

# HERB

INTERMISSION PAGES 14 AND 15

# CONTRIBUTORS

## EDITORIAL TEAM



**Annette Cunningham**

Internal Communications Manager  
Public Affairs Directorate



**Shaunna Latchman**

Communications Officer (secondment)  
Public Affairs Directorate



**Laetitia Velia**

Senior Graphic Designer  
Public Affairs Directorate

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS



**Lanisha Butterfield**

Media Relations Manager  
Public Affairs Directorate



**Becky Fishman**

Marketing & Communications Manager  
The Oxford Foundry



**Rose Munday**

Communications Officer  
Academic Administration Division



**Dan Selinger**

Head of Communications  
Academic Administration Division

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Cover photo: Oxford Mail

# INTRODUCTION TO HR SELF-SERVICE

**In March 2017 the University began a project to implement HR Self-Service. Project Sponsor Dr Kate Blackmon explains this new service, which will give staff access to their personal details online**

## **What is HR Self-Service?**

By taking advantage of some of the more intelligent functions of the University's HR information system, this new service will allow University staff to view payslips and P60s online and access information held about them in the HR system.

## **Who will have access?**

All University employees will have access. We're aiming to implement the system more widely as new features become available. If you don't have a University contract (for example, if you're an agency or casual worker) the system won't be available for now, but this may change as the service develops.

## **What about staff with limited PC access at work?**

During the first phase the system will only be accessible within the University network and paper payslips will continue to be provided. Following the HR system upgrade due at the end of this year, access will be available from anywhere with an internet connection, including mobile devices. At this stage, and when staff have become familiar with their online payslips, we will look at ceasing to provide the paper copies. We're working with departments and the unions to ensure staff without access to a PC at work will have the means to get payslips and review their data.

## **Is it secure?**

The University's HR system utilises technology that is widely used globally to ensure the security of business systems. The project team has been working with the Information Security team to make sure that we continue to meet the University's requirements whilst allowing staff better access to their personal data.

## **Why now?**

With the impending changes due to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) later this year, it is important to allow people to view and update their own data securely, without an intermediary, wherever possible.

## **What are the benefits?**

Our goal of going paperless will reduce printing and delivery costs considerably. The current print run of 14,000 payslips every month costs approximately £31.5k per year. And naturally we will reduce the University's environmental impact by saving around 25 trees each year! Other work, like physically sorting through and delivering all the paper payslips, will also significantly reduce staff time.

## **When can we start using the system?**

We're aiming to launch the first phase mid-2018 with additional features, including offsite and mobile access, being introduced at the end of the year.

## **What is your role?**

As Project Sponsor I help ensure that all the plates keep spinning and add an element of academic involvement. My day job includes lecturing to MSc students in Major Programme Management. This development opportunity has allowed me to work with a varied group of interesting people, especially Kate Welsby, and Mandy Zaccheo and Anne Harkness in Personnel Services.

## **What can we look forward to?**

This is just the start – more services will become available through HR Self-Service, including booking annual leave online. Managers and administrators will also have facilities to view their employees' details and request changes to HR data.

## **Any parting thoughts?**

It is a really worthwhile and incredibly well-planned project with involvement from across the University including Information Security, Faculty of Law, MPLS, Department of Biochemistry and HR – to name but a few.

I hope it proves a good model for faculty member involvement in future projects. Being part of a project that empowers those involved, and which will impact everyone who works at the University, has been so rewarding.



Dr Kate Blackmon, Associate Professor in Operations Management and a Tutorial Fellow in Management Studies at Merton College

Find out more at <https://projects.it.ox.ac.uk/hr-self-service-project>

Please send any queries about HR Self-Service to the project team at [hselfservice@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:hselfservice@admin.ox.ac.uk)



# DAY IN THE LIFE OF JONATHAN BLACK

## Director of the University Careers Service

Annette Cunningham  
talks to Jonathan about  
his role delivering  
critical career guidance  
to Oxford's students

“  
One thing that I am incredibly proud of is that everyone in the University Careers Service is innovative and entrepreneurial  
”

Looking at Jonathan's diverse online profile – which reveals that he widely publishes, consults and presents on innovation around the student/employer careers experience – it seemed likely that he might struggle to describe a typical work day.

Jonathan confirmed this, describing his role as ‘someone who joins up the dots’ between the varied strands of his own work, within his own teams and across the wider University and beyond.

His teams comprise the advisors, internship co-ordinators, employee relations team and the administrators who Jonathan credits with keeping the office going and dealing with marketing and IT. ‘The service we provide has been completely revised since I came to Oxford in 2008, resulting in significantly raising both undergraduate and postgraduate satisfaction and engagement with the service. My workload continuously evolves to accommodate changes.’

Jonathan is quick to acknowledge the efforts of his teams: ‘One thing that I am incredibly proud of is that everyone in the University Careers Service is innovative and entrepreneurial.’

‘Someone is always coming up with an idea of how we might perhaps do something better, start something new or respond to new student or employer demands; everyone is always keen to investigate how suggestions might be implemented.’

Jonathan explains that collaboration with others is also essential to the success of all their work, from the careers fairs, internship programmes, weekly workshops and external vacancy promotion. ‘We enjoy the great relationships we have built across the University, including with the Admissions, Student Systems and Student Counselling teams. I find the existing widespread culture of “yes we will help – what can we do?” incredibly supportive.’

Jonathan is always open to listening to suggestions from others. ‘During my first term working at Oxford, two German students studying at Balliol College asked if I would consider setting up a student consultancy service, a common practice in their own country.

‘I investigated and, as an ex-management consultant myself, thought it sounded like something we should develop. The resulting

Student Consultancy has proved a great success, providing a well-respected service which involves training and assessing around 500 undergraduate and graduates a year. These students then use their skills to solve local organisations’ real business issues, enhancing their business awareness.’

One of the central roles of the Careers Service is the one-to-one meetings with students to discuss their career aspirations. The team conduct around 5,000 of these interviews each year. Jonathan is directly involved, typically spending one or two afternoons a week speaking to students about their future plans.

‘I know that many of my counterparts in other universities don’t personally conduct these interviews but I find it enjoyable, challenging and inspiring to interact with our students, working with them to explore their potential and helping them find solutions.

‘During these interviews,’ continues Jonathan, ‘we have a unique role to play. We’re experienced professionals providing them with impartial and non-directive advice. At the same time, we’re in the role of their best friend – it’s certainly a challenge. Our goal is to ensure that everyone always walks away feeling more positive about their future.’

Jonathan is often invited to present at conferences and events, within and outside the UK. These events offer great opportunities to inform others about the career research and initiatives taking place at Oxford and also highlight potential opportunities for working with others.

‘This is another example of how I join up the dots. At a recent conference in South Africa, I was intrigued by a fascinating presentation about an entrepreneurship centre at Copperbelt University in Zambia. I immediately felt that we could mutually benefit by working together. They agreed and we’re now setting up internships for our students in Zambia and investigating how Copperbelt can get involved with Enterprising Oxford and the new Oxford Foundry.’

Jonathan is proud of our work outside the city and that our career resources are so widely accessible: ‘Our website ([www.careers.ox.ac.uk](http://www.careers.ox.ac.uk)) allows everyone to view over 100 pages of our career advice, re-enforcing that Oxford is open, giving and for everyone.’

