Twenty four PhD students from the Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, Department of Medicine stepped away from their research projects on Friday evening to take part in a novel networking event. “Summer networking” was a proposal put forward to the Cohort Building Initiative by Dr Channa Jayasena and student Chris Holton in order to encourage useful connections between fellow PhD students and other researchers within the Division. Due to the busy work ethic of researchers within the Division, it is common that communication between members from different research projects are forgotten, however this is a key advantage of being part of such a large group. Therefore an opportunity to strengthen bonds and create networks between students was welcomed to both improve the research environment and enable students to troubleshoot their research with each other.

With sporting equipment provided by Zorball.com, the event was a huge success with every student participating in mini games of “bubble-football” and more traditionally, rounders. The games were both stimulating and available for students of all sporting abilities. The event struck a chord with 1st year student Ivan de Backer, who remarked, “This whole evening has been tremendous amounts of fun. I have engaged with other students who I had not previously had the opportunity to meet.”

Between activities there was plenty of time to start informal chats with fellow students and start new friendships. With this respect, the networking event excelled as students from several different research groups in different buildings were able to group together. There is a great chance that these connections will translate to increased productivity in the work place. It was truly a day to remember.