



CONNECTIONS

OxRSS provides Oxford research staff with a voice and networking opportunities

WWW.OXRSS.OX.AC.UK ■ NOVEMBER 2020 ■ VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A LETTER FROM THE NEW CO-CHAIR	1
OXRSS COMMITTEE	2
OXRSS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	3

CONNECT WITH US

Receive up to date information on staff events! Sign up to the staff list by sending a blank email to our [mailing list](mailto:committee@oxrss.ox.ac.uk) or follow us on social media.

✉ committee@oxrss.ox.ac.uk



@ResStaffOxford



[OxRSS Connections](https://www.linkedin.com/company/oxrss-connections)

A LETTER FROM THE NEW CO-CHAIR

A big WELCOME to the new academic term!

My name is Caroline Korell and I have recently been elected as the Co-Chair for Events for the Oxford Research Staff Society (OxRSS). I have been an active member in the OxRSS since August 2019 when I established two events where researchers could regularly meet new people and old friends in an informal way.

Of course, meeting people in these unprecedented times is a tricky business, but during the first lockdown with a lot of effort from volunteering hosts, we managed to bring the Pub socials and Board games nights alive in a virtual environment.

Albeit not being able to see each other in real life, the Events team has used the time spent at home to think of other ways to connect researchers across departments and divisions to learn and celebrate different cultures and languages as well as finding ways to support each other with getting important projects done when lockdown fatigue hit. Now, the writing bootcamps are a bi-weekly occurrence and we have just started to roll out language meet-ups for French and Italian.

You might think, how come French and Italian? Why not Spanish or another language?

Here is where YOU come into play. YOUR voice matters. We need to know to what matters to YOU in order to make change happen.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Board games nights
- Language meet-ups in French and Italian
- Writing boot camps
- Pub socials

Now, more than ever, is the time for communities to come together and support each other. The OxRSS Events team very much wants to support YOU in your current situation. Perhaps you are part of the vulnerable community and you rarely get to socially interact with others. Perhaps you are a single parent who struggles with working and caring for your child at home all day. Perhaps, now that you work from home, you have more work to deal with than before but you find it hard to sit down and get the writing done?

Not only is the Events team here to help you support with company and light-hearted activities but there is also the OxRSS Representation team here to support you with more fundamental challenges regarding your life as a researcher. Whatever the support is you require or the concern is that you feel the Oxford Research Staff Society should address, please do let us

know! Check out our objectives on the OxRSS website to see what we are currently working on and perhaps you see something that sparks your passion and you would like to support us reaching that objective. Here, please email our Co-Chair for Representation gwilym.rowlands@zoo.ox.ac.uk with any queries.

If you can think of any other events you would like to see on our calendar or you are interested in helping out, simply pop over an email to [me](#).

This is a time for change and we are hoping that with your input we can make a positive difference in our community. Thank you so much for taking time to read this and we very much look forward to hearing from you soon.

With all best wishes,

Caroline (caroline.korell@edcation.ox.ac.uk)

THE OTHER OXRSS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Co-Chair Representation

Your name: Gwilym Rowlands

Your department: Zoology

What was your most important achievement for OxRSS in the last year: It is hard to view the last year through anything but the lens of Covid. One of the greatest achievements for me was how OxRSS responded, and indeed expanded efforts through the Covid outbreak. A particularly remarkable achievement considering most researchers involved with OxRSS representation and event activities do so on an entirely voluntary basis and were themselves experiencing many challenges in and out of work. At key points through the first lockdown, representatives drew attention to specific impacts felt by research staff. I am proud of the strides made to improve representative structures, setting up the Research Staff Consultation Group and other committees with a specific focus on research staff. While there is much work still to do in this area, a clear pathway has been established to amplify information around Covid and other matters from the research staff community to university committees and key decision makers.

What is your plan for OxRSS in the next year: I was pleased to see expanded representation of research staff on University Committees — I will be working hard to see that trend continue. I will continue to work with departments, divisions, and colleges to strengthen research staff representation. Covid will I think continue to loom large for much of the next year, and we will also be monitoring the impact of Brexit on the research staff community. I look forward to helping research staff to feed into the university strategy following the signing of the Concordat on Research Staff development and helping to shape the direction of the Research Staff Hub. Both are very positive developments that will shape provision and culture towards research staff for many years to come.



