

Best Outstanding Contribution to the Research Staff Environment

Name: Careers Seminar Series Organising Team (Elli Marinopoulou, Nicholas Scott, Gabrielle Parkinson, Helen Williams)

Faculty: FBMH

Position: Postdocs

Research area: Biological Sciences



We are a team of four postdocs (Elli Marinopoulou, Nicholas Scott, Gabrielle Parkinson, Helen Williams) who have worked within the FBMH for many years, and we all hold PhDs in Biological Sciences.

In your own words, please describe your outstanding research whether that be an output, impact, contribution to the environment:

We conceived the idea of creating an FBMH career seminar series where we would regularly invite former academics to tell us about their experience in transitioning into positions outside academia. The purpose of these seminars is to expose researchers (Postdocs or PhD students) to alternative career options, give them the opportunity to ask questions about the roles and provide them with useful tips and advice on how to make the transition. We have also organised more practical-based workshops such as CV clinics and a LinkedIn masterclass. Sessions take place over Zoom, and are recorded and uploaded to the University's video portal and hence available on demand.

Many of our attendees have let us know how helpful this service has been in deciding what type of job would suit their skills. Some have even obtained employment with companies and organisations that our speakers represent.

What motivated you to do this?

Us researchers, are/have been in the same situation, worrying about immediate concerns (papers, grants, job security), but also where we're heading career-wise. It is an inescapable truth that most researchers do not become principal investigators and yet, getting an insight into alternative careers can be difficult. It therefore struck us that our peers had a desire to know more about careers beyond academia.

We felt more could be done to guide and inform researchers about the alternative careers available outside an academic environment. Some of us would have conversations with ex-colleagues that had left academia, which were so helpful to the planning of our own futures, and thought- why not share this information with the broader FBMH community? And that's what we did through this seminar series! We must also thank Eamon Dubaissi, who drove the formation of the seminar series before leaving the University in mid 2021.

What are you planning to do next?

We remain passionate about maintaining the seminar series and keep providing career support to researchers at the University. Our workshop on LinkedIn was very popular so we aim to run further

practical workshops in the future, encompassing areas such as interviews and selling yourself to employers.

We will continue the seminars as long as we work for the University but inevitably, some of us will end up leaving! On that note, if you are a researcher interested in getting involved in the organising of these talks, we would love to hear from you. It is an excellent way to network with potential future employers while contributing to the creation of a positive research environment. Please email us! Recorded seminars and our contact information can be found here:

<https://video.manchester.ac.uk/> (you must login via the university network/VPN to access and search for 'FBMH Career Seminar Series').