



The Postdocs of Cambridge (PdOC) Society

www.pdoc.cam.ac.uk
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Hosted by:

The Postdoc Centre, 16 Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1SB
The Accommodation Service, Kellet Lodge, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge, CB2 1QJ

The PdOC Society aims to:

- Represent Postdocs from all Faculties, Schools and Departments at the University of Cambridge and University Partner Institutions (UPIs).
- Facilitate communication and networking between Postdocs both within the Departments and across Faculties and the wider University community.
- Provide information and support so that Postdocs can make the most of their time at Cambridge.
- Create a social and intellectual network for Postdocs throughout the University.

PdOC Society Reach

The PdOC Society is open to all postdocs at the University of Cambridge and UPIs. Postdocs include all contract staff who have completed or are finishing their doctorate but do not have long-term tenure, or established positions. As of June 2014, the PdOC Society sends its weekly newsletter to a mailing list of over 1600, there are over 1000 likes on facebook and 230 followers on twitter.

The Society complements the University's infrastructure, ensuring information is disseminated regarding careers and professional development opportunities, College affiliations and social and welfare provisions. The priority of the Society is to ensure that all postdocs throughout the University and UPIs have access to relevant information and networking opportunities.

The PdOC Society is now collocated with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Newcomers and Visiting Scholars Society in the Postdoc Centre at 16 Mill Lane. The PdOC Society continues to be supported by the Accommodation Service; Nicky Blanning, Head of the Accommodation Service, is the Society's Senior Treasurer.

Background

There are more than 3500 postdoctoral staff (Research Associates and Fellows) within the University of Cambridge and its partnering institutions. This diverse group of "postdocs" are delivering the bulk of the University's research output, striving to succeed with limited tenure. The flow of contract postdoctoral workers is probably one of the University's most essential assets.

The Postdocs of Cambridge (PdOC) Society was founded by Dr Rob Wallach in 2001, to bring this disparate group of staff together, create new opportunities and to encourage researchers to meet others outside their individual research disciplines. The PdOC Society was registered as a Senior University Society in May 2013.

Activities of The PdOC Society 2013-2014

The PdOC Society organises a series of networking events to enhance intellectual and social interaction between postdocs from different disciplines.

During the year ending 31 May 2014 the PdOC society provided 1550 spaces for postdocs at pre-registered social and academic networking events. In reality, the number of postdocs involved in the activities is significantly larger as the drop in informal lunches and monthly socials are not pre-registered events.

The activities of the PdOC Society are summarised below:

- ***Welcoming postdocs***
The Society pro-actively welcomes new and existing postdocs to weekly informal lunches at the University Centre and to monthly social events. The Society also participates in welcome induction events for new staff.
- **Providing a 'community' for postdocs**
PdOC has a track record of providing a range of vibrant social activities for Cambridge postdocs. During 2013/14 PdOC activities increased in number, range and participation. This ranged from the ever-popular College dinners, to wine tasting, to coach trips to BBQs. The PdOC social events are placed at the centre of the PdOC Society. The majority of postdocs are excluded from Collegiate Cambridge and so PdOC plays an essential role in providing opportunities to meet and socialise with postdocs from all academic disciplines. The highlight for 2014 was our Christmas dinner at Kings College where the Provost of the College joined 300 postdocs and their guests for dinner.
- ***Providing networking and researcher development opportunities***
The Society hosts a number of Researcher Development activities, the themes of these activities are provided in response to the needs of the members of the PdOC society. The PdOC society wishes to thank the Researcher Development Committee who provided the funding for our Researcher Development activities during the last year. In 2013/14 the Society provided 5 early evening 'pizza and beer' sessions hosted around a specific theme. Themes for this year included, 'research and social media', 'University teaching opportunities', 'College Affiliation opportunities', 'fellowship grant writing' and 'presenting good practice'.
PdOC also launched the interdisciplinary 'crossing the barriers' lecture series. This series provides postdocs with the opportunity to network with high profile speakers and to present their own research in an interdisciplinary setting. The series was opened by Prof David MacKay talking on the theme of 'energy' in Oct 2013 followed by Prof Deborah Howard talking on the theme of 'Science meets the arts' in April 2014.
Through the generous support of Lord Wilson, Master at Emmanuel College, PdOC hosted its first May week Garden party in 2013 to which all the Heads of Colleges, Heads of Departments and Pro-Vice Chancellors were invited. This was a fabulous opportunity for postdocs to meet senior members of Collegiate Cambridge and raise the profile of the Cambridge postdoc community.
- ***Sharing and disseminating information***
The Society aims to act as a central information point for postdocs, bringing together information from a wide range of University services. Through the Society's website, its