Know someone who would appreciate some career guidance? Jonathan's recently published book, *Where am I Going and Can I Have a Map? How to take control of your career plan – and make it happen*, has been described as ‘one of the most practical and comprehensible career guides ever produced’

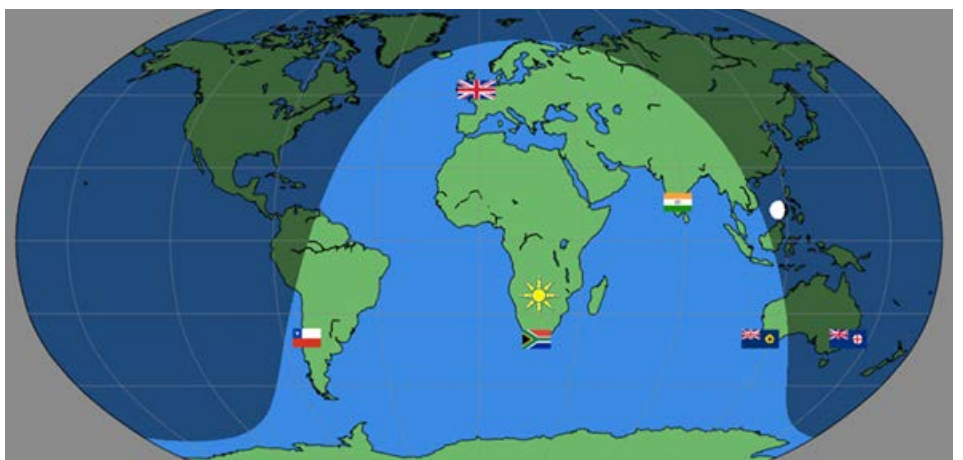
Look out for Jonathan's new fortnightly column in the *Financial Times* offering advice to readers about their working life



Students at the observatory located in South Africa

# RECRUITING YOUNG MINDS TO

**Professor Katherine Blundell, Professor of Astrophysics and Fellow of St John's College, speaks to Lanisha Butterfield about her research and her 2017 OBE award for her pioneering services to both astronomy and the education of young people**



Global Jet Watch – observatory locations

In a world where expertise is increasingly called in to question, research with a tangible impact and the potential to advance human understanding is essential. Professor Blundell's expertise on the evolution of active galaxies and their life cycles, the behaviour of material near black holes and the launch and propagation of relativistic jets contributes to this.

She is perhaps best known for her pioneering work to support young people to engage in science – particularly in the developing world – through the Global Jet Watch observatory network which she founded following a grant and a prize from the Royal Society.

The network, set up in locations across the world, includes a central office at Oxford, as well as observatories in South Africa, Chile, India and one on each side of Australia. The strategic positioning of these telescopes is vital. They allow round-the-clock observations to help scientists understand evolving phenomena in our Galaxy.



Professor  
Katherine Blundell

In October 2017 she was invited to Buckingham Place to receive her OBE from HRH Prince William. Professor Blundell said: 'I was delighted to receive this great honour. My visit to the palace with my dad and my husband was amazing and a memory that I will always treasure.'

The challenge of encouraging more young people, particularly girls and those in the developing world, to pursue a career in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) is widely embraced. However, despite the best efforts of industry, science councils and government, there is still much headway to be made.

When asked about the role Global Jet Watch continues to play in inspiring children to connect with science, she replies: 'In terms of getting data for astrophysics research this project is a dream come true for me. By design it was always intended to have a massive spin-off to engage young people – especially girls – in developing countries into science.'

“

**We hope that the legacy of the project will not just lie in the astrophysical results, but in inspiring a new generation of scientists ”**

# EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE

Astrophysics is often considered to involve studies of objects that change very slowly but Professor Blundell's studies of black hole systems show they are far from static. Huge changes can take place over just a few hours and having the ability to investigate changes as they happen will help us to understand more about how these highly dynamic systems work.

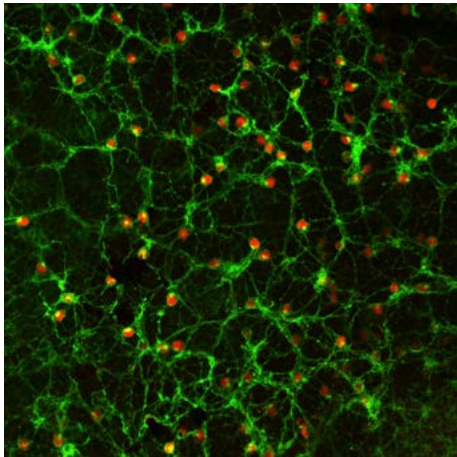
Four of the five observatory sites are hosted at residential schools where students are encouraged to use and operate the telescopes to develop their astronomy knowledge and technological skills. After local bedtime at each location, Professor Blundell operates the telescopes by remote control over the internet from her Oxford office, using the sophisticated spectroscopic instrumentation developed by her colleague Steve Lee of the Anglo-Australian Telescope, to gather the round-the clock data vital to inform her research.

'My aim is to expand the girls' horizons and broaden their aspirations, and I am thrilled by what we have achieved so far. Their thirst for knowledge is inspiring and seeing them go on to use the skills and confidence they have gained is incredibly rewarding.'

Looking at the future development of the project, Professor Blundell adds: 'On the research side, I would love to add to the technology that we currently have, and increase the wavelength capability of our spectrographs. But, I would also like to develop an ambitious component to the outreach part of our work, and share the learning online, so that children across the world have an opportunity to engage with our dynamic and evolving Galaxy.'

Find out more at  
[www.globaljetwatch.net](http://www.globaljetwatch.net)

# NEWS



## Gene therapy shows promise for reversing blindness

It may soon be possible to reverse blindness using gene therapy, reprogramming cells at the back of the eye to become light sensitive. Most untreatable blindness occurs due to loss of light-sensitive cells lining the retina, but the remaining non-light sensitive nerve cells remain. Samantha de Silva and colleagues from the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology introduced melanopsin, a light-sensitive protein, into these remaining cells in mice using a deactivated virus. After the treatment, the previously blind mice were able to recognise objects in their environment.

## Professional Services Conference – 20 March 2018

The Professional Services Conference (previously the UAS Conference) is taking place from 12pm on Tuesday 20 March at the Mathematical Institute at the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter. The event, aimed at professional and administrative staff across the collegiate University, will provide information about internal and external developments and approaches that will impact the University's administration in the year ahead. It will also offer staff professional development and useful networking opportunities. Visit [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uasconference](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/uasconference) for more information and registration.



## Medieval remedies

Daniel Wakelin, the Jeremy Griffiths Professor of Medieval English Palaeography, has written a book about some of the unpleasant medical remedies used in medieval England. With the help of Oxford masters' students, he found the remedies in the Bodleian's collection of medieval manuscripts. The remedy for gout, for example, recommends cutting open, baking and pulverizing an owl, before gently rubbing it over your wound! 'These remedies', states Professor Wakelin 'show us a lot about the medieval worldview.'

## Breast cancer recurrence risk persists for decades

The risk of breast cancer recurring may persist for at least 20 years after diagnosis, suggesting that hormonal treatments should be extended to reduce the risk. The Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group based at Oxford pooled data from 60,000 women who had estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer between 1976 and 2011, and had anti-estrogen therapy for five years. Those who had no recurrence in the first five years then stopped treatment, and their progress was followed for 15 further years. Over 11,000 had a recurrence of cancer at another site, with the risk of recurrence during each subsequent year (from years 5 to 20) remaining constant.

## Film London Jarman Award 2017

Oreet Ashery, Associate Professor of Contemporary Art at the Ruskin School of Art, has won the prestigious 2017 Film London Jarman Award for her web-based video series, *Revisiting Genesis*. The series looks at the modern death industry and tells the stories of an artist with cystic fibrosis and a painter who has had cancer.

## Is technology taking over children's lives?

Worried about how much time young people you know are spending on digital devices? An Oxford study suggests that although children spend a lot of time on them, they generally manage, much like adults, to multitask and intertwine the tech with daily life. The study looked at children aged 8 to 18 and found that children's overall screen time increased by 30 minutes a day between the years 2000 and 2015, while time watching TV dropped by 10 minutes.

Killian Mullan from Oxford's Centre for Time Use Research says: 'Technology is being used with, and to support, other activities like homework and socialising – not pushing them out.'



