Royal recognition for the Imperial team taking on Neglected Tropical Diseases

Tackling Africa’s health

IMPERIAL NAMED FIFTH BEST UNIVERSITY IN THE WORLD
2007 THES rankings published
PAGE 3

NEW WEBSITE JUST AROUND THE CORNER
Read all about the new site inside
PAGES 10–11
Meet the Dean of Students
New role to focus on student activities and welfare

Professor David Lloyd Smith has been appointed to the position of Dean of Students, a new role covering student support activities across the College.

After 36 years on the academic staff at Imperial, 13 of those as Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering followed by seven years as a College Tutor, Professor Lloyd Smith is delighted with his new role and enthusiastic about the challenges ahead.

Professor Lloyd Smith has overall responsibility for student counselling, students with disabilities, the chaplaincy and religious interests, College Tutors, Hall Wardens and student complaints and appeals. He will also work closely with the International Office to assist international students as they settle in to College life.

Professor Lloyd Smith is aiming to bring enthusiasm to his new role. He said: “As Dean of Students I can now focus on just student activities and welfare which before were covered by the Pro Rector for Educational Quality along with other things. It’s a great job that plays up to my strengths. I love interacting with students and thoroughly enjoy the teaching aspect of my role as Professor of Structural Mechanics.”

Professor Lloyd Smith will report to the Pro Rector for Education, Professor Julia Buckingham, and is also Chair of the Student Welfare Committee.

—NAOMI WESTON, COMMUNICATIONS

For more information, visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/aboutimperial/news
Imperial jumps from nine to five in THES rankings

Imperial has been named the fifth best university in the world by new international rankings published on 8 November. The accolade comes in the Times Higher Education Supplement’s 2007 World University Rankings, which reflect a combination of factors including peer assessment, graduate recruiter feedback, research citations and student-staff ratios.

“This year’s position is a jump from 2006, which saw Imperial enter the world top 10 for the first time, at number nine. Congratulating Imperial staff, Sir Richard Sykes said: “Throughout the year there have been numerous individual and team triumphs in every area of the College. This recognition reflects the commitment and brilliance that you demonstrate every day—it is that which makes the College a world-leading institution.”

The 2007 World Rankings place Harvard in top position, and Cambridge, Oxford and Yale at joint second, followed by Imperial. London is represented in the top 10 twice, with University College London taking Imperial’s former position at number nine.

Imperial also features highly in the THES sub-rankings, coming sixth in the world for technology, seventh for life sciences and biomedicine and 13th for natural sciences. This year’s position marks a steady rise for the College, which was rated 14th in the world when the rankings were launched in 2004 and climbed to 13th the following year before breaking into the top 10 in 2006.

—Abigail Smith, Communications

Neglected Tropical Diseases

Alan Fenwick, Imperial Professor of Tropical Parasitology and Director of the Schistosomiasis Control Initiative, also gave a presentation at the conference, outlining how over 500 million people in Africa are infected with one or more Neglected Tropical Disease, but cannot afford the drugs that exist to combat them. See pages 8 and 9 for more information on Professor Fenwick’s work.

Other speakers at the event included Professor William Makogoba, Vice Chancellor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa (far right); Professor Fotis Kafatos, Imperial’s Chair in Immunogenomics (left centre); Dr Mark Walport, Director of the Wellcome Trust (right centre); and Professor Sir Roy Anderson, Chair in Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Rector Elect (far left).

—Naomi Weston, Communications

The problem of an ever increasing global population was discussed last week by Sir David King, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government, at the Africa: Health Matters? conference jointly organised by Imperial College London and the Royal Geographical Society.

The conference focused on the social, economic and geographical variations associated with HIV/AIDS, schistosomiasis and malaria, and the healthcare issues surrounding them.

Sir David explained the effect of the increasing population on water resources, food supplies, energy consumption and the spread of disease in Africa.

He said: “Life expectancy around the world has increased dramatically over the years but in Africa all these advantages seen in the rest of the world are still absent.” He added: “Instead of focusing on consumerism and GDP growth we need to refocus on wellbeing.”

Highlighting some of the main issues affecting Africa, including poverty, conflict, corruption and climate change, Sir David discussed how to address these to promote sustainable development.

He said: “Human capital is a key factor; investment needs to be made in skills, infrastructure and cultural development. Education right across the board is also vital from primary and secondary school through to higher education.”

He concluded that science and technology were vital for good governance and stability for the region.