ANN GILETTI, OXRSS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

In October 2019, OxRSS was awarded a John Fell Fund grant to support its activities and, for the first time, a part-time administrator to work with the Events and Representation Chairs and volunteers. I came on board as OxRSS Administrative Officer in January, and it has been quite a year. My role is, among other things, to organise and take minutes at various committee meetings, and manage OxRSS finances. Three months into my post we went into lockdown, and the Events Team swung into action by creating virtual social activities, while the Representatives gathered information on researchers' difficulties in the sudden uncertainty. Everyone made contributions. I helped Events by creating a series of virtual writing boot camps for researchers in lockdown. Modelled on live activities held in the Humanities Division where I am a

researcher, OxRSS boot camps support researchers across all divisions who want to make progress on writing commitments. At the same time, we held Representatives' meetings on researcher concerns during lockdown, such as financial worries, housing, child care, reduced research output, and commitments to funders. My contribution was to organise the detailed information in minutes, whose content was reported to Prof. David Gavaghan (University Advocate for Research Staff), Prof. Patrick Grant (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)) and Prof. Anne Trefethen (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and GLAM)), and forwarded to the Vice Chancellor. Work at OxRSS will continue to be challenging and exciting as we build support for researchers and begin working with the new Research Staff Hub!

Events Officer

Your name: Michael Morrison

Your department: Centre for Health, Law and Emerging Technologies, Faculty of Law

What was your most important achievement for OxRSS in the last year: It has to be our virtual events to provide some social interaction for people cut off from friends and colleagues.

What is your plan for OxRSS in the next year: To keep going! The pandemic means we can't plan ahead with any great degree of certainty, but we will be offering more virtual events and planning a wider variety of in-person social activities that can be rolled out as and when restrictions are lifted in 2021.



Researcher Developer

Your name: Anjali Shah

Your department: Research Staff Hub within People and Organisational Development (POD)

What was your most important achievement for OxRSS in the last year: Supporting the Events team to quickly move socials online when Covid hit, including Zoom tech-hosting. Clarifying and better communicating the University's support for researchers with children.

What is your plan for OxRSS in the next year: Supporting greater representation of researchers from under-represented groups on University committees.



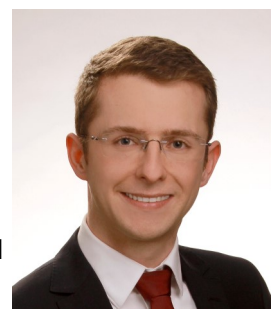
Publicity Officer

Your name: Fabian Schranz

Your department: Engineering Science

What was your most important achievement for OxRSS in the last year: Publicising an amazing amount of online events to keep researchers connected within the university.

What is your plan for OxRSS in the next year: Increase the awareness of OxRSS and spread the word about our great events.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Social opportunities

[OxRSS Email List](#)

To join, please visit www.ox.ac.uk/oxrss and click the link “Sign up to the Research Staff Mailing List”

[Facebook](#)

Like the [OxRSS page](#) for the latest news and events!

[Oxford University Newcomers' Club](#)

For partners' of researchers, graduate students and staff to meet each other.

[Oxford University Club](#)

Members and staff of the University are welcome to this sports and social club.

Career development, workshops, fairs and personal development

[Careers Service](#)

For one-on-one meetings with a Careers Adviser, and workshops and events specific for research staff.

[People and Organisational Development](#)

Obtain support for personal and professional development via courses and seminars on management, teaching, and personal development.

[Support for researchers](#)

This website contains information on support available to research staff from across the University.

[Vitae](#)

The national researcher development organisation.

Other resources

[Health and safety](#)

For information on occupational health and welfare

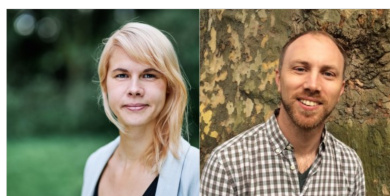
[IT services](#)

For technological and computing assistance.

[Welcome Service](#)

Welcome service for University members and their partners.

THE OXRSS COMMITTEE



Contact us: committee@oxrss.ox.ac.uk

Editorial team:

Fabian Schranz, Anjali Shah

Written and photographic contributions:

Caroline Korell, Ann Giletti,
Gwilym Rowlands, Michael Morrison