# NEWS

## Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Awards 2018

There's always lots of amazing work going on around the University to promote and support equality and diversity and we are proud to celebrate this work. Nominations are now open for the 2018 Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Awards and the four categories are:

- Individual Champion or Role Model (nominated by others)
- Innovation in promoting E&D in the workplace or in the student body (self-nominated)
- Promoting E&D through public and community engagement (self-nominated)
- Promoting E&D in learning and teaching (self-nominated)

If someone has inspired you or championed a cause close to your heart, please nominate them for Individual Champion or Role Model. If you're personally involved in any activity or initiative that has aided better equality or diversity at work, please consider nominating yourself and share good practice.

Winners will be announced at a high-profile event on Tuesday 8 May hosted by the Vice-Chancellor. The keynote speech will be given by June Sarpong, MBE – broadcaster, activist and author. Find out more and download the nomination form at: [www.ox.ac.uk/vc-diversity](http://www.ox.ac.uk/vc-diversity). Closing date for nominations is Friday 23 February.



### Replicating peregrine attack strategies could help down rogue drones

Our researchers have discovered that peregrine falcons steer their attacks using the same control strategies as guided missiles. The findings could be applied to the design of small, visually guided drones that can take down other 'rogue' drones over airports or prisons. The research, initially funded by the US Air Force Research Laboratory, may also give scientists greater insight into the pursuit behaviours of other predatory species. Professor Graham Taylor, of Oxford's Department of Zoology, said: 'Falcons are classic aerial predators, synonymous with agility and speed. Our GPS tracks and on-board videos show how peregrine falcons intercept moving targets that don't want to be caught. Remarkably, it turns out they do this in a similar way to most guided missiles.'

### There is water on Mars

Today's Martian surface is frozen and uninhabitable, but a trail of evidence points to a once warmer and wetter planet. What happened to this water is widely debated – however, Oxford research suggests it was absorbed by rocks after a mineral reaction. Dr Jon Wade from Oxford's Department of Earth Sciences explains: 'In essence, Mars was doomed by its geochemistry. Water reacting with lavas that form its basaltic crust resulted in a sponge-like effect, causing the planetary surface to dry and become inhospitable to life.'



# NEWS



## Pay Dates 2018

Below you will find this year's dates for when your salary will appear as a cleared fund in your bank account. The date tends to coincide with the second-to-last working day of each month.

- Tuesday 27 February
- Wednesday 28 March
- Friday 27 April
- Wednesday 30 May
- Thursday 28 June
- Monday 30 July
- Thursday 30 August
- Thursday 27 September
- Tuesday 30 October
- Thursday 29 November
- Friday 21 December

## New Year's Honours

A number of members of the University were recognised in the New Year's Honours list for 2018:

**Bernard Silverman**, FRS Emeritus Professor of Statistics at Oxford University, former Master of St Peter's College and lately Chief Scientific Adviser to the Home Office, is knighted for public service and services to Statistics.

**Professor Margaret MacMillan**, Honorary Fellow and former Warden of St Antony's College, is appointed Companion of Honour (CH) for services to Higher Education, History and International Affairs.

**Dr David Prout**, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Planning and Resources, is appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB).

**Jane Humphries**, Professor of Economic History at Oxford's Department of History and Fellow of All Souls College, is appointed CBE for services to Social Science and Economic History.

**Professor Ngaire Woods**, founding Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government and Professor of Global Economic Governance at Oxford University, is appointed CBE for services to Higher Education and Public Policy.

**Professor Tim Besley**, CBE London School of Economics and Political Science, and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, is knighted for services to Economics and Public Policy.

**Chas Bountra**, Professor of Translational Medicine at the Nuffield Department of Medicine, is appointed OBE for services to Translational Medical Research.

**Alan Giles**, Associate Fellow at Saïd Business School and chair of the advisory board of the Oxford Institute of Retail Management, is appointed OBE for services to UK Business and the Economy.

**Professor Judy Sebba**, Oxford's Department of Education and Director of the Rees Centre for Research in Fostering and Education, is appointed OBE for services to Higher Education and to Disadvantaged Young People.

**Dr Ben Goldacre**, Senior Clinical Research Fellow at the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, is appointed MBE for services to Evidence in Policy.

**Madeleine Sumption**, Director of the Migration Observatory, University of Oxford, is appointed MBE for services to Social Science.

**Dr Jake Dunning**, Honorary Visiting Research Fellow in Tropical Medicine (Epidemic Diseases Research Group Oxford) and Deputy Programme Director for High Consequence Infectious Diseases, NHS England, is appointed MBE for services to Clinical Research.

# MY OXFORD

**Professor Senia Paseta, Fellow in History at St Hugh's and Co-Director of Women in the Humanities, shares her Oxford experience with Shaunna Latchman – and prepares us for the celebration of 100 years of women's suffrage in the UK**

## **How did your career begin?**

I always wanted to be a historian and a teacher, so after studying in Melbourne and Canberra followed by Ireland, I embarked on an academic career to make this a reality.

## **What brought you to Oxford?**

I came to take up the Irish Government Senior Scholarship. This was, and remains, an innovative and important postdoctoral post for many Irish historians. I was based at Hertford College where I worked with Irish historian and academic, Professor Roy Foster. Whilst there I was successful in my application for a Junior Research Fellowship at Merton College. I later applied for a permanent position at St Hugh's and have remained with the college for almost 20 years where the access to knowledge and information is unparalleled. My role has evolved with time and I haven't felt the need to go anywhere else.

## **Has anything about your Oxford experience really stuck with you?**

Experiencing the Bodleian for the first time. I had read about it but the photographs I'd seen just didn't do it justice. It is magnificent and remains one of my favourite things about Oxford.

## **What direction would like to see the institution go in?**

Oxford is an ideal place for intellectual exchange and innovation. It is a city full of people from different places and over the last few years it has become a centre for women's and gender history. It's flexible with room for all sorts of experiments to gather speed, and there is a real mixture of minds and ideas and possibilities for growth. We need to continue on this trajectory and to create opportunities for study and research in new and innovative fields.

## **What impact would you like to make on Oxford?**

Women's history can inform broader history and I want to continue to build this field. I want to be someone who makes a real and positive difference to equality and diversity in this University.

This year marks 100 years since the Representation of the People Act of 1918 – which allowed some women in the UK the right to vote. In recognition of this, Women in the Humanities is working with partners



across the University and the city to mark this milestone in the development of democracy in the UK. One of the highlights of our programme is an exhibition in the Weston Library titled *Sappho to Suffrage: Women Who Dared*, which the Vice-Chancellor will open on 5 March.

## **What will the exhibition feature?**

It will showcase exhibits from the Bodleian which were made, written or commissioned by women and which have, up to now, never been displayed in this thematic format. The exhibition will serve as a focus for a broader programme of events to include library talks, school visits and workshops, the production of a 'suffrage in a box' teaching resource, international conferences, talks and debates.

I've had the pleasure and honour of curating this exhibition, working closely with Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM), the Public Affairs Directorate and academics across the University. We're fortunate to have the support of an award from the Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Fund which will allow us to showcase the programme online. It's a chance to celebrate the achievements of women who took risks and dared to do the unexpected and to highlight Oxford's continuing commitment to inclusivity and equality.

## **What is your lasting impression of Oxford?**

That our students are remarkable. They are very bright and so open to new ideas. And when they are committed they are really committed. They take advantage of the fantastic resources available to them and can produce extraordinarily good work.

