

Life Sciences Newsletter

Imperial College London

Christmas 2015

[DoLS Committees and Initiatives](#)

[DoLS Newsletter Archive](#)

Dear all – we have come to the end of yet another year and it's been very pleasing to witness our department going from strength to strength. I would like to thank all the staff on both campuses for contributing to our success.

My term as HoD will be up next October and the search for a new Head will continue in the New Year.

I hope that everyone has a good break over the Christmas and New Year period.

With best wishes – Murray

WELCOME TO ALL NEW STAFF

ACADEMIC & RESEARCH

Research Fellows: **Kirsten McEwen** – Junior Research Fellow (Michael Stumpf).

Research Assistants: **Sophie McKenna** (Steve Matthews), **Ernest Cheng So** (Gad Frankel), **Edward Harding & David Uygun** (Nick Franks), **Rhian Jones** (Ernesto Cota Segura) and **Dimitrios Kontopoulos** (Samraat Pawar).

Research Associates: **David Ruano Gallego** (Gad Frankel) & **Qiyuan Zhao** (Geoff Baldwin).

PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL SERVICES, AND LEARNING & TEACHING FAMILIES

Research Technicians: **Francesco Carpi, Taylor Lura, Dario Meacci & Giulia Morselli** (Tony Nolan); **Faye Rodgers** (George Christophides).

RESEARCH GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

Kostas Beis has been awarded an MRC Newton Fund grant (UK – Philippines Research Collaborations), £340K over 3 years for the 'Structure Elucidation and Characterization of the Venus Kinase Receptors of a Philippine Isolate of *Schistosoma japonicum*'.

Alfonso De Simone has been awarded a 3 years grant from Leverhulme Trust entitled "Biomolecular mechanisms in heterogeneous systems: the interfacial activation of lipases" for a total value of £189,084

USEFUL POLICIES & PROCEDURES & INFO

[Working at Imperial](#) –

family friendly benefits, equality and diversity, financial benefits and more...

[Equality & Diversity Policies](#)

[Staff Networks](#)

[Women @ Imperial](#)

[Learning & Development Centre](#)

[Disability Support for staff](#)

IMPACT

Richard Gill was invited to present research on the 'impacts of pesticides on insect pollinator health' in Parliament on 2nd Dec.

In November 2015, **Austin Burt** was in front of the House of Lords Science and Technology sub-committee enquiry on GM Insects and the National Academy of Sciences committee on responsible conduct of research into gene drive.

TALKS

Pietro Spanu delivered an invited lecture at the University of Oxford (Department of Plant Sciences) on "*RNAse-Like Effectors: a useful tool to unlock plant immunity?*" (26 Nov 2015)

Pennington, H. G, Gheorghe, D. M., Thieron, H., Luong, P., Chandler, T., Jones, R., Damerum, A., Morgan, S., Przydacz, M., Bindschedler, L. V., Cota-Segura, E., Bozkurt, T., Panstruga, R. and Spanu, P. D. (2015) *Identifying the protein and RNA interactors of BEC1054* [Poster] 36th New Phytologist Symposium: Cell biology at the plant-microbe interface, 29th November.

PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Cell Science, exploring the utility of semi-quantitative imaging approaches and their use for dissecting molecular events on a micro scale - here malaria parasite invasion of the red blood cell. Riglar, D. T., L. Whitehead, K. L. Rogers, A. F. Cowman and **J. BAUM**. Localization-based imaging of malarial antigens during red cell entry reaffirms role for AMA1 but not MTRAP in invasion. *Journal of Cell Science*. In press. November 2015.

Claire A. Runge, James E. M. Watson, Stuart H. M. Butchart, Jeffrey O. Hanson, **Hugh P. Possingham**, Richard A. Fuller, [Protected areas and global conservation of migratory birds](#), *Science* 4 December 2015, Vol. 350 no. 6265 pp. 1255-1258

Stephan Eismann, **Robert G. Endres**. Protein connectivity in chemotaxis receptor complexes. *PLoS Comp. Biol.*, in press.

Pakharukova N, Garnett JA, Tuittila M, Paavilainen S, Diallo M, Yu, X. **Matthews S**, Zavialov A. (2015) Structural Insight into Archaic and Alternative Chaperone-Usher Pathways Reveals a Novel Mechanism of Pilus Biogenesis. *PLoS Pathog* 11(11): e1005269. doi: 10.1371/journal.ppat.1005269

Wong CT, Xu Y, Gupta A, Garnett J, **Matthews SJ**, **Hare S**, Structural analysis of hemoglobin binding by HpuA from the Neisseriaceae family, *Nature Communications*, ISSN: 2041-1723

Gabriele Micali, **Robert G Endres**, "Bacterial chemotaxis: information processing, thermodynamics and behavior" accepted in *Current Opinion in Microbiology*.

Yilmaz, Alguel et al, [Crystal structure of the anion exchanger domain of human erythrocyte band 3](#), *Science* 6 November 2015: Vol. 350 no. 6261 pp. 680-684

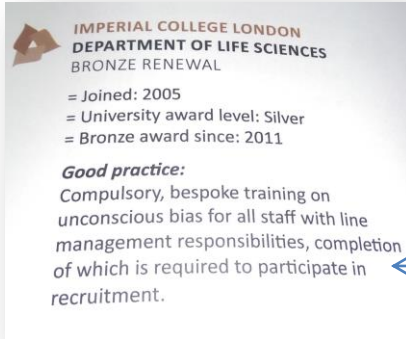
APPOINTMENTS

Bill Wisden became the Deputy Chair of the Neuroscience and Mental Health Board at the Medical Research Council (MRC) for his remaining time on the Board.

