

FMHS Postdoctoral Society

End-of Year Report

2016

COMMITTEE

Founding members:

Brie Sorrenson, Cherie Blenkiron, David Musson, Karen Bishop, Anita Muthukaruppan, Catherine Bacon, Jie Zhang, Kate Lee, Carol Greene, Jen Hollywood, Catherine Tsai, Verity Oliver (on maternity leave), Martin Chopra (departed UoA to become a Journal Editor), Jimmy Dalton (departed UoA to return to Ireland to become a Patent Advisor), Sunali Metha (departed UoA to join University of Otago as a Research Fellow), Kimiora Henare (departed UoA on a Research Sabbatical in Canada)

New members in 2016:

Andrea Kwakowsky, Raewyn Poulsen, Simon O'Carroll, Manisha Sharma, Susann Beier, Swarna Gamage, Bianca Heilman, Jesse Ashton and Sachin Thakur

Committee structure:

1 President (Brie Sorrenson)

2 Vice-Presidents (Cherie Blenkiron & David Musson)

1 Treasurer (Andrea Kwakowsky)

5 Subcommittees (Scientific, Professional Development, Grants Communications, Networking) each with their own subcommittee leader

Committee meets once a month to strategically plan all events and Subcommittees meet as required to run individual events and brainstorm. Charter established for the organization in 2015.

AGM held in July (30 attendees) and new Committee Leadership elected.

ACTIVITIES

Scientific Events:

1. "3-Minute Methods Mini Symposium" for Research Fellows and final year PhD students in February.
2. Microscopy Methods lunch with Jacqui Ross, Hillary Holloway and Jenny Malmstrom in April.
3. Half day "Postdoc Symposium" showcasing FMHS Postdoc research in July (45 attendees).
4. International speaker Dr Paul Smaldino hosted in December.

Planned Scientific events for 2017: Ethics information session (human & animal, this may also include a session on tissue banking) in March, Half-day Annual Postdoctoral Symposium in July, Vision Maturanga information session in October International speaker (possibly Dr Elizabeth Iorns), "Toys for scientists" session– introducing the new

equipment in the labs to increase awareness of the Faculty's research capabilities.

Professional Development Events:

1. Grant Writing Info session with previous MPPT panel members in February
2. PBRF Information and support session run in conjunction with the Faculty and CBR ECR Committee in March.
3. Established Lecturing evaluation and peer review platform. Collated teaching database for future teaching development.
4. Advocating on behalf of research fellows during APR review and HRC strategic refresh.
5. How to be a **SMART** (Service, Mentoring, Action, Research, Teaching) Postdoc half day session including information on grants, publishing, service, promotions, APR, social media presence and more in July (65 attendees)
6. Media SAVVY workshop in conjunction with RSNZ ECR and the Science Media Centre in June (45 attendees).
7. Marsden Fund panel event for Research Fellows in conjunction with the Research Office in December (already 20 RSVPs).

Planned Professional Development Events for 2017: Early Career Researcher specific PBRF session in February, ADPR advice and support session early-mid year, How to get media exposure for your research session in March, Grant advice sessions with experienced panel members (e.g. MPPT, AMRF) in April, "How did they do that?" half day talks on activities that will improve your CV (e.g. international committees, grant review boards, journal editorial boards etc) in June/July, alternative careers event in conjunction with Faculty of Science postdoctoral society.

Grant Events:

1. Two funding rounds were held for publication and travel grants (Jan 2016 and June 2016). In the first round we awarded 4 publication grants from a total of 6 applications and 6 travel grants for travel to conferences and workshops from a total 13 applications. In the second round we awarded 2 publication grants from a total of 5 applications and 8 travel grants from a total of 19 applications.
2. Grant peer-review platform was established early 2016 that can provide examples of successful grants (Marsden EOIs, AMRF, MPPT etc), writing help and grant reviewing.
3. Initiated the creation of a ThermoFisher sponsored consumables award for Research Fellows that was awarded in October.