“Life expectancy around the world has increased dramatically over the years but in Africa all these advantages seen in the rest of the world are still absent”
media mentions

—Danielle Reeves, Communications

**The Sun • 2 November**

**The world’s most attractive man?**

A Romanian man who claimed to have magnetic superpowers was brought to the UK recently by *The Sun* newspaper to investigate his seemingly inexplicable ability to stick household objects to his skin. Whilst in London, Aurel Raileanu was introduced to Imperial’s Professor Russell Cowburn (Physics) who agreed to test if there was anything unusual about the magnetic field around Mr Raileanu’s body. A test with a Gaussmeter—which measures magnetic fields—proved conclusively that Mr Raileanu was not magnetic at all:

“While there is no magnetism involved in Aurel’s ability to stick things to himself, it could be caused by something chemical or his skin or muscles,” Professor Cowburn told *The Sun.*

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**Today, BBC Radio 4 • 9 October**

**Film investigates a sticky situation**

A new documentary about the world’s dwindling resources of cheap and plentiful oil, *A Crude Awakening*, arrived in British cinemas on 9 November. Professor Martin Blunt (Earth Science and Engineering) appeared on BBC Radio Four’s *Today* programme to discuss the premise of the film, which examines the world’s dependence on oil, and what a post-oil world might look like. “The film is geologically accurate but didn’t give the oil industry much of a chance to respond,” Professor Blunt told the programme. “We’re not talking about oil running out, but in the next 10 years we’ll no longer be able to produce conventional oil,” he added.

**The Guardian • 6 November**

**Success for marathon mum**

Athlete Paula Radcliffe’s postnatal success in the New York Marathon was the subject of an article in *The Guardian* this month. Speaking to *The Guardian*, Professor Lesley Regan (SORA) said that even though there is no hard data, many sportswomen who continue training through pregnancy say their performance improves afterwards. “Some people also say there are psychological benefits through enduring labour that may make you stronger,” she said. This is a sentiment echoed by Paula Radcliffe in a recent interview. Her labour lasted 27 hours: “That’s tougher than any marathon,” Paula is reported to have said.

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**BBC News Online • 14 November**

**Right to the heart of treatment inequalities**

Emergency care for female heart failure patients lags behind that offered to men, according to a UK-wide survey, reported by BBC News Online.

Researchers found female patients were less likely to receive recommended investigations such as ultrasound scans and drug treatment like beta blockers. Professor Martin Cowie (NHLI) told the BBC: “There is a general perception, both among women themselves and the doctors that look after them, that women are less likely to have heart problems, and if they do they are less likely to be as serious as they are in a man.”

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**Technology and biology collide**

World experts in a new scientific field, which fuses science and engineering with biological and medical research, gathered at the College on 13 November for the first Autumn Symposium on Systems and Synthetic Biology.

The symposium is the first major international event hosted by Imperial’s Institute of Systems and Synthetic Biology, which was founded in April 2007. The Institute’s goal is to facilitate the application of the College’s engineering, physical sciences, mathematical and computer-modelling expertise to solve biological and medical problems.

Speakers from top universities in the UK, USA and Europe, and leading pharmaceutical companies, addressed the entire spectrum of systems and synthetic biology at the symposium, from the level of individual cells and molecules, up to organs and physiological systems, and the development of new technologies using these techniques.

Speakers from Imperial included Professors Paul Freemont (Molecular Biosciences)—discussing the College’s latest research in synthetic biology—and Jeremy Nicholson (Medicine), who spoke about his work using systems biology techniques to build predictive models of drug metabolism and toxicity that are necessary for personalised healthcare solutions in the future.

Professor David Klug (Chemistry) spoke of his work on a £5 million technology development programme to create new tools and techniques for analysing the composition and chemistry of proteins.

Professor Richard Kitney (Bioengineering), Chairman of the Institute of Systems and Synthetic Biology, said: “I’m delighted to welcome so many high profile speakers from around the world to join us for this symposium at a very exciting time for this new area of science. As the traditional boundaries between different disciplines like engineering and medicine become increasingly blurred, researchers are finding that pooling their expertise and learning from each other’s techniques is vital for tackling some of the most pressing problems in the world today.”

—Danielle Reeves, Communications
Clinical Programme Groups to replace existing directorates

Following consultation with clinical directors, a new clinical leadership and management structure replaces the Trust’s existing Clinical Directorates from 1 April 2008.

The new Clinical Programme Groups (CPGs) and their Directorates are based on clinical and research adjacencies and an annual turnover of more than £50 million. The structure is not site-specific and relates well to the Divisions in the Faculty of Medicine.

Each programme will be led by a Clinical Programme Group Director, who will report to the Managing Director and will consist of several Directorates led by a Chief of Service. Its management team will include a Head of Research, a Head of Education, a Programme Manager, and a Nurse Leader.

Writing to staff to inform them of the changes, Professor Stephen Smith, Chief Executive and Principal, said: “The new structure will create the opportunity for innovation, research and excellence to thrive, within a strong framework of accountability, governance and quality assurance.” The Clinical Programme Groups are as follows:

Medicine
Maps with the Division of Medicine—CPG annual turnover of £94.3 million. Includes: accident and emergency; acute medicine; dermatology; diabetes and endocrinology; elderly care; gastroenterology and hepatology; HIV and GUM; infectious diseases and infection control; respiratory medicine.

Surgery and Cancer
Maps with SORA—CPG annual turnover of £62 million. Includes: acute surgery; breast surgery; endocrinological and bariatric surgery; GI and hepatobiliary surgery; oncology; private patients; urological surgery.