# TEAM WORK MAKING IT WORK

**They're often the first people you will speak with about an IT query – so you can imagine how busy life can be for the Service Desk team in IT Services. The experienced team of analysts pride themselves on ensuring that we can all make the best use of technology at work**



From left: Stuart Robeson, Carla Thornley, Labhrain Magee, Jackie Hewitt, Paul Boodell, Katherine Craddock, Doug Simpson and Andy Swadling



Given the increasing reliance on technology in the workplace, the IT Services Service Desk team has seen a number of changes over the last three years. Service Desk Manager Carla Thornley explains 'We've increased the number of skilled Service Desk staff to reflect the changing demands on our service and we firmly believe that we best support the University by investing in our people. We aim to ensure that we deliver a high-quality customer-focused service, with an emphasis on ensuring team members understand how technology contributes to and shapes our working lives.'

**Team fact:** On average, the team deals with 500 calls and 700 emails each week

Alongside the new members of staff, the team is also aided by the latest tools: 'With our new IT Service Management system (ITSM) the Service Desk Analysts own each support call from beginning to end, contacting the relevant teams and managing the incident until it is complete,' explains Stuart Robeson, Customer Team Manager.

**Team fact:** The Service Desk comprises two former Oxford students, plus staff with work experience in other University areas, including engineering science, the Bodleian Libraries and finance

Recently the team implemented a new system for dealing with remote support. BOMGAR software allows the team to communicate with customers in real-time and, with permission, access their computer or mobile device wherever they are: 'Remote support allows us to improve support and efficiency by getting a better look at what the customer is viewing whilst talking things through. This helps us quickly identify what is going on by taking a look, rather than ask people to try to describe their issues,' says Labhrain Magee, who has worked with the Service Desk as an analyst for three years.

**Team fact:** The most common help requests received are granting access to shared mailboxes and guiding customers through eduroam setup

The team are currently guiding members of the University through the use of an enhanced self-service portal, which has been built to allow customers better access to commonly requested services. Additionally, in partnership with a dedicated out-of-hours support service, the Service Desk is now providing 24/7 support via telephone for members of the University.

“

**Our customers contact us because they have a request, question or a problem. Whatever their reason, and whether it's simple or complex, the bit I enjoy most about my job is sending them away happy ”**

Sydney Hicks, Service Desk Analyst

### How can the team help you?

The Service Desk is the first point of contact for any queries relating to software, hardware, printing or account management. Contact the team 24/7 by telephone on 01865 (6)12345. You can also email [help@it.ox.ac.uk](mailto:help@it.ox.ac.uk) or use the self-service portal <https://oxford.saasiteu.com>

### How can you help the team?

Call **12345** if you are struggling with an IT issue. If the lines are busy select the option for a call back. Please provide as much information about the issue you are experiencing as possible – this will help the Services Desk team to better understand and resolve your issue quickly



# INTERMISSION

Many of our colleagues across the University are engaging in interesting and extraordinary activities outside work. Here are just a few of the fascinating stories we have heard so far...



David Gowers

**Ginger Jansen**, Event Operations Manager, Ashmolean Museum

As a lover of languages I've always been motivated to learn more as I progress through my career and part-time studies. Last year I spotted an introductory course for British Sign Language at Oxford Brookes University which immediately sparked a fire in me – I had met my next challenge! Alongside signing, the class also offers an insightful journey into the amazing culture of the deaf community, their daily challenges and stories of inspirational role models. Gaining the confidence to sign with deaf colleagues and friends is hugely rewarding.

Find out about language courses at [www.lang.ox.ac.uk](http://www.lang.ox.ac.uk) and other adult learning opportunities at [www.conted.ox.ac.uk](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk)

**Dr Chris Thorogood**, Head of Science and Public Engagement for the University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum

Outside my work as a botanist I am an illustrator in my spare time. I mainly produce botanical illustrations for books and scientific papers, but I recently created a botanically accurate '3D oil painting'. The model, constructed from papier-mâché, plaster, clay and oil paint, was a life-size replica of *Rafflesia*, the largest flower on earth. It is not yet possible to grow this species in botanic gardens and it is rare in the wild, so my ambition was to bring this incredible flower to life for the public.

For more information, watch the Facebook Live video: <https://www.oxfordsparks.ox.ac.uk/content/facebook-live-worlds-largest-flower>



**Magda Kozarzewska**, Assistant Custodian (part-time), Sheldonian Theatre

I've worked as an exhibiting artist since the 1970s. I trained at the Slade and was fortunate to be taught by some of the best of British artists including Lucian Freud, Euan Uglow, Bill Coldstream and Laurence Gowing. I'm something of a seasonal artist – painting outside between March and September in the French tradition of *plein-air*. I particularly enjoy working on landscapes (especially woods, water and fields), interiors and figures and I really like structure, tending to consider myself a builder rather than an illustrator. I'm pictured working on a recent portrait titled *The Headteacher*, inspired by Warhol.

Visit Magda's website [www.magdakozarzewska.co.uk](http://www.magdakozarzewska.co.uk)



**Matthew Kirk**, Examinations Manager, Examination Schools

Over the past decade I have been a wizard, a devil and an ass – well on stage at least! I've been performing for the past 11 years and have also directed several shows. It's a great creative outlet from work and I find my acting skills help with making presentations and delivering training. The Studio Theatre Club, operating since the 1970s, perform in the wonderful mock-Elizabethan Unicorn Theatre in Abingdon and we all muck in with props, costumes and the technicalities. I'm currently directing our next performance, a production of JM Barrie's rarely seen comedy *Quality Street*, showing from 14–17 March.

For more information, visit [www.studiotheatreclub.com](http://www.studiotheatreclub.com)



If you'd like to share details of a pastime or project you're involved with in your spare time please send your submissions to [blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk)

# ANNUAL APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS AND GRADUATION CEREMONY 2017

Director of Human Resources Julian Duxfield presented the 2017 University's annual Apprenticeship Awards and Graduation Ceremony in December at the Sheldonian Theatre, together with Clive Shepherd, Apprenticeship Manager

Clive reported that the judges were, once again, extremely impressed by the high standard of all the award nominations. *Blueprint* went along to the event to speak to the winners



## First-Year Apprentice Award – sponsored by Qube Learning

**Winner:** Jordan Morris, Reprographics Apprentice, Print Studio, Estates Services (nominated by Sarah King, Estates Services)

“I am completely blown away by this award. I love making my customers happy and I leave work every day feeling like I have achieved something. I can't thank my colleagues enough for their support”



## Second-Year Apprentice Award – sponsored by CSR Group

**Winner:** Lewis Aprea, Buildings Maintenance Apprentice, Estates Department (nominated by Karen Brading, Estates Services)

“It's great to know that my work is appreciated. It's one of the best ways to learn. I've been amazed by how much I pick up and I really enjoy getting involved and progressing every day”



## Third (or Final)- Year Apprentice Award – sponsored by Aylesbury Training Group

**Winner:** Adam Fisk, Museum Maintenance Apprentice, Museum of Natural History (nominated by Wendy Shepherd, Museum of Natural History)

“My apprenticeship provides me with great opportunities and I love the craziness of my job and the random requests we get – including the task of constructing an 8-metres-high chicken!”

# GRADUATIONS 2017

## Apprentices receiving their graduation certificates:

- Olivia Acott, Apprentice HR Assistant
- Ellie Bowles, Apprentice Business Administration
- Harry Clarke, Apprentice HR Assistant
- Georgina Graham, Apprentice Administration Assistant
- Alicia Green, Apprentice Business Administration Assistant
- James King, Apprentice Workshop Technician
- Melina McCann, Apprentice Clerical Assistant
- Frances Murray, Apprentice Library Assistant (English Cataloguing)
- Grace Parsons, Apprentice HR Assistant
- Daniel Pull, Apprentice Network Operations
- James Ritchie, Herbarium Apprentice, Apprentice in Plant Specimen Conservation
- Laura Wilkins, Apprentice Administrative Assistant



Rob Judges

## Apprenticeship Manager Award

**Winner:** Andy Kirk and Sarah Chamberlain, NPEU  
(nominated by apprentice Alex Idle)

“We’re delighted to have received this award and very pleased to have our hard work and effort recognised. We’d like to extend our thanks to those colleagues that have supported us in our supervisory role and to Alex for his nomination”

## Apprenticeship Manager’s Special Award

Awarded to Engineering Science by Clive Shepherd

“The team’s open and inclusive approach to recruitment has given many young people an opportunity of a University career – and their excellent retention and progression history endorses this achievement”

## Poster Competition

Candidates were invited to design a poster to represent the elements of their apprenticeship – sponsored by Oxford University

**Winner:** Katherine Whitcher, Software Developer Apprentice, Clinical Trials, NPEU

“Since I have started my apprenticeship, I have gained invaluable hands-on experience and I now feel confident in having a successful career as a software developer”

Here’s what our other apprentices say about working at Oxford ...