social media presence and weekly newsletter, the Committee ensure information is consolidated and disseminated with opportunities for all postdocs. The Society launched its new website during May 2014 with the new address of www.pdoc.cam.ac.uk

- ***Campaigning for more Postdoctoral Representation***

The Society strives to represent the needs of postdocs at appropriate levels of decision making within the University. The Society is working with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs to increase representation on a number of University and departmental committees. PdOC Society Committee members represent postdocs on the OPdA steering committee, the OPdA management committee and the Researcher Development Committee.

PdOC also chairs the newly established 'Departmental Postdoc Committee Chairs Network'. This network brings together the chair (or representative) from each departmental postdoc committees with the aim of providing a representative voice for postdocs and providing support and training for postdocs who organise departmental postdoc groups. A full list of department committees and contact details can be found on <http://www.pdoc.cam.ac.uk/what/departmentcommittees>

- ***Encouraging Cambridge College affiliation and engagement***

A large proportion of postdoctoral researchers have not been Cambridge students, nor are they funded by a College benefaction (eg JRF), and therefore have no access to the extra social and intellectual interactions that most Colleges provide. The Society's Committee proactively engages with the Senior Fellowships of the individual Colleges, encouraging them to see value in widening opportunities for postdocs and early career researchers. The Society then disseminates information about postdoctoral affiliations, any teaching and research opportunities and other College membership opportunities.

- ***Monitoring the Postdoctoral provision in other Institutions***

As an outlook, the Society aims to keep abreast of provision for postdoctoral researchers in other institutions nationally and internationally. Importantly the Society will look to implement elements of "best practice" learnt from these other institutions.

Financial Management of the PdOC Society

Financial conduct of the Society will be in accordance with the University's approved practice. The Society will apply for funding, or generate much of its funding from appropriate events. For underlying costs, basic revenue will be generated by charging "members", either an overhead for regular activities or an individual yearly membership fee. The basic revenue is expected to make the major contribution to the cost of running the Society.

The process for approving income and expenditure is taken by the role of the successive Treasurers who will have responsibility for financial management. Procedurally, financial summaries of the Society will be presented and approved at Annual General Meetings. A long term aim of the Society's financial management is to build and maintain a reserve fund, principally as a backup for the running of the Society autonomously for an Academic year, in the absence of income derived from overheads.

Officers and Committee of the PdOC Society

The PdOC Society is a University Senior Society, administered by a small committee of volunteers with defined roles and offices defined in its current constitution. The PdOC Society is given administrative support by The University of Cambridge Accommodation Service and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

Committee Membership (elected at the PdOC Society AGM May 2013)

President

Maya Ghoussaini mg458@medschl.cam.ac.uk

Vice-President

Jean-Francois Mercure jm801@cam.ac.uk

Treasurer

James Smith js252@cam.ac.uk (May 2013 – July 2013)

Derina Sweeney ds623@medschl.cam.ac.uk (July 2013 – July 2014)

Membership Secretary

Paul Coxon prc39@cam.ac.uk (co-opted August 2013)

Social and Networking Events

Manya Pagiavla mp508@cam.ac.uk (May 2013 – Dec 2014)

Brian Krummel bk313@cam.ac.uk (co-opted Feb 2014)

Clare Simpson cs740@cam.ac.uk (co-opted Feb 2014)

Communications

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College Affiliations

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Co-opted committee members

Post-doctoral Research Staff Coordinator

PdOC Secretary

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Head of Accommodation Service

PdOC Senior Treasurer

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