

Surviving as a Woman in Science

The BioPark Hertfordshire, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 3AX: November 13, 2009

Following on from our successful Woman in Science event held in November 2007, we are pleased to announce our 2009 follow up which will focus on Career development for women at all stages of their career and life

This meeting has CPD approval

- 9:00 – 9:45 **Registration**
- 9:45 – 10:00 **Introduction by the Chair:** *Dr Pia Ostergaard*, St Georges Medical School, UK
- 10:00 – 10:35 **Do women make a difference to biology, and does biology make a difference to women?**
Professor Sian Harding, Imperial College, London
Working for 30 years in the London-based colleges has given me ample opportunity to observe to eco-systems of academia and the Darwinian struggle for survival. I will give a personal view of the roles of conscientiousness, risk taking, work, family, perception and fear of failure. I will consider whether science is a better or worse career than others for the advancement of women, and whether we have yet reached a plateau in what we can achieve.
- 10:35– 11:10 **PhD and Business**
Dr Mitra Hedman, Carbon Lite Solutions Ltd., UK
This talk will discuss Dr Hedmans personal the journey of a PhD, as a mother and a wife, and setting up a business in her free time..."It took 25 years from the beginning to the end of my PhD, as I had to take time off, to build a family, raise three children and take it up from where I left before, not an easy task compare to the young PhD students, or those who take time off for research..."
- 11:10- 11:15 **Speakers photo**
- 11:15 – 11:45 **Mid-morning break**
- 11:45– 12:20 **Back to the lab - joys and challenges**
Dr Annett Klinder, Reading University, UK
Having returned to science after a career break of nearly 4 years I will give a personal view of the challenges I faced, first, when I decided to go back to the lab and second, when I actually returned to the lab juggling work and family. I will talk about the support I received through the Daphne Jackson Trust, not only financially, but also boosting my confidence and giving me the opportunity to talk to other women with similar problems and experiences. I will also discuss what I personally see as advantages and disadvantages of working in lab
- 12:20 – 12:55 **How the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET can support you in returning to a career in science**
Ms Veronica Benson, UK Resource Centre for Women in Science and technology, UK
What the UKRC does to support women returners. Tips to returner to SET careers. Success stories and case studies
- 12:55 –14:00 **Lunch**
- 14:00 – 14:35 **Returning to a career in science following a break.**
Dr Katie Perry, Daphne Jackson Trust, UK
Dr Perry will talk about Daphne Jackson Fellowships as a means to return to a career in science following a break. The Daphne Jackson Trust arranges Fellowships throughout the UK, in university and industrial laboratories, for qualified scientists, engineers, technologists and IT specialists returning to work after a career. We enable returners to retrain and gain the latest knowledge and most up to date skills, mentoring them throughout their Fellowship, providing all the support, encouragement and help they require to enable

them to re-establish their professional confidence and credibility thus enabling them to compete for employment on a level playing field with their peers. Fellowships are flexible, paid, and are usually part-time for two years. Fellows undertake a research project and retraining programme

14:35 – 15:10 **What a difference a child makes - returning to work**

John O'Sullivan, CEO , Ten2Two, UK

Returning to work, particularly on a part-time or flexible basis throws up many new challenges and opportunities that didn't exist before. Whether it's finding a new role or just re-adjusting to your old job, there are a number of issues women need to consider and once you've returned, you, your managers and your colleagues need to adapt to new working patterns. John's talk will cover some of the issues women encounter, particularly in the context of the recent changes in working practices.

15:10 – 15:45 **Mentoring - a tool for advancement as well as survival**

Jan West, MentorSET, UK

This talk will discuss the importance of mentoring using MentorSET and a number of case studies as examples

16:45 – 16:00 **Chairman's summing up.**

You can network with people from this event at

Nature network - <http://network.nature.com/groups/euroscicon/>

Linked In- <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=1939569>

Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=70847076549>

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/Euroscicon/>

About the Speakers

Dr Sara Shinton works with a range of organisations in a variety of ways, but with a common theme of improving the career management and effectiveness of scientists and researchers. Originally a chemist, she followed a PhD in materials chemistry with postdoctoral research into polymer blends. An interest in teaching and student development was fueled by an RSC-funded project on communication skills for undergraduate chemists which led to a position as a university careers adviser. In 2000, she founded Shinton Consulting to focus on supporting researchers, particularly those on postdoctoral contracts and in the early stages of academic careers.