“I love the variety of my role and the fact that I am learning alongside gaining experience, working towards a qualification and getting paid – all at once!”

Katie Chegwin, Clinical Trial Support Officer, NDORMS

“I’ve been surprised at how important an apprentice can be in an organisation – a lot of people really rely on me for my lab support. It’s great that the scientists and students are always happy to talk to me about their interesting work”

Jamie Comley, Apprentice Laboratory Technician, NDM

“I love meeting the new graduate students and I feel really valued in my role. My manager has given me more responsibility over the last year and I no longer feel like an apprentice”

Jess Downes, Apprentice Administration Assistant, Graduate Accommodation, Estates Services

“I’ve been surprised by how valued you are and how welcoming everyone is. I enjoy building rewarding relationships with my colleagues and other apprentices”

Matt France, Apprentice Finance Assistant, NDM

“I’ve learned a lot about myself whilst doing my apprenticeship and it’s great that people trust me enough to confide in me. I recommend apprenticeships to everyone I know”

Grace Parsons, HR Assistant, Department of Computer Science

**REMINDER:** The University’s new Work Learn Develop programme helps University staff to gain professional qualifications at any stage of their career. Find out more at [www.staffdev.ox.ac.uk/wld](http://www.staffdev.ox.ac.uk/wld)



Dave Fleming

# OXFORD FOUNDRY

**The Oxford Foundry, developed and launched by Saïd Business School, is the University's brand-new entrepreneurship centre, designed to encourage Oxford students to develop an entrepreneurial approach to their future. The Foundry's Marketing and Communications Manager, Becky Fishman, reveals how the former nightclub on Hythe Bridge Street has transformed into a dedicated learning centre, offering hands-on, high-quality experiential learning for all Oxford students**



Dave Fleming

Since its official opening on 11 October, with special guests Tim Cook (CEO of Apple) and Vice-Chancellor Professor Louise Richardson in attendance, the Foundry community has grown fast. Almost 800 students have already registered to use the Foundry, representing all four divisions of the University.

Ana Bakshi, Inaugural Director of the Oxford Foundry, explains that the centre is committed to supporting Oxford's students: 'The Foundry will bring together a diverse and strong community, drawn from all disciplines of study, from medics and engineers to historians and philosophers.

'By collaborating with academic departments and with student societies across the University to create and deliver our programmes, we aim to create a safe haven for students to develop their employability skills and build self-reliance, which in turn will prepare them to take responsibility for their own futures.'

Students from every discipline are included in the Foundry's overarching mission to



**OXFORD  
FOUNDRY**

The current make-up of Foundry members is:

- **undergraduates 51%**
- **postgraduates 49%**

The divisional split is:

- **MPLS 46%**
- **Social Sciences 30%**

- **Medical Sciences 12%**

- **Humanities 11%**

- **Continuing Education 1%**

be as inclusive and diverse as possible. Both undergraduates and postgraduates can attend the workshops and inspiring speaker events that the Foundry facilitates. And joining the Foundry community has been made easy to do; students register by simply showing their Bodleian card.

Foundry user James Neale, a Mathematics and Statistics undergraduate from Corpus Christi College enjoys his visits to the Foundry: 'I love the space! It gives me a relaxed working environment where I am able to talk to friends.'

Ani Haykuni, MBA, Hertford College, agrees: 'It's great to have a place where you can interact with people, and it's a fun space, which is exactly what entrepreneurs need! Everyone here is friendly and incredibly supportive.'

Hilary term will see workshops on Exploring Your Strengths and Networking for Results, student-led events focusing on AI (artificial intelligence) and gender diversity in the workplace. It will also welcome the first 'Humans of the Foundry' visitor, Matt Clifford, founder of Entrepreneur First, who will be holding one-to-one sessions with students keen to get expert advice from a start-up sage.

'It's important to have an entrepreneurial space like this – it breeds innovation,' comments Camille Harris, a current Computer Science undergraduate at New College, who attended a recent workshop on Self-Branding and Telling your Story at the Foundry. 'It's crucial for students to be able to bounce off each other's ideas because real community and entrepreneurship go hand in hand.'

University alumni are also welcomed at the Foundry. One of the teams that has already adopted the Foundry as a meeting place and an occasional workspace is OQDA Renewable Energy Technologies Limited. This clean energy company, founded and run by recent Oxford graduates, works



with world-renowned scientists, Oxford Sciences Innovation and the University of Oxford.

Allison Gates, Oxford MBA graduate and co-founder of ODQA, says: 'It's great to be able to work here while we finalise our seed round. We get the chance to connect with bright minds building really incredible companies – plus a community to support us through the ups and downs of running a start-up.'

The Foundry will shortly open the application process for its new accelerator programme, OXFO LEV8. A cohort of early-stage start-ups – who each have at least one Oxford-affiliated founding member – will be selected to use the Foundry as their base for a limited period and to benefit from the centre's network, expertise and support.

Left page:  
Top picture (left to right):  
Becky Fishman, Marketing and Communications Manager; Ana Bakshi, Inaugural Director; Julie Sanders, Programmes Administrator; Johnny Thomson, Outreach Manager

