



CONNECTIONS

OxRSS provides Oxford research staff with a voice and networking opportunities

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Receive up to date information on staff events! Sign up to the staff list by sending a blank email to our [mailing list](#) or follow us on social media.

✉ committee@oxrss.ox.ac.uk

 @ResStaffOxford

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OXRSS DINNER AT EXETER

By Jean-Sebastien Balzat



The first OxRSS Christmas dinner took place at Exeter College on 19th December 2016. Pre-drinks were served to our 81 guests in the flamboyant nineteenth century Chapel of the college, while dinner was served in the historic Dining Hall. The three course menu, spiced up with a few French words, included artichoke and chive soup, roast guinea fowl for carnivores, ravioli for vegetarians, and an exquisite sorbet. The organisers interspersed this typical Oxfordian experience with a festive raffle and Christmas choir! The dinner was also the occasion to congratulate Steven Chance for his good work as former Chairman for the society. Special thanks to Anna Chabokdast and Lorraine Mumtaz for organising this enjoyable event. The next OxRSS dinner will be on 23 March 2017 at Trinity College.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 15 March, Welcome Event for Research Staff , Medical Sciences Teaching Centre, South Parks Road
- 23 March Trinity College dinner
- 30 March, OxRSS monthly social, Turf Tavern
- 5 April, Escape Room Games night, Headington
- 27 April, OxRSS monthly social, University Club

NEWS FROM YOUR VOICE REPRESENTATIVES

OxRSS representatives met on 11 January 2017 at the Oxford Learning Institute to continue discussions on issues affecting research staff. Numbers of representatives have increased from 15 since the Annual General Meeting in July 2016 to 26, but Social Sciences Division are under-represented.

If you are interested in becoming an OxRSS Voice representative, please contact Anjali Shah at anjali.shah@ndorms.ox.ac.uk

As a society, OxRSS aims to:

- represent staff at institutional and divisional level
- facilitate communication and networking by organising a range of social, professional, and family-friendly events

EMPLOYER JUSTIFIED RETIREMENT AGE

Sarah Thonemann (Head of Human Resources Policy) gave an update on Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA) at the Voice reps meeting. A policy has been in place for the last 5 years stating that academic, research, and professional staff in grades 6 and above should retire at age 67. The policy is currently under review. The full report of the review committee and its annexes are available at: www.ox.ac.uk/EJRA.

The EJRA Review Committee suggests:

- that the EJRA be retained
- that the retirement age be raised by one year to 68
- that the EJRA be limited to staff eligible for Congregation, i.e., those in grade eight and above

- that better support be provided for all staff nearing retirement age
- that all these changes come into effect as soon as is practicable

The group also recommended that the age of the EJRA be raised by a further year in 2022, to mirror changes in longevity, if the data available then continues to show the same trends.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Louise Richardson, invites us to express our views at the following email address: ejra.review@admin.ox.ac.uk. Any views submitted by 5 pm on 1 March will be considered by Council.

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD STAFF EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Laura Hodsdon (Professional Development Advisor) presented preliminary results from the 2016 University of Oxford Staff Experience Survey at the Voice reps meeting, under the headings of 'Being managed,' 'Training and Development', 'Environment and culture' and 'Fair treatment'.

Laura is working with Anjali Shah (OxRSS Chairman for Voice activities) to develop OxRSS policies from the results of the survey. These policies will be considered and amended by your Voice representatives, and then communicated at Institutional and divisional level to promote change.

NEWS FROM YOUR DIVISIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

MPLS

MPLS Division recently organised an afternoon induction session that was interactive, interesting, and well-attended. A number of postdocs and early career researchers are working closely with Justin Hutchence (MPLS Researcher Training and Development Manager) to tackle issues for researchers within the division. A wide range of training and development opportunities are available at divisional level listed here:

<https://www.mpls.ox.ac.uk/training/courses-for-research-staff>

Humanities and Social Sciences

Laura Tisdall has recently been appointed Post-doctoral Training Coordinator for the Humanities Division. Social Sciences are currently recruiting a

person for an equivalent post. Laura has organised an Early Career Writers' Workshop. Together with the Social Sciences Division, Laura is hosting three 'editor-in-residence' days, where editors will meet academics who are interested in writing for a public audience. Staff will receive feedback on ideas and pieces in progress.

Medical Sciences

Medical Sciences Division has recently set up the "Research Staff Advisory Group" (RSAG) to advise the Divisional Board on the development and implementation of the division's strategy for the development of research staff. It includes a member of staff from each department and will share good practice and champion career development.

FEATURED EVENTS

Walking tour

By Indira Nagesh

As a new postdoc in the city of spires and domes, I was very keen to explore historical and architectural insights. I joined Oxford Research Staff Society to integrate into the new place and was very pleased to join the walk on October the 15th. Daniéle Lucas was very knowledgeable and started with the history of the monastery being taken over by Cardinal Wolsey (Christ Church founder) during Henry VIII's reign. We visited Christ Church College and walked along Merton, New College, University College and the Bridge of Sighs with loaded history behind them. It was a very informative walk with typical English weather!



FEATURED EVENTS CONTINUED

Cuban salsa

By Anna-Lena Sahlberg



On a Wednesday evening in January, we gathered in a small group at Wolfson College for a beginner's salsa class. Guided by two skilled and friendly instructors, Sam Hutton and Bea Prentiss, and accompanied by rhythmic salsa music, we learned the basic steps and stumbled along in our first attempt at salsa, while our instructors showed us how it was really supposed to look. It was very nice to meet new people from around the university, and I really enjoyed spending time with people whom I would never have met otherwise.

Halloween Quiz

By Lorraine Mumtaz

We had 3 teams for the quiz, a few less than expected, but we realised many of you were probably out Trick or Treating! It was a themed quiz, with questions on horror movies as well as Halloween traditions, and the usual sports and general knowledge. All felt they learned a few

more interesting and unusual facts! The team members battled it out and it was close, but there had to be one winner, and that was the team consisting of Ruth Coleman, Amanda Bennett, Jessica Davies, Matthew Gosden and Adriana Adjani. Well done to you all.

Wine Tasting Event at The Randolph Hotel

By Lorraine Mumtaz

We had 16 tickets available for this event, which sold out fast. The event was run by Oxford Wine Company, and has been going for a few years now. In the Grand Ballroom of the Randolph Hotel 17 tables were set up around the room where we could sample various wines from different companies, and some spirits too. We decided to go round in numerical order, spending longer at

some tables than others! The wine merchants were very knowledgeable answering any questions we had. A bonus was the 15% discount on wines ordered that evening. It was a lovely evening and all thought it was very enjoyable. On the basis of interest received, OxRSS will be planning some more wine tasting events in 2017.

Wall Climbing at Brookes University

By Indira Nagesh

Anna Chabokdast organised a wall climbing taster session at Brookes University. We had a group size of 10. The instructor was very helpful in getting on to the basics of climbing with ropes attached, which all of us thoroughly enjoyed. The

free style climbing was exciting and challenging at the same time. With our sore muscles and achy legs some of us managed to climb to the top of the wall in the beginners section. Wall climbing is something I will look forward to doing in future!

USEFUL RESOURCES

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.

[Code of Practice for the Employment and Career Development of Research Staff](#)

The University's commitment to supporting the careers of researchers.

[Research staff groups by department](#)

This website contains information on research staff groups in each department.

[Oxford Learning Institute](#)

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

[IT services](#)

For technological and computing assistance

[New research staff](#)

This website provides information for research staff who recently joined Oxford.

Social opportunities

[Oxford University Club](#)

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

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