Specialist Services 1
Maps with SORA, the Division of Neuroscience and Mental Health, and the Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology—CPG annual turnover of £130 million. Includes: anaesthesia, critical care and theatres; ENT, head and neck surgery; maxillofacial surgery and dentistry; medical and surgical ophthalmology; neurology and neurosurgery; orthopaedic surgery; pain medicine and palliative care; plastic and reconstructive surgery; rheumatology; sports medicine.

Specialist Services 2
Maps with the Divisions of Medicine and Clinical Sciences and the NHLI—CPG annual turnover of £88.7 million. Includes: cardiology, cardiac and thoracic surgery; renal medicine and transplantation; vascular medicine and vascular surgery.

Women and Children
Maps with SORA—CPG annual turnover of £57.6 million. Includes: gynaecology; neonatology; obstetrics; paediatric haematology and BMT; paediatric medicine, surgery and critical care; reproductive and antenatal medicine.

Clinical and Investigative Sciences
Maps with the Division of Investigative Science—CPG annual turnover of £86 million. Includes: biochemistry; clinical and laboratory haematology; clinical microbiology; clinical trials office; haematology; histopathology; cytology and immunology; imaging; medicines; molecular medicine and genetics; therapies; virology.

Primary Care (structure to be developed further)
Includes: public health and epidemiology.

Do scientists and the media make good bedfellows?

Some of the country’s leading science writers and scientists came together at the College this month for a Centenary debate on whether their relationship was a marriage made in heaven or hell.

Chaired by alumnus and BBC Science correspondent Pallab Ghosh, 150 guests converged on the Sir Alexander Fleming Building to hear fellow alumni David Cohen from New Scientist (pictured third from top), Alok Jha from The Guardian and Michelle Martin from BBC Science Radio duel with Professor Steve Bloom (Investigative Science) and Professor Richard Templer, Director of the College’s Porter Institute.

“If you look back in history scientists were perceived as being grubby workmen. They certainly weren’t seen as intellectuals.”

Professor Steve Bloom (top) kicked off with a light-hearted anecdote about sensationalism in journalism: “I remember an instance where I was talking about a new breakthrough in obesity. It was an appetite suppressor that required daily injections and a journalist asked whether there was another way to administer the dosage. I joked that we could put it in chewing gum. The next day the headline read, ‘gum to shrink your bum’. Well, I guess that is what I said!”

He added that he believes it to be the duty of scientists to put out information about what they are doing because the public pays them to make discoveries.

Talking about the need to include statistics within news reporting to give it credibility and to ensure news is accurate, Professor Templer (second from top) said: “It seems to me there is a duty here of science journalism to inform, to let people make their own mind up about things.” He added that without the use of statistics, this is incredibly difficult, Alok Jha (second from bottom) said he made no excuses for the popularisation of science and highlighted a MORI poll which stated that 90 per cent of people got their science information from the media as his justification. He said: “As much as you try you are not going to get someone to read 2,000 words on quantum mechanics unless you make it entertaining.”

The BBC’s Michelle Martin (bottom) brought history into the argument: “Who do you think was responsible for making scientists one of the most respected professions? That’s right, the media! If you look back in history scientists were perceived as being grubby workmen. They certainly weren’t seen as intellectuals. That was the domain of artists and writers.” She added that people could argue that the ‘hard working’ science journalist helped to change the public’s perception of science.

—COLIN SMITH, COMMUNICATIONS

To watch a RealPlayer stream of the debate, visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/aboutimperial/news
Treat all patients with rare lung disease to prevent stroke

Treatment should be offered to all people with a particular rare lung condition, regardless of whether or not they show symptoms of it, say Imperial researchers and doctors behind a new study published on 2 November in the journal Thorax.

When animals evolve on islands, size doesn’t matter

A theory explaining the evolution of giant rodents, miniature elephants, and even miniature humans on islands has been called into question by new Imperial research published on 7 November in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences.

The new study refutes the ‘island rule’ which says that in island environments small mammals tend to evolve to be larger, and large mammals tend to evolve to be smaller, with the original size of the species being the key determining factor in these changes.

The new findings suggest that the tendency to either evolve larger or smaller on islands varies from one group of species to another, irrespective of original size. The research team suspect instead that a number of external factors, including the physical environment of the particular island, play a role in determining size evolution.

Dr Shai Meiri (NERC Centre for Population Biology), the lead author on the paper, explained: “If the island rule was correct then most large mammals living on islands would be smaller than their continental relatives, and most small island mammals would be larger than those living on continents. Our large dataset of mammal body sizes shows that this isn’t the case.”

— DANIELLE REEVES, COMMUNICATIONS

Imaging the brain to understand obesity

Scientists can now measure how full or hungry a mouse feels, thanks to a new technique which reveals how neurons behave in the part of the brain which regulates appetite.

The Imperial study, published on 7 November in the Journal of Neuroscience, gives researchers hope that the technique will enable a far greater understanding of why certain people become obese when others do not, and why different people have different appetites.

