

Surviving as a Woman in Science

With a good degree, perhaps a PhD or maybe you have a couple of post-docs under your belt, you start to realise that the majority of senior scientists within your organisation are men! Of course they are not expected to juggle a career with family commitments and we all know that single-mindedly following one's ambition comes more naturally to the male of the species! So, how can you break through the glass ceiling and achieve your goals?

This one day meeting will bring together women from many different scientific backgrounds and at different stages in their careers, all with inspirational life stories, who are challenging the old order. There will be talks and advice from experts to help with CVs, grant and fellowship writing, interview techniques, time management, networking and a whole host of the other skills required to not just survive but thrive in science.



2nd Nov 2007

Chair: Dr Caroline PD Wheeler-Jones, Royal Veterinary College, UK

9:00 – 9:45 **Registration**

9:45 – 10:00 **Introduction by the Chair:** Dr Caroline Wheeler-Jones

10:00 – 10:30 **The Roles Women Play**

Dr Maureen Cooper, Former Director, Scottish Resource Centre for Women in SET, Napier University, Edinburgh

Many of us think that we progress up the career ladder on merit, that being good at the job and working hard will bring their reward. The continuing clustering of women in the lower grades in universities and companies and their absence from the boardrooms show that this can't be true. In fact research shows that promotion is around 80% image and selling yourself and at most 20% performance, has more to do with being politically aware than committed to the good of the organisation. This thought provoking talk will encourage you to look at the different roles in organisations in a new light and may help you to develop a personal career strategy.

10:30 – 11:00 **Juggling Lessons for Women:** Tips to get the most out of your career and your life.

Bob Ferguson, Confident Communications Ltd, UK

You know what it's like for women - career, partner, children all the things that have to be done, and then what about you! What about the things you want to do for yourself, There must be a time when you feel like your a frantic juggler - and how do you balance all these conflicting demands? In this entertaining session, Bob Ferguson will offer some tips to help you get control of your life, manage your career and feel good about the way you prioritise your time. Bob shows how the keys to control are goals, priorities and balance with simple techniques to help with all three.

11:00 – 11:10 **Group photo**

11:10 – 11:30 **Mid-morning break**

11:30 – 12:00 **Regenerative Medicine - A personal Experience**

Professor Dame Julia Polak, Imperial College, UK

Born in Argentina, qualified as a Physician in 1961 and settled in England 40 years ago. First I developed a method to identify the origin of a putative "hormone". The new endocrinology was born. This technique became a useful tool for localising chemicals in tissues and it is now employed by all pathology departments. Later I discovered these "hormones", to be present in every organ, hence the concept of the "diffuse neuroendocrine system" was proposed. A substance, originally extracted from car exhausts, was found in humans. I discovered it was present in nerves. The substance is the main component of VIAGRA. Twelve years ago, while collecting explanted lungs, from Magdi Yacoub's transplant programme, I was told I had a fatal lung disease that necessitated a heart and lung transplant. Afterwards turned my attention to the emerging field of Regenerative Medicine and set up an International Centre to attempt to grow organs in a dish, combining cells and specially designed materials. The Centre became renown for its productivity and originality. "Intensive Care", a novel by Friedman and a play "Change of Heart" (Hampstead Theatre) are fictional stories, based on what happened to me. Julie Olivier, the daughter of Lawrence Olivier played me. I am happy with what I have achieved, of my husband, my three children and soon a grand child! What else can I ask of life?

12:00 12:30 **Effective communication strategies**

Margaret Collins, The Royal Veterinary College, UK

Important elements in communication include "what you intended", "what you said", "what they heard" and "what they thought you meant"... Opportunities for miscommunication abound at each step of the process! Achieving effective communication requires you to be clear about your intention, to be congruent in delivering your message and to be flexible in your approach. We usually behave as if people are basically similar to ourselves and in that one assumption lies our downfall. Self-awareness and recognition of the preferred communication style of

your listener increase the chances of getting your message across successfully. Come and learn some tips!

12:30 – 13:00 **Tour of the BioPark**

13:00 – 14:00 **Lunch**

14:00 - 14:30 **What does it take to get women back into SET work after a career break?**

Dr Nina Baker, South West Scotland Mentoring Scheme, Glasgow

14:30 – 15:00 **Daphne Jackson Fellowships for returners to SET careers**

Dr Katie Perry, The Daphne Jackson Trust, UK & *Dr Pia Ostergaard*, Daphne Jackson Fellow, St Georges Medical School, UK

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.