Hugh Possingham received an [honorary doctorate from UBC](#)

ATHENA SWAN

The Athena SWAN Award ceremony took place on 16 December at the Oxford University. The trophy and certificate (pic on the right) will be on display in the Sir Ernst Chain Building (2nd floor foyer area) in the New Year – until then you can come and admire it on Lenne's desk...



Life Sciences good practice promoted by the Equality Challenge Unit!



Silwood Park Nursing Mother's Room, has now been completed and is available to use for any staff who require "nursing" facilities at Silwood Park. **Thank you to Darsi Wickham for making it happen!** The room is located in the Refectory (the old student union common room – G.26) and requires swipe card access, so if you need access please contact Security who will add the reader onto your access level. The baby changing facility is located in the accessible toilet on the ground floor of Hamilton.



TECH NEWS

Imperial College hosted the HEaTED London Regional Network Event on Friday 11th December at the South Kensington campus, organised by **Allison Hunter**.

[Check out the brief report, further details & pictures of the event](#)

PERSONAL NEWS

Claire Pean, Research Associate, has recently started an online Science magazine called [KEWO Science](#) with a fellow scientist from CRICK, Dr Silva Zakian. The website aims at unravelling controversial issues about health, well-being, psychology and biology in general. It is run and written by scientists and targeting the general public to make the science in our everyday life more understandable and accessible. Our community of science writers is growing together as our partnerships with associations, and charities. We are providing articles, podcasts and documentaries (we will release soon a documentary on Tuberculosis done in partnership with World Without TB, <http://www.worldwithouttb.org/>). It is based on the voluntary contributions of all science lovers and we are delighted to see the enthusiasm of the science community in this project. We happy to involve anyone interested in the Life Science department!

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Kirsten McEwen was awarded an Imperial Junior Research Fellowship with effect from 1 December 2015.

Richard Gill is looking forward to hosting Dr Jacob Johansson for 2 years starting in March 2016 after a 3 year Marie Curie International Career grant for Jacob was successfully awarded.

Courtney Boyd, a PhD student from Doryen Bubeck's lab, just won a Prize for the best talk at the London postgraduate symposium for bacterial pathogenesis and host response (BPHRS 2015).

Cristina Lo Celso has been awarded a double bill from Bloodwise (former Leukaemia Lymphoma Research): a project grant written together with Dr Constandina Pospori to study the interactions between T cells and acute myeloid leukaemia, and a 4 years Gordon Piller PhD studentship to study the consequences of migration of leukaemia cells on residual healthy haematopoietic cells. Dr Pospori will join the Lo Celso group as a research associate right after the Christmas break.

Morgan Beeby received five years' worth of funding as a listed collaborator on an NIH R01 grant with a colleague in the USA.

MEDIA/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES/EVENTS BEING HOSTED

Stephen Curry was quoted in an article ["What does the spending review mean for science and innovation?"](#) The Guardian (25 Nov 2015).

["Will the UK's science chancellor please stand up?"](#) The Guardian - Opinion piece by **Stephen Curry**, published 3 Dec 2015.

Tony Nolan was quoted in an article ["How infertile mosquitoes 'could eradicate malaria within years': Genetically modified insects 'pass on gene that renders their offspring sterile'"](#) by Daily Mail (7 December).

Stephen Curry's piece ["Will Self's forceful search for the genius behind a scientific giant"](#), published by the Guardian (9 December).

Austin Burt and **Andrea Crisanti** were quoted in an article ["What's scarier? Tinkering with mosquito DNA, or malaria?"](#), The Washington Post (24 Nov 2015).

POSTDOC NEWS

Huge thank you to the wonderful **Rochelle Aw, David Briggs, Alice Grob, Roya Haghghat-Khah, Masue Marbiah, Miguel Matias** (Silwood Park), **Poh-Choo Pang, Marko Storch, Joe Yu and Chris Wilson** (Silwood Park) for volunteering to sit on the **Life Sciences Postdoc Committee!** First meeting to be held on 11 Jan – terms of reference, minutes of the meeting and details about upcoming events to be circulated after that date! Stay tuned. Stay supportive. Stay engaged.

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE



Laboratory inspections 2016

The [FoNS Health and Safety Team](#) has been reorganised so that the two Faculty Safety Officers (Dr. Felicity McGrath and Mr. Anthony Marchant) will be coordinating lab inspections with Principal Investigators and Facility Managers.

The inspection process will review the health and safety risks associated with specific hazards in each laboratory against sector guidance and best practice to ensure all laboratories are inspected annually.

HOSTING WORK EXPERIENCE STUDENTS

If you host any under 18 students on work experience or similar please refer to the appropriate [guidance](#).

COLLEGE HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING COURSES

The College Learning and Development Centre run a number of [courses](#) on various aspects of laboratory, offsite and other health and safety related issues. If you attend any health and safety training or receive local inductions or training remember to record them using the online '[My Health and Safety Training Record system](#)'.



Pic of some of the decorations made at the DoLS Family Christmas Party this year...

Happy Holidays :)