Professor Jimmy Bell, corresponding author of the study from the MRC Clinical Sciences Centre at the College, said: “Appetite and appetite control are important components of why people put on weight. We know very little about the mechanisms behind these processes and why they can vary so much between individuals. In the past we have had to rely on asking people how hungry they feel, which can be very subjective… Our new method is much more reliable and completely objective.”

Scientists had already identified the part of the brain which regulates appetite. In the new study, the researchers discovered that they could see the neurons there firing if they used an agent of manganese ion to make the neurons visible on an MRI scan. When the mouse was hungry the neurons showed increased activity. The intensity of this signal decreased as the mouse became less hungry and the neurons less active.

...Our new method is much more reliable and completely objective”

— LAURA GALLAGHER, COMMUNICATIONS

Step forward for light-activated cancer drugs

Combining light-activated cancer drugs with tumour-seeking antibodies could provide a more effective way of treating many cancers, according to Imperial research published in advance online in the International Journal of Cancer on 8 November.

The study, which is due to appear in the December issue of the journal, describes how scientists have successfully attached 10 light-activated drug molecules to an antibody which recognises and homes in on the cancerous cells. The researchers have shown that by using this method highly potent drug molecules are delivered to precise cancer targets much more effectively than if they are not attached to the antibody. Using light-activated drugs to treat cancer is known as photodynamic therapy (PDT).

Dr Mahendra Deonarain (Life Sciences), lead author on the paper, explained: “PDT is a very promising way to treat cancer because it leaves patients with very little cosmetic scarring and there are low chances of drug resistance.”

— DANIELLE REEVES, COMMUNICATIONS
MRI pioneer visits to announce a new scholarship

A pioneer in the use of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) visited Imperial’s Institute of Biomedical Engineering this month to announce plans to sponsor a new Research Fellow.

Professor Donald Longmore, founder of the heart research charity CORDA, visited Professor Guang-Zhong Yang, with Jennifer Jenks, Executive Director of the charity, to officially announce the establishment of the CORDA Donald Longmore Fellowship for research in advanced image analysis and computing techniques in cardiovascular MRI.

It is expected that the first Fellow will be chosen and announced by April 2008, with a new one chosen every three years. The Longmore Fellow will focus on developing MRI technology in an effort to prevent heart disease and stroke, and will share their time between Imperial and the Royal Brompton Hospital.

Professor Yang, Director of Medical Imaging and Robotics at the Institute, welcomed the creation of the new Fellowship, saying: “It is a great honour to have Professor Donald Longmore, who is a leader in the field of cardiomagnetic imaging, here to announce this Fellowship. The generosity of CORDA will help foster the next wave of researchers who will take MRI technology to the next level.”

CORDA, the Latin word for ‘hearts’, was established in 1976 by Professor Longmore.

He explained how he hopes that his early work in MRI can be taken to the next stage with this Fellowship: “The impact of heart disease and stroke can be felt nationwide as these diseases account for nearly half of all deaths in the UK.”

Through the funding of this Fellowship, and other projects, CORDA plans to incubate ideas which will advance technologies to the next stage.”

— Colin Smith, Communications

Bo, the veteran James and Brown car, built in 1902, completed the annual London to Brighton veteran car run in seven hours with no major problems on 4 November. Bo—short for Boanerges—is owned and maintained by students of the City and Guilds College Motor Club and has taken part in the run nearly every year since its arrival at the College in 1934.
Professor Alan Fenwick, Head of the Schistosomiasis Control Initiative (SCI) at Imperial, and his team are celebrating the award of a major prize by the Queen on 15 November.

The SCI was awarded the Queen’s Anniversary Prize, a national honour, for its programme, which has in just five years administered over 43 million treatments for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminths in countries such as Niger and Burkina Faso. The programme estimates that it has cured over 20 million people of these diseases during this time, although regular annual treatments are necessary to keep them free from re-infections.

Despite the programme already having proven how effective treatment can be, approximately 200 million people across Africa still need to be treated.

Professor Fenwick believes that countries in sub-Saharan Africa will be unable to develop unless children are protected against the Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) that are holding them back. He adds that people in the West are very aware of the toll taken by diseases like HIV, TB and malaria, and as a result more funding is devoted to tackling these than to fighting NTDs like schistosomiasis and elephantiasis. However, he and his team argue that NTDs prevent far more children from progressing fully with their lives. Professor Fenwick says that enabling children to be productive and achieve their potential is the key to development.

Tackling NTDs is crucial because children are otherwise malnourished, debilitated and caught in the poverty trap caused by poor health. NTDs prevent people from benefiting from available education and, later in life, being able to work.

However, the team behind the SCI’s success say that all NTDs could be treated simply and easily with a ‘rapid impact package’ costing just 25 pence per person per year, thanks to drugs that are readily donated by pharmaceutical companies.