Dr Annett Klinder is currently working as a post-doctoral research fellow in the Department of Food and Nutritional Sciences on the effects of fruit and vegetable consumption on colon cancer biomarkers. She became highly interested in the health benefits of commonly occurring food ingredients when - after a degree in biochemistry and a PhD in cell and molecular biology - working on the effects of probiotics and prebiotics in colon cancer. After the birth of Annett's son she gave up her career in Germany to move to London with her partner, a theoretical physicist. She returned to nutrition research after a 4 year career break with the help of a Daphne Jackson Fellowship and has been working since on various research projects in the same department.

John O'Sullivan founded **Ten2Two** in 2007 to connect people with professional experience that want to work flexibly with local businesses that need their skills. Having worked with a range of businesses of all sizes and over 2000 people (mostly women) that are seeking flexible work John and his team have a strong insight and operational understanding of how flexibility works. Prior to starting Ten2Two, John founded and managed his consulting business Juice Associates, which has worked with many businesses on strategic marketing, business development and organisational change. In his earlier career, John worked with BT, Telewest and Compaq developing leading edge businesses in the emerging internet and multimedia sectors.

Jan West studied Physics at University. She worked as a business analyst and then project manager in the international banking sector of the software industry. The role took her around the world specifying and developing dealing room systems. After a short family career break, she returned to the work place initially working as a lecturer in a local college. Jan became the first manager of MentorSET in 2002 and has worked to build the mentoring scheme since.

Professor Harding leads a group at the NHLI Imperial College studying the cardiomyocyte in the failing heart. She is Co-PI on the first cardiac gene therapy trial in the UK, President of the International Society for Heart Research European Section, and is a member of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics as well as MRC and BHF grant boards. Her interest in stem cell-derived cardiomyocytes has led to membership of the Scientific Advisory Board for the government/Pharma initiative "Stem cells for Safer Medicines". She has a daughter aged 18 who is also considering taking up a scientific career.

Dr Katie Perry is a physicist by training who moved into the area of science communication and scientific press and PR work. For 5 years she worked in the Public Affairs Department at the Institute of Physics, managing their Public Understanding of Physics programme and working as a press officer with daily interactions with the scientific media. In 2000 she began working freelance as a Press and PR consultant and science writer. She worked for the University of Surrey for 3 years and is now the Press and Public Relations Manager for the Daphne Jackson Trust. She has been working part time since her daughter was born in 1999. She describes herself as one of those rare people who have a foot in both camps – she has a PhD and has worked in academe, but can also communicate complex science to the general public.

Veronica Benson is Manager for the South East Hub of the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering & Technology (UKRC). The South East Hub of the UKRC has recently moved to the University of Reading. Veronica has postgraduate qualifications in careers guidance, teaching and occupational psychology. In 2002 she helped set up a charity and alumni association for the University of Reading's surveying department. Previous to this she was a director of a commercial conference organisation running events for the male-dominated property industry. These combined experiences attracted her to the work of JIVE and the UKRC where she divides her time between working with SET organisations advising them on the recruitment and retention of women and supporting SET women jobseekers and returners.

Professor Amrita Ahluwalia is Professor of Vascular Pharmacology at the Centre for Clinical Pharmacology, William Harvey Research Institute, Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry. She is also Chair of the Women in Pharmacology Committee of British Pharmacological Society (BPS) and leader of the BPS mentoring programme

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*This meeting was **organised by Euroscicon** (www.euroscicon.com), a team of dedicated professionals working for the continuous improvement of technical knowledge transfer to all scientists. Euroscicon believe that they can make a positive difference to the quality of science by providing cutting edge information on new technological advancements to the scientific community. This is provided via our exceptional services to individual scientists, research institutions and industry. The event was hosted by **'BioPark** (www.biopark.co.uk), a research and development centre in Welwyn Garden City providing specialist facilities and support for bioscience and health technology businesses to grow, and to develop new products and technologies*