduate Education in the Faculty of Medicine. In this role, her aim is to develop the Faculty’s education portfolio and work with the programme teams to maintain and improve the quality of education at Imperial.



Victoria Sood has worked as a Careers Consultant for over 15 years in a variety of settings including secondary, FE and Higher Education. In her role at Imperial College London, she advises students in a range of areas including Life Sciences, Postgraduate Medicine and the Dyson School of Design Engineering. She is an Associate Fellow of the HEA and teaches on programmes for the Graduate School, the Post Doc and Fellows Development Centre as well as being lead tutor for the ‘Professional Skills in Employability’ Horizons course.



Professor Alan Spivey is Professor of Synthetic Chemistry in the synthesis section of the Department of Chemistry Imperial College London. He began his research career studying for a DPhil with Professor Sir Jack Baldwin (Oxford University) developing new syntheses of enantiomerically pure beta-substituted alpha-amino acids. Following post-doctoral experience in the labs of the late Professor Wolfgang Oppolzer (Geneva University) and Professor Sir Alan Battersby (Cambridge University) investigating alkaloid total synthesis and tetrapyrrole biosynthesis respectively he was appointed to his first independent position as a lecturer at Sheffield University in 1996. He moved with his research group to Imperial College in January 2003. The focus of his group's research is the development of useful new synthetic concepts and methods and the demonstration of their utility by application to the synthesis of biologically important molecules.

STUDENT FUNDING AND FINANCE

Fees and funding information for Imperial students

Imperial's fee and funding information and advice for students:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/>

College scholarship opportunities portal, made to help search for all available scholarships in one place:

www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/fees-and-funding/scholarships/scholarships-search-tool

Faculty of Medicine funded PhD programmes:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/medicine/study/postgraduate/student-funding/phd/>

Imperial College MRC DTP Research Studentships: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/mrc-dtp-studentships>

Imperial College Enterprise DTP: iCase Doctoral Training Programme:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/medicine/study/phd-opportunities/icase-doctoral-training-programme/>

'Funding Postgraduate Study at Imperial' (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQzVi2ndcI8>

Funding opportunities for international students

UK government, postgraduate scholarships for international students:

<https://www.gov.uk/postgraduate-scholarships-international-students>

FindAMasters, funding information for international students:

<https://www.findamasters.com/funding/guides/international-masters-funding-uk.aspx>

Commonwealth scholarship, funding opportunities for a masters and a PhD:

<http://cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply/>

Chevening scholarship, a scholarship for a one-year taught masters: <https://www.chevening.org/>

Imperial President's PhD scholarship offers up to 50 scholarships per year:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/fees-and-funding/scholarships/presidents-phd-scholarships/>

Additional information

Postgraduate loan for master's study:

<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/postgraduate-funding/loans-and-grants/postgraduate-loan-for-masters-study/>

Postgraduate doctoral loan: <https://www.gov.uk/doctoral-loan>

Find a PhD, the majority of PhD opportunities are advertised on this site, including those at Imperial:

<https://www.findaphd.com/>

StudentShapers programme:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/studentshapers/>

Graduate Teaching Assistant positions:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/graduate-school/students/doctoral/gta/>

Living and working well as postgraduate student in London

University and College Union: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/>

Housing and renters' rights unions:

<https://londonrentersunion.org/>

<https://www.rentersrightslondon.org/>

Finally, remember to look at what other universities offer!