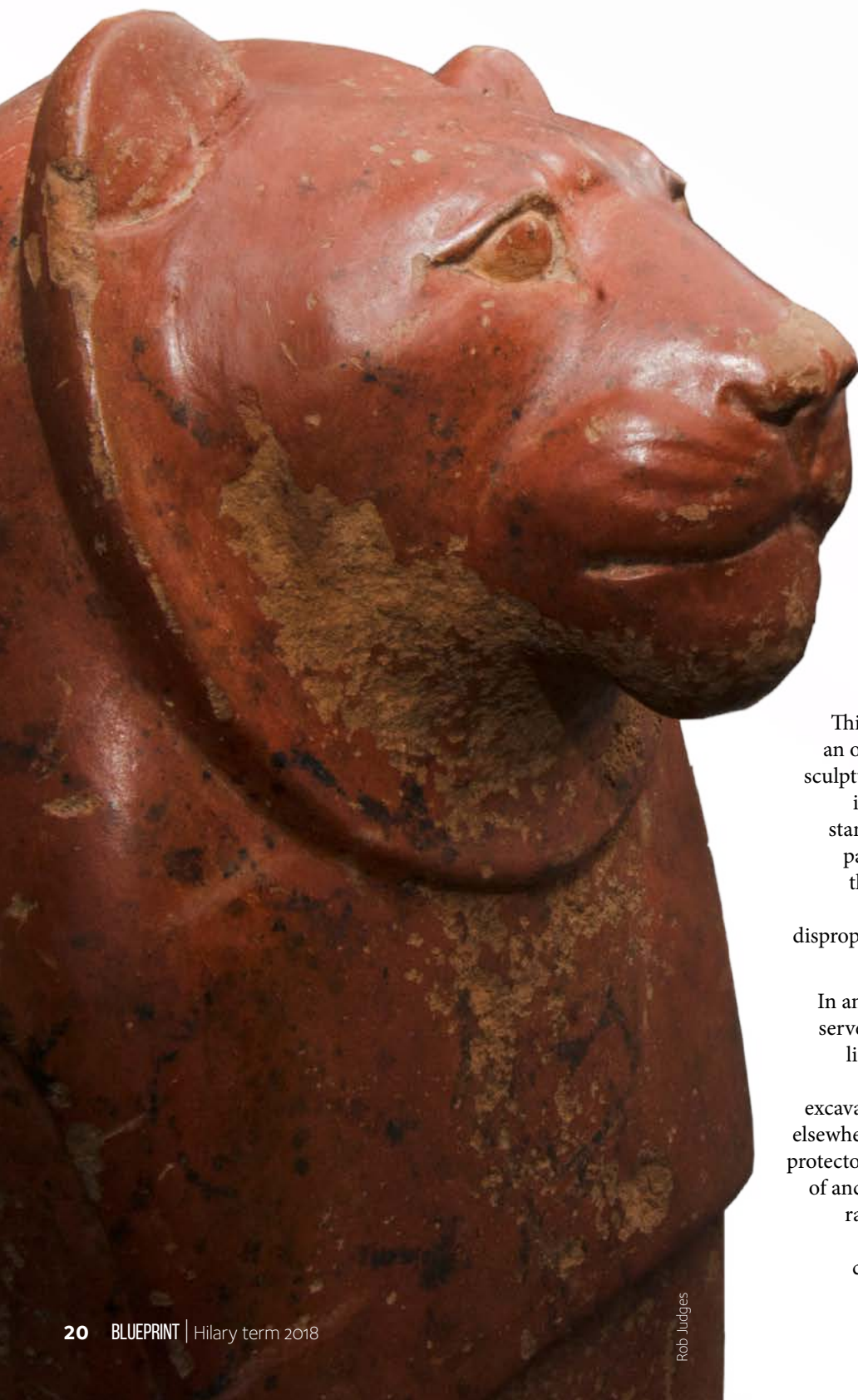
Bottom picture (left to right):  
Gedit Kamaca, Allison Gates and Ahmed Refaat

Primarily a student facility, University staff can hot-desk in the Foundry one day a week with prior agreement and request space for student-facing programme delivery. For details email [info@oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk](mailto:info@oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk)

Details about the accelerator programme and all upcoming events are available at [www.oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk](http://www.oxfordfoundry.ox.ac.uk)

# CURIOXITIES

We encouraged you to ask us to find out more about the intriguing artefacts found in the University's vast collections. Thank you to our museum experts for the explanations in this issue which unravel the process of petrifying and reveal the likely purpose of a pottery lion crafted over 4,500 years ago



**Pottery lion:**

**Ashmolean Museum,**  
Egyptian Research Account Excavations,  
1897–9 gallery

**Artefact nominator:**

**Martha Buckley,**  
Project Support Co-ordinator, Humanities

**Museum expert:**

**Liam McNamara,**  
Lisa and Bernard Selz Curator  
of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

This fired-clay pottery statue depicting a lion on an oval base was discovered with a cache of royal sculpture in the temple enclosure at Hierakonpolis, in Egypt. Dated at around 2325–2175 BC and standing at 42.4cm, the face, muscular body and paws are modelled with striking realism, while the circular ruff around its face and its square, bib-like mane are highly stylised. The head is disproportionately large for the body and the overall impression is one of majesty and power.

In ancient Egyptian mythology, paired lions often served as the guardians of entrances and sculpted lions performed the same function in temples.

This figure may have had a companion (the excavators found fragments of another pottery lion elsewhere at the site) and the two probably served as protectors within the temple precinct. Such examples of ancient Egyptian sculpture in clay are extremely rare, perhaps because the modelling and firing of large pieces in this medium can pose considerable artistic and technical challenges.



**Petrified bird's nest:**  
**Museum of Natural History, 1843**

**Artefact nominator:**  
**Thomas Marshall,**  
 Communications  
 Officer, Estates  
 Services

**Museum expert:**  
**Eliza Howlett,**  
 Head of Earth  
 Collections

This petrified bird's nest, in reality a basket of eggs, was created in a petrifying spring (possibly in Matlock, Derbyshire). At these springs, water rich in calcium bicarbonate drips from limestone rocks and carbon dioxide is lost to the atmosphere. This makes the calcium bicarbonate less soluble and causes it to precipitate. Placing an object beneath the resulting drips fills the original pore spaces of organic material with minerals, eventually transforming it into a fossil, giving it the appearance of having turned to stone. The process takes up to one year to complete – slow, but much faster than the rate at which fossils normally form.

There are several petrifying springs around Matlock. In the 19th century there was a thriving local industry selling petrified curiosities to visitors. Bird's nests were the most popular subject with one chosen by Princess Victoria when she visited Mr Joseph Pearson's Great Petrifying Well in 1832. The Ashmolean example belonged to William Buckland, who read Geology at Oxford from 1818 to 1845. It is likely to have informed his investigations into the process of fossilisation.

#### **Curious about an artefact?**

Nominate a museum exhibit to feature in the next issue – [blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk)

# WHAT'S ON

Find out which events are recommended for your diary by colleagues from some of our popular visitor venues



## Ashmolean Museum

[www.ashmolean.org/events](http://www.ashmolean.org/events)

Celebrate Chinese New Year, the Year of the Dog, at the Ashmolean with a free and fabulous weekend festival for all ages, taking place on Saturday 17 to Sunday 18 February from 11am–4pm. Experience a Chinese lion dance, listen to live music, enjoy performances of magical Chinese tales presented by the Story Museum, join a tour, try a trail and much more!

The Ashmolean's next exhibition, *America's Cool Modernism: O'Keeffe to Hopper*, begins on 23 March and explores significant examples of American art produced during the roaring '20s and Depression-era '30s. The works on display share a smooth, crisp, clean appearance and a cool, impersonal treatment. Look out for *The Life and Art of Georgia O'Keeffe* lecture on Friday 27 April.

Don't forget to keep an eye on the museum's regular Ashmolean After Hours events when the museum is open late. Take in a talk, listen to some live music or relax at the bar with friends after work.



## Pitt Rivers Museum

[www.prm.ox.ac.uk/special-events](http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/special-events)

The Pitt Rivers Museum hosts regular family activity days and an array of events and classes throughout the year. Every Saturday from 11am to 1pm families are invited to discover more about the wonderful and fascinating objects from the museum's collection. Get up-close with these hands-on, free events. In addition, you can borrow a backpack full of activities and become a family of museum explorers. Stop by the information point between 10am and 4pm every Saturday to get started!

On Saturday 24 February from 6pm to 10pm the museum will host *Party at the Pitt: An LGBT History Month Celebration*. Community groups, queer theorists, curators, performers and artists will come together to celebrate LGBT History Month 2018. Join them for a night celebrating LGBTQ+ histories from Oxfordshire and beyond. Expect live performances, pop-up exhibitions, micro-talks and interactive activities. All are welcome! Keep an eye out on Facebook for more programme details about the plans to transform the galleries and celebrate queer culture. Booking is essential; visit the website for further details.



## Bodleian Libraries

[www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson)

2018 promises to be a big year for exhibitions at the Bodleian Libraries. Learn about graphic design at a time when only pen and paper were available. *The Graphics on the Medieval Page* exhibition, in the ST Lee Gallery until 11 March 2018, explores the graphic design of handwritten manuscripts and inscriptions for the first thousand years of English, across the Middle Ages.

Or if photography is more your thing why don't you swing by the Proscholium before 25 March to see *Walter Benington: photographic portraits 1914–1922*? Walter Benington was a British photographer whose work is heavily represented in the National Portrait Gallery.

