

## **ARUK Southwest Network Early Career Researcher Day**

- 10.00-10.30 **Registration**
- 10.30-10.40 **Welcome from ECR reps**
- 10.40-11:20 **ECR lightning talks**
- 11.20-11.50 **Break**
- 11.50-12.50 **Reproducibility and Research Integrity** (2x 30 min talks)
  - Open Research (Sofia Fernandes, University of Exeter)
  - Reproducible Practice (Eilis Hannon, University of Exeter)
- 12.50-13.50 **Lunch and posters**
- 13.50-14.10 **ARUK Update** (Katherine Hanlon, ARUK)
- 14.10- 14.40 **Translational Research** (John Davis, Oxford DDI)
- 14.40-15.40 **Parallel breakout sessions** (Writing Theme)
  - Grant writing (Gordon Taylor, University of Exeter)
  - Paper writing (Chris Wood, University of Exeter)
- 15.40-16.00 **Break**
- 16.00-17.00 **Parallel breakout sessions** (Career Development Theme)
  - CV writing and interview techniques (Rebecca Northwest)
  - Fellowship workshop/panel
    - Francesco Tamagnini (Reading University)
    - Emily Lane-Hill (Warwick University)
    - Robbie Fisher (Bristol University)
    - Eilis Hannon (Exeter University)
- 17.00 -17.30 **Closing remarks and award presentations**

QR code to  
poster and  
oral abstracts



**Sofia Fernandes - Open Research Manager, University of Exeter**

With over fifteen years of experience in higher education institutions, Sofia serves as the library functional expert for Open Research and is at the helm of the Open Research Team. In this role, she spearheads the University's Open Research strategy, overseeing vital components such as managing institutional and funders' open access funds, the repository and research data services. Her dedication focuses compliance with funder and Research England requirements while advocating the broader advantages of Open Research. Her expertise and interests lie in Open Research, particularly in the domain of Open Access publications and data, scholarly communication, responsible metrics, research culture and research assessment. Sofia holds a degree and a master's degree in Information Science and various coaching qualifications. In addition, she is currently undertaking an MBA focused on Strategic Management and Leadership.

**Eilis Hannon –Senior Research Fellow, University of Exeter**

Eilis Hannon is a Senior Research Fellow in the Complex Disease Epigenetics Group at the University of Exeter Medical School following her undergraduate in Mathematics and PhD in Bioinformatics. Her research focuses on integrating multiple layers of genomic data from a range of technologies to model the dynamic nature of gene expression and epigenetic variation and explore how this mediates genetic risk for complex diseases. She currently holds a Research Software Engineering Fellowship from the EPSRC, where in addition to developing bespoke software for modelling genomic data, she advocates for reproducible research methods and facilitates wider development of computational skills for staff and students across the University. She has been awarded funding from the Brain and Behaviour Foundation and Alan Turing Institute. She is co-module lead for Health Statistics for Data Scientists, part of the Health Data Science MSC programme, and is Biomedical Health Theme lead for the Institute of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence. Since February 2022 she has been part of the UKRN Institutional Reproducibility Leadership Team.

**Katherine Hanlon - Research Manager, Strategy & Impact**

Katherine is part of the Research team at Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK). ARUK is the UK's leading dementia research charity dedicated to making life-changing breakthroughs in diagnosis, prevention and treatment. Katherine's role focusses on assessing the impact of the research ARUK funds and developing the research strategy.

**John Davis – Professor of Pharmaceutical Discovery in the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford**

John Davis is Professor of Pharmaceutical Discovery in the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford, and a principal investigator within the Centre for Medicines Discovery. As director of business development for the Alzheimer's Research UK Drug Discovery Alliance (ARUK DDA), John is focused on building partnerships that capitalise on the strengths of the three drug discovery institutes within the ARUK DDA. John is a biochemist with a PhD from the University of Cambridge, postdoctoral training carried out at the Ludwig Institute (Middlesex Branch) and an EMBO fellowship at The Salk Institute. In 1993 he joined SmithKline Beecham as part of the establishment of a neurology research unit and, following the merger to form GlaxoSmithKline, led non-clinical pharmacology research departments for pain and neurodegenerative diseases. In 2010 John co-founded Convergence Pharmaceuticals, subsequently acquired by Biogen, and has since co-founded a further three start-up companies. In 2015 he joined the University of Oxford to set up and lead the ARUK Oxford Drug Discovery Institute. The institute has developed a portfolio of early drug discovery programmes for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, with an emphasis on genetically validated targets, and has forged multiple industrial alliances to ensure progression of these projects. John has 25+ years of drug discovery expertise from gene to phase IIa and has helped steer a dozen drug candidates into development.

