

The Forum Bulletin – Online Harms webinar, COVID-19 policy engagement and more

Bulletin July 2020

Thank you for signing up for The Forum bulletin. The Forum is Imperial's policy engagement programme, connecting our researchers with policy-makers.

Please feel free to forward this on to colleagues. If you were forwarded this bulletin you can [sign up here](#).

For advice and support with any policy engagement opportunities, such as submissions to government or Parliament, training and bespoke events, get in touch with [The Forum team](#) and we'll be happy to help.

POLICY PANEL DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE HARMS

Preventing online harms, an issue at the forefront of health and digital policymaking, was the focus of The Forum's first ever online panel event.

Dr Nejra Van Zalk of the Dyson School of Design Engineering led a discussion with partners from government, regulators and charities, exploring social media, algorithms and online harms, seeking to answer how we can protect young and vulnerable people online.

[Read the full story.](#)

MODELLING AN UNPRECEDENTED PANDEMIC

The Forum has published a new [Imperial Stories longread article](#) which takes a detailed look at the vital role of team-based, collaborative epidemiology and disease modelling in managing pandemics. With commentary from Imperial academics including Professor Azra Ghani, Chair in Infectious Disease Epidemiology and a key member of Imperial's COVID-19 Response team, and Professor Neil Ferguson, who leads the COVID-19 Response Team and is Director of both MRC GIDA and the Jameel Institute, this feature article explores the importance of epidemiologists' mathematical models in understanding how COVID-19 might impact populations, helping to inform government policy around the world. Read the feature: [Modelling an unprecedented pandemic.](#)

POLICY AND ACADEMIC LEADERS DEBATE FUTURE OF PLASTICS

The policy implications of Imperial's [Greener Plastic Futures](#) project were the focus of [The Forum](#) and the [Ocean Plastic Solutions Network's](#) latest workshop.

[Professor Jason Hallett](#), who leads the project, described the huge growth in plastics across the world to attendees from government and third sector. [Dr Arturo Castillo Castillo](#) then discussed his role as lead of the project's policy implications.

Project researchers Dr Zaneta Muranko, Dr Manu Mulakkal and Dr Panos Bexis then spoke about rethinking manufacturing, distribution and consumption, while Dr James Hogg and Dr Maria Mediero discussed recycling, repurposing and tracing. Dr Castillo concluded with an overview of the remaining policy barriers and future opportunities before attendees discussed onward collaboration.

[Read more about plastics research at Imperial.](#)

BLOG POST: LEARNING HOW TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE WITH POLICY-MAKERS AS A RESEARCHER

[The Forum](#) has recently delivered several online policy engagement training sessions with the renowned [Institute for Government](#). Rebecca Clube, a PhD researcher studying the circular economy and sustainable development at Imperial's Centre for Environmental Policy, has written a blog post about her experience on the training. [Read the blog.](#)

BLOG POST: WHY GOVERNMENT MUST ACCELERATE A GREEN RECOVERY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL - AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

[Dr Neil Jennings](#), Partnership Development Manager at the [Grantham Institute](#), considers how a coronavirus recovery plan that prioritises climate action can reinvigorate the economy and create a resilient society – and why local authorities are best placed to deliver this. Read the blog.

[Read the blog.](#)

UPDATES FROM POST

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology's (POST) has published a [comprehensive list](#) of activities which represent the most targeted, impactful ways that researchers can engage with Parliament on the COVID-19 outbreak at the moment.

You can view the [latest updates to POST's work programme, and contact information for all projects](#). Also find out [more information on what contributing to a POSTnote entails](#).

OTHER POLICY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

The Joint Committee on Human Rights' inquiry into the **Health Service Safety Investigations Bill** is accepting evidence until 22 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Joint Committee on Human Rights' inquiry into **Mental Health Act reform** is accepting evidence until 22 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Commons Science and Technology Committee's inquiry into UK Science, Research and Technology Capability and Influence in **Global Disease Outbreaks** is accepting evidence until 31 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Lords Science and Technology Committee's inquiry into the science of COVID-19 is accepting evidence until 3 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy's consultation on future support for **low carbon heat** closes on 7 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport's consultation on **expanding the dormant assets scheme** closes on 16 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs' consultation on **environmental land management** closes on 16 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Department for Transport and Office for Low Emission Vehicles' consultation on **the future of transport regulatory review: micromobility vehicles, flexible bus services and mobility as a service** closes on 3 July 2020. [Find out more.](#)

The Environment Agency's consultation on **river basin planning** closes on 24 September 2020. [Find out more.](#)

Ofwat's consultation on **regulatory reporting for the 2020-21 reporting year** closes on 24 August 2020. [Find out more.](#)

NHS Digital's consultation on the clinical Safety of **Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning** closes on 27 October 2020. [Find out more.](#)

KEEP IN TOUCH

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or would like advice, get in touch with [The Forum team](#).

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