The Weston Library is hosting the *Sappho to Suffrage: Women Who Dared* exhibit from 6 March 2018 until February 2019. This features a collection of carefully curated items all chosen to celebrate the achievements of women who dared to do the unexpected. *Sappho to Suffrage* showcases some of the Bodleian's most remarkable and treasured items.



## Botanic Garden

[www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/event](http://www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/event)

Fancy a virtual botanical cruise around the Mediterranean or immersing yourself in a world of aromatic, culinary herbs? Perhaps you are interested in finding out about the wildlife at Harcourt Arboretum, exploring the rich and unique 400-year history of the UK's oldest botanic garden, or brushing up on your practical skills with a course in creating magnificent pot displays? Then spring into 2018 with Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum!

The garden's Winter Lectures, a 2018 highlight, offer the perfect tonic for long, cold winter evenings. Lectures are followed by a glass of wine and take place at 8pm on Thursdays in the Mathematical Institute OX2 6GG. A 10% discount is available for Friends of the Botanic Garden and alumni of the University of Oxford. Other lectures in the series are:

- **22 February:** *A Mediterranean Botanical Voyage* (Chris Thorogood, Oxford Botanic Garden)
- **1 March:** *People, Places and Plants* (Jim Gardiner, Vice-President of the RHS)
- **22 March:** *Succession Planting in the Mixed Border* (Fergus Garrett, Great Dixter)

**Tickets are available online along with information about other events, including the family-friendly Science Club and the popular Teddy Bears' Picnic in May**

### Want to find out more?

Visit [www.ox.ac.uk/events-list](http://www.ox.ac.uk/events-list) for details of a wide range of great events open to everyone taking place across the University

Visit [www.museums.ox.ac.uk/content/family-friendly-events](http://www.museums.ox.ac.uk/content/family-friendly-events) for more information about family activities taking place at eight University venues

Visit <https://talks.ox.ac.uk> for details of a diverse range of events, talks and workshops. Each event listing indicates whether it is open to all or only to members of the University

# REDUCING CHILDCARE COSTS



Did you know that you can save tax and national insurance by using childcare vouchers? The workplace salary sacrifice scheme is for those using the University's nursery provision, whilst childcare vouchers can be used towards fees for private nurseries, child-minders, nannies, holiday play schemes and breakfast/after-school clubs.

Parents using the scheme benefit from tax and NI savings and the University benefits from employer NI savings – which is reinvested in childcare provision. From April 2018, the childcare voucher scheme will close to new applicants (anyone signed up before April can remain whilst still working for the University) and will be replaced by a tax-free childcare scheme.

The new scheme is open to a wider range of families but subject to qualifying criteria. Eligible families can save up to 20% (up to a maximum of £2K per annum) per child on childcare costs for children up to the age of 12. A family's individual circumstances will determine which scheme is more beneficial for them. Further information is available at [www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare](http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare) and [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk).



# OXFORD LITERARY FESTIVAL

## 17 and 25 March 2018

Staff and students can once again claim a 20% discount off tickets to the diverse range of talks on offer at the annual Oxford Literary Festival. Booking is now open for this event which always attracts a wealth of celebrated authors to the city to discuss their work. Guest speakers include the University's Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor and the festival will host the Bodley Lecture and Award of the Bodley Medal. To claim the 20% discount use code **OUOXLIT18**. Find out more at [www.oxfordliteraryfestival.org](http://www.oxfordliteraryfestival.org).

**FT Weekend**  
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We holding a prize draw to give away six pairs of tickets to the talk of the winners' choice. Just send your name, contact details and the name of your preferred talk (availability may make it necessary to choose an alternative event) to **blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk** by 5pm, Thursday 8 March.

## EUREKA!

Mathematician Dr Vicky Neale, Whitehead Lecturer at the Mathematical Institute and Supernumerary Fellow at Balliol College, sets *Puzzle for Today* for the *Today* programme on BBC Radio 4 and we've asked her to set one for you. Could you be the prime problem solver of this binary problem (there's a couple of hints there)?

Can you unravel which letter of the alphabet the solutions to the numbers below relate to? The letters spell out a feature of Oxford but have been mixed up – so when you've deciphered the letters, you'll need to unscramble them to reveal the answer.

**14 33 7 330 10 35 10 165 33 10 35 6 33**

Solved it? We have two pairs of tickets to give away as prizes to an Oxford Literary Festival lecture by David Acheson (mathematician and author). *Mathematics, Magic and the Electric Guitar* takes place at the Weston Library on Sunday 25 March at 1pm. To enter, send your answer and contact details to **blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk** by 5pm, Thursday 8 March.

## SPRING CONCERT BY OUP ORCHESTRA

The next performance by the Oxford University Press (OUP) Orchestra takes place at 7.30pm, Wednesday 21 March at St Barnabas Church. The orchestra's spring concert programme comprises Brahms' Tragic Overture, Mozart's Symphony No. 31 ('Paris'), and Schubert's Symphony No. 8 ('Unfinished'). Performers are talented amateur musicians from across the University.

Tickets are £6 each and can be purchased online (search 'Eventbrite OUP Orchestra') or on the door. Email [ouporchestra@gmail.com](mailto:ouporchestra@gmail.com) if you would like more information.

We have two pairs of free tickets for this concert. To enter the prize draw, simply email your name and contact details to **blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk** by 5pm, Thursday 8 March.



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**Dan Selinger talks to Fausto Ximenes, Oxford's first student from Timor-Leste (also known as East Timor) in Southeast Asia. Fausto, who grew up in a small village in one of the world's youngest nations, talks about his journey from a small island ringed by coral reefs with a population of 1.3 million, to taking up a place at Exeter College and studying towards a Master of Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government**



## **Can you tell us a little about your background please Fausto?**

I was born and raised in a small village town called Quelicai, approximately 140km to the east of Dili – Timor Leste's capital. I'm the sixth of ten children from an organically genius mother who didn't have any form of formal education and a father, a relentlessly dedicated nurse, who gave his lifetime to serving the rural communities with whom they still reside among today. Before coming to Oxford, I worked as a senior manager on an international development aid project.

## **How does it feel to be the first person from Timor-Leste to study here?**

Coming from a tiny island country of just over one million population and having only restored its independence in 2002, I'm very pleased to see Timor-Leste added onto the statistics of this world renowned institution. Although I'm the first student from Timor-Leste to ever enrol in a full degree program in the history of Oxford University, Oxfordshire and the UK as a whole have been very generous to Timor-Leste with thousands of Timorese workers engaging in all sorts of work, including here in Oxford and at some of our very own colleges. This certainly is a very special relationship to treasure.

## **What made you apply to Oxford?**

I stumbled on an article during my first year of junior high which described, in the Indonesian language, Oxford University as a mighty academic institution to aspire for, featuring several black and white photos of castle-like buildings. Although I had no idea where it was located on a world map, and having zero ability to compose even a sentence in English at that time, I silently murmured to myself 'maybe I'll go there one day when Timor-Leste becomes a free nation'. It took about 20 years from reading that old article before I was able to fulfil this childhood dream.

## **How are you finding the experience of studying at the Blavatnik School of Government?**

It is very positive. We are around 120 students with various professional and academic backgrounds and quite a large



Rob Judges

proportion of us have had extensive professional experience working in various fields. Learning from them via their participation in the lectures, group discussions and case studies has been profoundly enriching, just as our core lectures have been.

## **What has helped you the most?**

The staff at the Blavatnik School are incredibly friendly, accessible and willing to help whenever needed. The biggest help has been the financial support from the school. Although I came to Oxford mostly self-funded from personal savings and loans, my journey here would still have not been possible without the generous financial support towards my tuition fees, which I will forever be thankful for.

## **What are your plans for the future?**

I have several plans which include pursuing a career in public policy especially in the fields of access to justice, human rights, local governance, international development and also in international relations either at home or internationally. Depending on the outcome of my studies at Oxford, I am also interested in getting onto a PhD program, either in the UK or elsewhere.