"Basic health and education should form the keystones of development, and the health of children across sub-Saharan Africa is really compromised by these diseases”

Professor Fenwick estimates that with an investment of approximately US$1 billion over seven years, everyone in sub-Saharan Africa could be reached with the drug package, which would then bring all NTDs in the region under control. Once this coverage had been achieved, a new sustainable programme could be implemented which would only treat children as they entered school and again three years later. These children would then be protected from the serious consequences of NTDs for the rest of their lives.

Over one billion people across the world are infected with the most common NTDs, which include trachoma, the world’s leading cause of preventable blindness; soil-transmitted helminths like hookworm, which cause stunted growth; elephantiasis, an infestation of the lymphatic system which causes terrible deformities; schistosomiasis, which causes liver and kidney damage, and impaired growth and development; and river blindness, which causes skin rash, eye lesions and blindness.

—LAURA GALLAGHER, COMMUNICATIONS
The Queen’s Anniversary Awards • THE FACTS

- The Queen’s Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education recognise and reward the outstanding contribution that universities and colleges in the United Kingdom make to the intellectual, economic, cultural and social life of the nation. The prizes are awarded within the national honours system.

- The Prizes Scheme was established in 1993 by the Royal Anniversary Trust, a charity set up initially to bring about the national programmes to mark the 40th anniversary in 1992 of The Queen’s accession to the throne.

- This is the fourth Queen’s Anniversary Prize awarded to Imperial researchers. Previous winners are: the Centre for Process Systems Engineering in 2005; the Academic Surgical Unit in 2001; and the Centre for Environmental Technology in 1994.

Professor Alan Fenwick, Head of the Schistosomiasis Control Initiative, spoke of how important it is to develop Africa: “The word ‘foundation’ comes to mind. If you’re building a house you build it on a strong foundation, if you want to develop Africa then the children of Africa need the foundation of good health and their good health is actually being compromised by all these parasitic diseases they’ve got.”

Professor Joanne Webster, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation for the SCI, shared her feelings on winning the award: “Winning the Queen’s Anniversary Prize is a huge honour for the SCI, both in terms of the recognition of the impact of the work we’ve done and also in terms of allowing us to expand out to future donors and treat more people.”

Artemis Koukounari, Senior Research Statistician for the SCI, said of the team’s successes: “We’ve seen a reduction in the intensity of intestinal schistosomiasis in Uganda over four years’ data, and a reduction in urinary schistosomiasis in Burkina Faso over three years’ data. There’s also been a reduction in the prevalence of anaemia.”

To view a RealPlayer film of these interviews in full, visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/aboutimperial/news
Imperial’s new website goes live on 10 December, bringing a fresh look and an improved structure to the College’s online presence.

The Web Redesign and Information Architecture project was established in summer 2006 with the aims of modernising the design of Imperial’s website and making it easier for users to find information.

User research played an important part in developing the new site. Project Manager Pamela Michael explained that in interviews users suggested they would like the website to show what Imperial is really like as a place to work or study: “Prospective students want to understand what Imperial has to offer—where they might live and what facilities are available—and to hear about the experiences of current students. Alumni want to see how Imperial has developed since their student days.”

In response to this feedback, the new website will see Imperial’s podcasts brought to the top level, videos and photos featured on a new page, Campus Life, and current construction projects showcased. The main area of the new homepage will highlight key aspects of College life and will change on a regular basis. One month it might show particular research achievements; during another it might focus on Imperial’s international students.

Other changes brought by the new website include a move away from drop-down menus, which users found to be frustrating, according to the research. In the future clicking at the top level of the site will take users to landing pages where they will find key links according to the information category or audience group.

All staff will receive a user’s guide to the new website with their payslips on 23 November. Between 24 November and 10 December the current site will be frozen to updates while major technical work is undertaken to move it across to the new templates. The new website will be launched on 10 December.

—Caroline Davis, Communications

*Full details on the project can be viewed at: [www.imperial.ac.uk/webredesign](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/webredesign)

Queries can be emailed to: [webredesign@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:webredesign@imperial.ac.uk)
The new resource for staff

Tools for staff to update their details

Access Reporter online

Survey question to come — departments can ask Imperial staff directly for their views

Noticeboard for staff to publicise events, items for sale etc.

Key links to help staff find the information they need

Current construction projects highlighted to inform staff about building work across the campuses

Email: staffpage@imperial.ac.uk to put up notices and make key announcements from your department/division

Reporter’s Alex Platt went to hear what some members of staff think of the new site

Bang Nong oversees the webpages for the Centre for Professional Development.

“I have followed the development of the site with interest and have been pleasantly surprised at how well the communication has been handled, having been kept informed throughout the process. I think it looks good, is well designed and feels much more consistent in terms of navigation. I’ve noticed on the blog that there have been a few comments about the fixed width of the new site. I personally see no problem with this and actually find our site works better within this constraint, but I guess, like anything, it has its pros and cons. On the whole, I think the new website looks great and the quality reflects our status as one of the best universities in the world.”

Professor Jaroslav Stark (Mathematics) was one of over 50 members of staff who were consulted on the new website.

