



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

The Postdocs of Cambridge (PdOC) Society

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Introduction

There are more than 3000 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 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.

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. 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.

Officers and Committee of The PdOC Society

The PdOC Society is a non-profit organisation, 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.

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.

Activities of The PdOC Society

The PdOC Society organises a series of networking social events to enhance intellectual and social interaction between postdocs from different disciplines. 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 networking and researcher development opportunities*
The Society hosts a variety of networking events each year to bring together postdocs on a social and intellectual level. These are an invaluable opportunity for postdocs, from across the University to meet, share experiences outside of the normal departmental structure of the University. The Society also 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.
- *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.
- *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's committee is looking for representations on a number of University and departmental committees.
- *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 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.