**Rebecca Northeast- Product Manager and Science Liaison, Proteintech**

Rebecca obtained a PhD in neuroscience from the University of Manchester followed by Postdoc in metabolism. Rebecca joined Proteintech in 2020 as a Technical Specialist before rapid promotion to Product Manager. Her role is highly varied; from working with R&D and commercial arms to develop and launch new products, to leading Proteintech's global webinar program which reaches over 10,000 people a year.

**Gordon Taylor- Professor of Medical Statistics & Director of the NIHR Research Design Service South West**

Gordon obtained his first degree in Mathematical sciences from the University of Portsmouth, followed by an MSc in Statistics (with applications in Medicine) from the University of Southampton and a PhD in applied Mathematics from the University of Ulster. He then did a 2 year post-doc at the MRC Biostatistics Unit, Cambridge working on transplantation related research before moving to the South West to work for the Bath Research and Development Support Unit (the forerunner of the current Research Design Service structure) and then subsequently for the NIHR Research Design Service South West. Gordon moved to Exeter in April 2018 to take up the role of Professor of Medical Statistics and in October 2018 took over the role of director of the RDS SW. Gordon provides methodological (especially statistical) support across a wide range of research areas, with grants and publications reflecting this diversity of interests. He is vice-chair of one of the NIHR Doctoral Research Fellowship (DRF) panels and has previously been a member of an RFPB committee as well as chair of a NHS research ethics committee.

**Chris Wood - Head of Researcher Development and Research Culture, University of Exeter**

Chris is Strategic lead for the Researcher Development and Research Culture team in the Doctoral College responsible for planning, budgeting and day-to-day management as part of the Senior Management Team. The team covers research culture, postgraduate research and ECR wellbeing and training needs and is involved with the VITAE and GW4 networks. Chris has over 25 years of experience in delivering high impact agendas across strategic research sectors and has developed an expert understanding of research agendas, both within higher education and beyond. He has chaired the regional GW4 Talent and Skills Steering Group, is a member of the national Vitae CEDARS Steering Group and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**Emily Lane-Hill – Race against dementia and Babara Naylor Charitable Trust Fellow, University of Warwick**

Emily studied Medical Genetics at the University of Leicester, moving on to the University of Warwick for her BBSRC funded PhD in neuroscience. Awarded a Race Against Dementia Fellowship in 2021, she is collaborating with world-leading dementia biomarker experts at the University of Gothenburg. Emily is the co-lead of the neuroscience research cluster and chair the SLS Postdoc Society at the University of Warwick. She is an associate fellow of the Institute of Advanced Studies and an active member of the ARUK midlands network. Emily's research is investigating tau protein and how it disrupts neuronal and network function in early-stage Alzheimer's disease and has previously shown that tau aggregates can disrupt nerve cell function and the pathways that underpin learning and memory. She uses a highly specialised method which allows her to record the function of a single neuron at a time and challenge it with tau aggregates to look at changes in function. More recently, she has developed an assay to screen tau-containing patient CSF, demonstrating that tau in CSF potentially modulates neuronal and network function. She is now looking to determine the underlying mechanisms of these changes.

**Robbie Fisher- Alzheimer's Society Research Fellow, University of Bristol**

Robbie completed his PhD on Salmonella persister cells at Imperial College London before leaving research for a year to work in medical communications. He returned to academia as a research technician working under Dr. Scott Miners in the Dementia Research Group at the University of Bristol, before being awarded an Alzheimer's Society Research Fellowship to investigate novel cell markers for pericytes in the human brain within the same lab.

**Francesco Tamagnini – Lecturer in Pharmacology, University of Reading**

Francesco moved to UK in 2009, during his PhD in neurophysiology from the University of Bologna, where he researched the neuronal correlates of memory and learning. Following his PhD he worked as a post-doctoral researcher at the universities of Bristol and then Exeter, where his work focused on evaluating the alterations of the electrophysiological and morphological properties of interneurons in different preclinical models of Alzheimer's disease. In 2015 he received a junior research fellowship from the Alzheimer's Society. In 2017 he took on the role of Lecturer in Pharmacology at the University of Reading. His work focusses on single cell and network electrical function in physiological conditions and in pathological states, such as Alzheimer's disease and Fronto-temporal dementia.