“I was pleased to be invited to take part in the consultation and I thought that it was done extremely professionally. There was a well designed questionnaire, followed by an hour long face-to-face individual interview, and then a number of follow up emails to clarify specific issues. My impression was that the issue of producing a website which we could all be proud of was being taken seriously, and the points I raised as being most important to me were listened to. The new website looks to be a significant improvement.”

Dr. Sylvain Laizet (Aeronautics) is responsible for his research group’s web pages.

“I think the redesign was a really good idea and has been very successful. The first thing I did when considering coming to Imperial was to check the website, and I know that this will be the case for anyone interested in the College. The new pages look fantastic and truly reflect the sort of organisation that Imperial is. The navigation is also much smoother and information is presented in a way that makes it easier to read and more inviting.”
Rising up to celebrate diversity

‘Realise equality, celebrate diversity’ was this year’s theme for Rise week, Imperial College Union’s racial awareness campaign, held earlier this month.

The week focused on the cultural diversity of the College’s campuses with the aim of promoting integration and tolerance of others.

Throughout the week, Kirsty Patterson, Deputy President for Education and Welfare, and her team of volunteers gathered photos, interviews and comments from international students. They plan to use all the material to put together posters and materials for future events.

As part of the celebrations, students had the opportunity to try out different international culinary dishes at the student canteen, daVinci’s. Dishes included Italian lasagne, Spanish paella, Ghanaian chicken jollof rice, Mexican fajitas and Chinese sweet and sour chicken.

The Union also showed two foreign language films in their cinema—award winning Spanish film Volver and international co-production The Motorcycle Diaries which follows Che Guevara in his travels across South America.

Kirsty, who organised the week, said: “Rise has been about celebrating all the different cultures we have here at Imperial. It is a very diverse place with students from all over the world.” She added: “I plan to keep promoting these issues…culminating in a Rise festival planned for the end of the year.”

Lai Wai (above) is a second year medical undergraduate from Hong Kong and is enjoying her time in London. She said: “On my medicine course there are students from all over the world. I have friends here from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Africa. Because the campus is quite small and compact I blend in with the home students here and I feel very integrated.”

She added: “I don’t get too homesick as I go home twice a year and I have so many friends here it doesn’t bother me. The support network is also great in the Faculty of Medicine for international students so if I have a problem there are always people to turn to.”

Third year electrical engineering student Oghenevese Aghoghovbia (left), from Nigeria, has also made a lot of friends at Imperial and is heavily involved in student life. She said: “I am a member of the Afro-Caribbean society which provides lots of events and careers advice, and is a great support—they are like a family to me. The society also assigns you a buddy to look after you in your first year which is a great help.”

Rise week at Imperial coincides with Student Rise month, 8–30 November, which is organised by the Mayor of London in partnership with the Student Assembly Against Racism and the NUS Black Students Campaign.

—NAOMI WESTON, COMMUNICATIONS
Imperial’s researchers have been very successful in winning funding under the first calls for proposals for the European Union’s new Framework Programme 7 for Research and Technological Development (FP7), the umbrella under which the EU supports scientific and medical research. This continues the College’s excellent performance in the previous FP6, when Imperial won more contracts than any other UK university.

FP7 began this year and will run until 2013 with a budget of €55 billion. It is organised into four programmes:

- **Cooperation** is for collaborative research projects with other universities, research institutes and industrial partners across the EU member states.
- **Ideas** is new European Research Council funding for research at the frontiers of knowledge.
- **People** comprises the Marie Curie programme of Fellowships. These exist to provide a large and well trained base of researchers in Europe by encouraging mobility throughout EU member states to obtain the most relevant and specialised training.
- **Capacities** supports regional clusters of research institutions and develops existing research and development infrastructures.

The Research Office EU team, under Lynne Cox, is currently negotiating approximately 40 contracts to begin in 2008 under the Cooperation and People programmes. This is an excellent start to FP7 for the College and recognises and rewards the high standard of Imperial’s research across a wide range of scientific and medical disciplines.

Even more encouraging is the outstanding progress of our researchers in the Ideas scheme Starting Investigator grants. This scheme supports investigators in any field of research, two to nine years after completion of their PhD, who have the potential to become exceptional independent research leaders. This scheme, launched at the beginning on FP7 in December 2006, was massively oversubscribed, with 9,167 applications submitted for approximately 250 grants. Evaluated solely on the basis of excellence, the best 559 of these applicants were invited to make a second-stage submission and 10 outstanding researchers from Imperial were among this total. These applicants have now submitted their second-stage proposal and are in the process of being interviewed by the evaluation panels. Results are expected in December.

The next round of calls for proposals is expected across all parts of FP7 in late November and early December.

—Carole Meads, Research Office

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**Celebrating the festival of light**

The evening of 7 November saw the College’s Main Entrance transformed into a spectacle of the colours, sights, sounds, and flavours of India as Imperial celebrated Diwali. Crowds gathered to hear the sounds of Dhol drumming by the Punjabi Society and watched the Hindu Society perform Garba and Dandia dancing, traditionally performed during the Navratri (nine nights) festivals. Imperial as One, the College’s race equality group, hosted the evening.