15:00 – 15: 30 **Afternoon Tea/Coffee**

15:30 – 16:00 **Fellowship opportunities for women in science**

Dr Sabine Best, UK Grants Officer, The Royal Society, UK

The Royal Society Dorothy Hodgkin Fellowship scheme has been running since 1995 and has supported more than 150 scientists since. It aims to redress an imbalance that currently exists in the number of male and female scientists progressing to permanent academic positions in the UK. The presentation will describe this and other fellowship schemes of the Royal Society and give general advice on how to submit a successful fellowship application. An overview of other UK fellowship sources will be included

16:00 – 16:30 **Creating Cultures of Success for women in science**

Dr Maureen Cooper, Former Director, Scottish Resource Centre for Women in SET, Napier University, Edinburgh

This talk describes 'institutional' and 'attitudinal' barriers to women's career progression in engineering. Based on findings of an international research project the emphasis will be on positive initiatives for women students, faculty, professional women engineers and employers to overcome these barriers and to recruit and retain talented women engineers. The relevance to women and employers in other disciplines will be highlighted.

16: 30 – 16:35 **Chairman's summing up and close**

The logo for EuroSciCon features the text "EuroSciCon" in a serif font, with "Euro" in red and "SciCon" in black. To the right of the text is a stylized, black, abstract symbol resembling a molecular structure or a network of interconnected nodes.

This meeting was organised by Euroscicon (<http://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.

Who are the speakers

Dr Caroline PD Wheeler-Jones, Royal Veterinary College, UK Dr Wheeler-Jones obtained her first degree (BSc (Hons) in Physiology at the University of London and then went on to study for a PhD in Physiology at Queen Elizabeth College. Her postdoctoral studies at the Thrombosis Research Institute moved her into the field of cardiovascular research. Following the birth of her son in 1992 she moved to King's College London to work with Professor Jeremy Pearson and was subsequently awarded a British Heart Foundation fellowship to pursue her interests in endothelial cell function. She moved to a lectureship at the Royal Veterinary College at the end of 1997 and is currently a Reader in Vascular Cell Biology based within the Department of Veterinary Basic Sciences.

Professor Dame Julia Polak, Imperial College, UK Graduated from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina and obtained postgraduate training in the UK. Became Professor and the Director of Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine Centre, Imperial College in 1997. Scientific Board membership: Imperial College Institute of Biomedical Engineering, Stem Cell Advisory Board Panel (MRC/UKSCF), EPSRC Peer Review College (2006 – 2009), MRC College of Experts (2006 – 2010), Steering Group of the National UK Stem Cell Network, Immunology Programme Steering group, Council member of the Tissue Engineering Society International and the Academy of Medical Sciences (2002 – 2005) and European Editor of Tissue Engineering (up until 2004). Author of 992 original papers, 126 review articles and Editor/Author of 25 books and is one of the most Highly Cited Researchers in the field. Co-founder and Director of NovaThera a Spin out Company dealing with Regenerative Medicine Products. Recipient of numerous honours and winner of a number of prizes.

Dr Maureen Cooper, Director, Scottish Resource Centre for Women in SET, Napier University, Edinburgh Dr Cooper became involved in women and science activities 17 years ago when she set up a network "Women Scientists and Engineers in Scotland". This led to "Winning Women" a Scottish Higher Education Funding Council project to produce 3 guides to good practice to women's access, participation and career progression in SET in HE. EU funded women and engineering research projects have included "WOMENG – creating cultures of success for women engineers". She was Director of the Scottish Resource Centre for Women in Science Engineering and Technology during its set up. She has founded "Cultures for Success" a not for profit organization dedicated to carrying on her work in this area.

Dr Sabine Best, UK Grants Officer, The Royal Society, UK. Dr Best has a PhD in biochemistry and has worked as an active scientist for seven years. In 2004, she moved 'onto the other side' to work for the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) as Programme Manager on its Biomolecular Sciences Committee. After almost 2 years of commuting to Swindon, she took a position in the Grants Section of the Royal Society in 2006. She currently manages their Dorothy Hodgkin and Industry Fellowship Schemes and has a particular interest in Research Careers and Women in Science issues.

Dr Katie Perry, The Daphne Jackson Trust, UK Katie 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.

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