Planned Grant Events for 2017: Three rounds of publication grants (February, May, August). Two rounds of travel grants (February and July), continuation and increased exposure of grant peer review platform, ThermoFisher sponsored award will be repeated in the first half of the year. Aiming to approach multiple other companies to establish additional sponsored awards.

Communication Activities:

1. Fortnightly Postdoc newsletter – the Postdoc Journal.
2. Facebook group for updates on events relevant to FMHS postdocs.
3. Twitter account to raise profile of the society within the social networking arena, used to communicate details of our events and also to promote the research done by FMHS Postdocs.
4. Ongoing contact and joint events with SBS postdoc group and newly formed Faculty of Science postdoc group.

Planned Communication Activities for 2107:

Continuation of current communication approaches as well as development of a FMHS PDS page on the university website: This will help us to advertise our events (via a calendar of events and event posters), hold surveys, and will also be a repository for useful information gathered during seminars and workshops.

Networking Events:

1. Monthly networking Happy hour held in Cafe85.
2. FMHS Postdoctoral Society 1st Birthday Drinks and Cake event held at Grafton Atrium in April (approx. 40 attendees).
3. FMHS Postdoc vs PGSA Student Quiz night held at Café 85 in August. Prof Andrew Shelling as the Quiz Master (over 100 attendees, at least 4 postdoc teams).
4. Postdoctoberfest BBQ to celebrate Postdocs at Outhwaite Park in October (approx 25 attendees).
5. Christmas Party for all FMHS Postdocs held at the Good Home Bar/Cafe in December 2016.

Planned Networking Events for 2017: Summer Picnic/Trip to Waiheke in February, Participating in Round the Bays in March (with FMHS PDS t-shirts), PDS 2nd birthday party in April, Postdoctoberfest or celebration for Halloween in October, Postdoc vs Student Quiz night, PDS Bowling night, Have Happy Hour once/twice a month (try having a “theme” to it, or a topic of discussion relevant to what is happening in the science world to attract more people), Christmas event TBD.

Other events/activities:

1. Robyn Toomath seminar discussing “How to Engage with and Influence Policy Makers” held at Tamaki Campus in March.
2. “Careers at the intersection of science and business” panel event in collaboration with Velocity and PGSA in July.

3. “Fundamental vs Applied Science: Importance to the Advancement of Science in NZ” panel event held on city campus run in collaboration with the SBS Postdoctoral Society in August.
4. HealthX judging and PDS sponsored prize in September.
5. Q&A session with FMHS relevant Uniservices representatives in October (approx 20 attendees).
6. Representation on Faculty Research Committee and Equity Committee (when required).
7. Representation at Faculty Meetings.
8. Representation at The Future for Scientists in New Zealand: NZAS conference 2016 and booth presence at Queenstown Research Week 2016.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

Budget

- Funding of \$30,000 from the Dean’s Strategic Fund for 01 May 2016 to end Dec 2016 so as to align with the end of the financial year, \$25,721 has been spent to-date.
- Expenses have been reduced by self-catering smaller events and using professional University approved caterers only for the larger events.

Scientific Events:

- \$5,431 of the \$5,600 budget spent on events to date. Potentially some additional costs during International speaker visit.
- Attendance has been very good at all events, extremely positive feedback for the Postdoc Symposium which we intend to make an annual event.

Professional Development Events:

- \$2,587 of the \$4,100 budget spent on events to date.
- The half day “how to be a SMART Postdoc” was very popular and feedback suggests it could be run regularly, perhaps every second year

Grants:

- \$11,700 of the \$13,500 budget was spent on grants – of this \$7,700 was awarded as travel grants and \$4,000 as publication grants.

Networking Events:

- \$4,149 of the \$4,800 budget spent on events to date, there are remaining costs associated with the Xmas party that are expected to be approximately \$1,000.
- Networking events are well attended and many events have become popular annual activities (e.g. Postdoctoberfest, Quiz night).

Administration/Miscellaneous:

- \$1,854 of the \$2,000 budget was spent on miscellaneous and administration items including printing of the PDS banner, sponsoring a prize for HealthX and travel of PDS members to the NZAS conference.
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