For more information about the group, visit: [www.imperial.ac.uk/imperialasone](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/imperialasone)
Mr Brian D'Lasselle, Energy Engineer, Estates

Brian joined the College almost 30 years ago straight from his own time in higher education where he had been training to be an electrical engineer at Barking Technical College. He said: “I joined Imperial on the recommendation of my uncle who had worked here. I can still remember being shocked at how busy the walkway was!”

Brian began his Imperial career as a trainee electrician and over the years has worked his way through several jobs including electrician, electrical supervisor, electrical engineer, and finally to his current post of energy engineer. His job entails, amongst other things, monitoring energy and utilities on the South Kensington campus, producing reports on energy and costs and assisting in the procurement of utility tariffs. Throughout his time at the College his role has changed a lot. He explained: “With new technology the roles we undertake have changed. You have to bear in mind that when I started here there were hardly any computers. Now a lot of the systems we used to run are done by for us with the technology that has been developed over the years.”

Volunteering for Medics

Every year the Imperial Volunteer Centre (IVC) receives many requests for voluntary placements in hospitals from the College’s medical students. Although placements of this type are rare, the team are keen to stress that there are many other opportunities which can offer medics valuable skills and experiences.

MORE (Medics Out Reach Enterprise) is a voluntary placement specifically for medical students. Volunteers are asked to visit isolated members of the community who have been identified by a local GP. Taking part is a good way of developing a greater understanding of a wide variety of medical problems and the broad spectrum of patients’ needs within a community. Medical student Lucinda Shaw started volunteering for MORE in 2006. She said: “Giving up an hour every fortnight is a small sacrifice with great rewards—you really feel like you are making a difference to someone’s life and alleviating their isolation.”

The Food Chain offers another hands on volunteering opportunity. The Food Chain enables volunteers to develop a wider knowledge of the holistic treatment required by HIV-positive people. Recent Imperial graduate Wei Song Ong explained: “The Food Chain helps create awareness of the diversity of people around us who have their lives affected by HIV/AIDS. I volunteered as a navigator and a lead cook, the latter giving me an opportunity to plan nutritionally balanced menus. It aided me in learning about the specificity of each diet, be it diabetic or low potassium, and its contribution towards alleviating symptoms of HIV/AIDS-related problems. The people in The Food Chain are absolutely fantastic, and I’d recommend it to anyone who’s looking for an opportunity to reach out and make a difference.”

There are opportunities to get involved in educational and campaign-based projects. Volunteers could, for example, become a Speak Up For Asthma volunteer with Asthma UK, a charity dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of the 5.2 million people in the UK whose lives are affected by the disease. Volunteers are also needed to be Information Campaign volunteers for the ‘Nursing Leukaemia’ campaign of the Leukaemia Research Fund (LRF), which provides information resources to professional nurses to give to their patients. One medical student who has volunteered for the campaign, Ming Lee, reflected on his volunteering: “My experience at LRF resulted in better communication skills, new friends and a firmer understanding of the NHS, which would help me along in my future career.”

—Lucy Mitchell, Imperial Volunteer Centre

For more information on these and other opportunities visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/volunteering or contact the IVC by emailing volunteering@imperial.ac.uk

For a map, visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/occhealth/contacts/ohlocationmap/accessinformation

The Occupational Health Department is moving back to Level 4 in the Sherfield Building between 23–26 November and will be closed during this time. Normal service will resume on 27 November. Access to the department will be from the walkway on Level 2 of the Sherfield Building. There is a set of doors next to STA Travel which lead to a lift and stairs, both of which can be used to gain access to Level 4.
new starters