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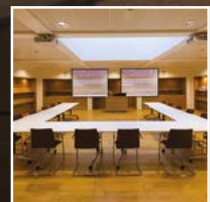


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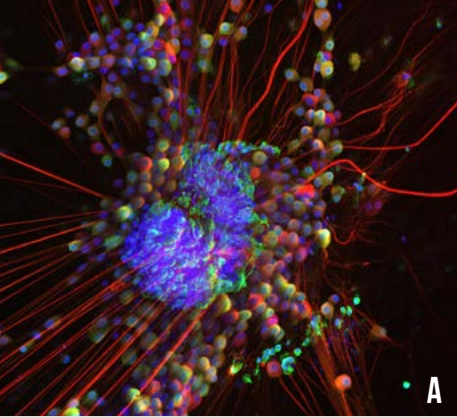
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A



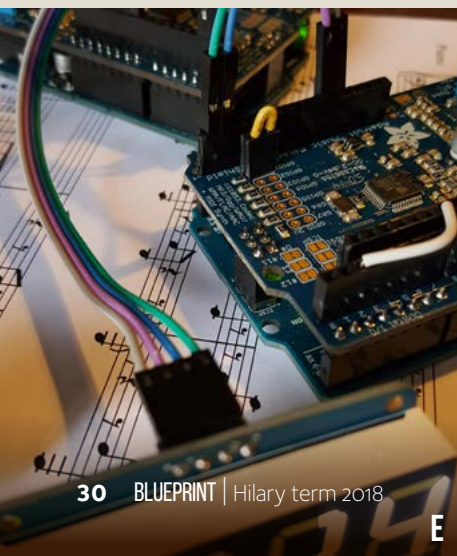
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C



D



E

# INNOVATION PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2017 WINNERS

Last year, staff and students were invited to use photography to depict innovation in their work or study. The overall Judges' Choice winner was Malte Kaller with his *Weird and Wonderful* Entry. All winners and runners up received Amazon gift vouchers and the Judges' Choice winner also received a copy of their image on canvas and printed on a mobile phone cover

## The Judging Panel comprised:

- Matt Perkins, Chief Executive of Oxford University Innovation
- Dominique Piché, co-founder and Creative Director of UPROSA
- Paul Chinn, Head of Design Studio, Public Affairs Directorate

## The winners are listed below with comments from the Judges:

**A** *Weird and Wonderful* by Malte Sebastian Kaller, DPhil Neuroscience

“Not only is the image striking but it also represents incredible innovation”

**B** *People and Partnership* by Elliot Bromley, MSc Modern South Asia 2017

“The image shows innovation in an interesting and important social context”

**C** *In the Field* by Sarah Griffin, DPhil in History of Art 2014

“This nicely captures how technological advances are extremely useful for accessing old knowledge”

**D** *Inspiration and Discovery* by Megan Bird, Department of Experimental Psychology

“This photo beautifully encapsulates both aspects of the category, inspiration and discovery, in a distinctively Oxford setting”

**E** *Machines and Equipment* by Professor David De Roure, Professor of e-Research at Oxford e-Research Centre

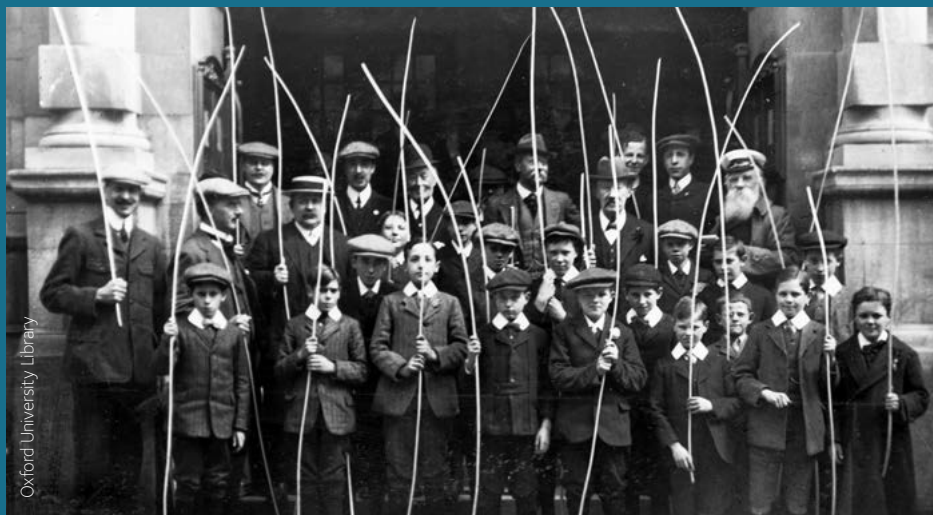
“An interesting combination of electronics and music, with the innovation clearly visible”

Professor Ian Walmsley, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation): ‘Thank you to everyone who entered the Innovation Photography competition. To capture the diverse ways researchers put the potential of their intellectual capital to use is a challenge and the judges were impressed by the quality and variety of the submissions.

As you will see from the winning images the impacts of research-led innovation may take many forms, but all share their common roots in a commitment to creative and lateral ways of thinking, connecting and problem-solving.’

# BEATING THE BOUNDS

Rose Munday investigates an ancient tradition surviving in modern Oxford



Boundary beaters on the steps of Oxford Town Hall in 1913. The white-bearded gentleman is the renowned Victorian photographer Henry Taunt

Whatever comes to mind when you think 'Easter', it probably isn't beating Oxford's walls with sticks. However, beating the bounds is an annual event held on Ascension Day that holds meaning and memories for many within the local community. As with many Oxford traditions, it dates back hundreds of years and is recorded as far back as Saxon times.

The purpose of the custom is to establish the perimeters of the parish boundaries, very important in days when maps were scarce, and long before Google maps!

While the need for the process no longer remains, the tradition surrounding it is as strong as ever. Come Ascension Day (the fifth Thursday after Easter), you'll find processions of people clad in gowns and brandishing sticks made of willow making their way between the boundary points of their parish. On arrival, the party beat the point in question with their sticks shouting 'mark, mark!' before saying short prayers for those who live and work there.

This year's date for beating the bounds is **Thursday 10 May** – look out for it in the city's streets from 9am

The parishes that still carry out boundary-beating are the City Church of St Michael at the Northgate and the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. Many elements of the two-hour process remain unchanged to this day, including the serving of cherry cake at All Soul's College as a reminder of where cherry orchards used to flourish.

There have been some changes over the centuries as a number of the original parish boundaries' points have been bought up by retail spaces. Today, the procession pays a visit to both the store room of Zara and the ground floor women's department of Marks and Spencer where there is a visible boundary marker in the floor – and a boundary stone on display in a glass case.

Tourists are known to latch on to the parade as it makes its way through the city. Given the gowns and sticks, they might be forgiven for thinking it was yet another Harry Potter tour.

## BLUEPRINT CONTACTS

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Public Affairs Directorate  
University Offices  
Wellington Square  
OX1 2JD  
[blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk)

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# LAST WORD

**Sarah Argles, Senior Project Officer with the Education IT Programme, requested that we feature this early photo from the University's image library, offering a fascinating insight into Victorian Oxford**

I love Oxford, and I love old photos of our city. This one of Cornmarket in 1896 shows the old horse-drawn passenger tram lines. Oxford's first line opened to the public in 1881, the route through Cornmarket was added in 1882. Competition from motor buses resulted in the city's last horse tram service running in August 1914.

What's great about the photo is that, despite being taken over 120 years ago, the exact spot it was taken is still instantly identifiable. It shows the – very newly built – existing Town Hall stretching down St Aldate's, officially opened by Prince Edward in 1897.

**Tell us about your favourite place in Oxford  
– [blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:blueprint@admin.ox.ac.uk)**