Dr Sonya Abraham, Kennedy Institute
Ms Obolomoboi Akimwale, EPHPC
Ms Hazelann Alexis-Noel, Investigative Science
Miss Laura Allan, Chemistry
Ms Sophie Atleet, EPHPC
Professor Wendy Atkin, SORA
Dr Magdalena Bak-Maier, Human Resources
Dr Glynn Ball, Cell and Molecular Biology
Mr Andi Beljeri, Computing
Miss Rebecca Bird, Faculty of Medicine
Mr Keith Blackney, Mechanical Engineering
Miss Annick Borquez, EPHPC
Mrs Jenny Bough, Centre for Environmental Policy
Dr Ruth Branford, NHLI
Mr Antoine Chamballu, Physics
Professor Christopher Chapman, Tanaka
Professor Sergei Chernyschenko, Aeronautics
Miss Onjee Choi, Medicine
Ms Man Chung, Investigative Science
Dr James Clark, SORA
Ms Lindsey Cole, EPHPC
Mrs Sinead Condon, Estates
Miss Valerie Crawford, Mechanical Engineering
Miss Nicola D’Arcy, NHLI
Mr David De Ruyter, Civil and Engineering
Mr Athanasios Didangelos, Kennedy Institute
Ms Andrea Ecker, Cell and Molecular Biology
Dr Nicholas Ekins-Daukes, Physics
Dr Ahmed Elsaity, Computing
Dr Ayman Elshakhi, Centre for Environmental Policy
Dr Jane Evers, Medicine
Mrs Luciana Folly, Catering Services
Ms Maria Gaanderse, Library Services
Dr Andrew Milestone, Medicine
Mr Kenneth Miller, SORA
Mr Sunil Mod, Kennedy Institute
Ms Kay Neale, SORA
Mr Sebastien Nola, NHLI
Dr Waffa Osman, NHLI
Mr Masaki Owari, Physics
Dr Carlo Palmieri, SORA
Ms Claire Parsonage, Medicine
Dr Yi Peng, Chemical Engineering
Professor Robin Phillips, SORA
Dr Sanjay Popat, NHLI
Dr Alexandra Porter, Materials
Mr Tim Porter, Development and Corporate Affairs
Miss Bhawana Poudel, NHLI
Miss Joanna Riddoch-Contreras, NHLI
Miss Anna Robson, Chemical Engineering
Mr Ali Salimi, Sport and Leisure Services
Miss Maria Sampson, NMH
Dr John Shotbolt, Medicine
Dr Caglar Sinayuc, ESE
Dr John Gulliver, EPHPC (6 years)
Dr Saniaji Hadi, SORA
Dr Sven Horst, Chemistry
Dr Siti Ismail, Investigative Science
Dr Kazuhiro Ito, NHLI (5 years)
Dr Malte Jaensch, Mechanical Engineering
Dr Jie Jiang, SORA
Dr Mark Joffe, Centre for Environmental Policy (5 years)
Miss Charlene John, Sport and Leisure Services
Mr Richard Jones, ICT
Dr Anand Narasimhan, Tanaka
Dr Ana Mocumbi, NHLI
Dr Yasuyuki Miyoshi, Physics
Miss Claire Middleditch, NMH
Dr Saniya Hadi, SORA
Dr John Gulliver, EPHPC (6 years)
Mr Martin Gallegillo, Mechanical Engineering
Mrs Sherry-Lynn Gerard, Library Services
Miss Louisa Gniatus, NHLI
Dr Arantzazu Gonzalez Campo, Chemistry
Dr David Guilliano, Cell and Molecular Biology
Dr John Gulliver, EPHPC (6 years)
Dr Saniya Hadi, SORA
Dr Svetlana Chyb, Agricultural Engineering
Dr Sylwester Chyb, Agricultural Engineering
Mrs Margaret Wright, SORA
Dr Jennifer Whyte, Tanaka
Dr Stephen Zara, Biology (15 years)

Dr Sarah Sebastian, Cell and Molecular Biology
Mrs Alma Smith, Library Services
Miss Kelly Stewart, EYEC
Dr Maria Sukkar, NHLI (6 years)
Miss Emma Sully, NHLI
Dr Konstantinos Syrios, Civil and Environmental Engineering
Dr Fabio Tessicini, Aeronautics
Mrs Anne Valentine, SORA
Mr Kumaara Velan, EEE
Dr Mark Vernon, Catering Services (6 years)
Dr Abhilash Vora, NMH (9 years)
Dr Jennifer Whyte, Tanaka
Miss Philippa Worley, Registry (6 years)
Dr John Allwright, EEE (40 years)†
Professor Peter Cargill, Physics (11 years)
Professor Michael Rowan-Boxer, Chemistry (37 years)
Professor Michael Hassell, Biology (37 years)
Professor Geoffrey New, Physics (34 years)
Professor Ray Rivers, Physics (37 years)
Professor Michael Rowan-Boxer, Physics (14 years)
Professor Kenneth Taylor, NHLI (24 years)
Professor David Websdale, Physics (33 years)
Mr Jim Wright, Materials (43 years)
Mrs Margaret Wright, Mechanical Engineering (14 years)

This data is supplied by HR and covers the period 21 October–10 November. It was correct at the time of going to press. Years of service are given where an individual has been a member of College staff for over five years. Asterisk (*) indicates where an individual will continue to play an active role in College life.

Please send your images and/or brief comments about new starters, leavers and retirees to the Editor, a.platt@imperial.ac.uk who reserves the right to edit or amend these as necessary.
Headline
Project: Membership and fundraising volunteer
Project ID: 1789
Organisation: London Cycling Campaign (LCC)
Date(s): Ongoing
Time(s): Monday to Friday, mornings and/or afternoons
Location: SE1, nearest tube London Bridge

Volunteers are needed to help in the LCC office with membership and fundraising administration. This is a good opportunity to gain experience of working in the not for profit sector within an organisation whose vision is to make London a world class cycling city.

For more information

To take part in a scheme or to hear more about volunteering in general, contact Minna Ruohonen
• 020 7594 8133
• m.ruohonen@imperial.ac.uk

For full details of over 250 volunteering opportunities visit: www.imperial.ac.uk/volunteering

Subscribe to the weekly newsletter by emailing: volunteering@imperial.ac.uk