

Social Sciences Division Diversity Network News – May 2020

Dear colleagues,

Please find below the latest news from the **University of Oxford Social Sciences Division Diversity Network**. This network is for all staff with an interest in, or formal responsibility for, matters of Equality and Diversity.

These newsletters can also be found on the Social Sciences Division intranet at <https://socsci.web.ox.ac.uk/intranet#collapse873256>. All staff are welcome to subscribe, by contacting the divisional office directly (diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk). Please forward on this message to anyone whom you think might be interested. Note that the list of members is not published. You may unsubscribe at any time via the same email address.

Please send any requests to circulate items to diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk. Feedback on Network messages is also welcome at any time.

Opportunities

Returning Carers' Fund – deadline Friday 29th May (5th week)

The University Returning Carers' Fund supports staff who have taken a break due to caring responsibilities to re-establish their academic careers. The fund is deliberately designed to be flexible. Applicants can apply for grants of normally up to £5k, which can be used in whatever way they feel will best support them to return to research and develop their career.

We would like to use the Returning Carers' Fund to best effect to support colleagues at this challenging time, so if you have thoughts or ideas of how it might support you, but are unsure of how to proceed, please do contact me to discuss.

Further details at <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/returning-carers-fund>. Application forms should be sent to diversity@socsci.ox.ac.uk by the deadline.

University Diversity Fund – call for bids to open soon; deadline in June.

The Diversity Fund is a £70,000 annual fund which provides small grants to initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive culture and promoting equality and diversity. The fund provides small grants (usually in the region of £5-£10k). See <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-diversity-fund> - further details to follow. If you have a potential initiative which you would like to discuss in relation to making a bid under this fund please get in touch.

Call for Participation: Career challenges among junior and senior academics at the University of Oxford – interviews now being held online

If you are a *postdoctoral researcher, junior or senior research fellow, lecturer, reader, associate professor or professor* employed by the Collegiate University, you may wish to consider participating in this research study, led by SBS and the Nuffield Department of Medicine. *Hearing your views, experiences, and opinions will help us understand what training, support and attitudinal shifts the University can foster to promote a diverse academic community at Oxford.*

Participation entails signing a consent form, completing a demographic questionnaire, sending us a copy of your CV, and undertaking a confidential 1.5-hour interview online at a date and time that is convenient for you. Interviews will be confidential and discuss the expectations you have from your career, and how your individual circumstances and work environments have affected your academic career progression at the University.

For further information on the research, please read the Study Information Sheet [here](#).
If you would like to ask questions before deciding to take part, please contact Dr Mahima Mitra at Mahima.Mitra@sbs.ox.ac.uk
To book an interview, please visit <https://OxfordCareerChallengesProject.as.me/>
If the provided times do not suit, please email Mahima.Mitra@sbs.ox.ac.uk so that we can schedule you in.

Events

University Disability lecture - #WhyDisabledPeopleDropOut: A Neurodivergent Student-turned-Academic on the Neurotypical University - 27 May 2020, 6 - 7.30pm online

Dr Kate West, Senior Lecturer in Visual Criminology, Oxford Brookes, will be delivering the University's 2020 disability lecture which will be taking place online via Zoom. Poster attached. Please register for free through the QR code on the poster attached, or at bit.ly/2020-UniDisabilityLecture

Our Mental Wellness: Managing Stress and Overcoming Anxiety (first of Experimental Psychology seminar series – online via Zoom - Thursday 21 May, 10:00-11:00am)

The Experimental Psychology Department has opened registration for the first talk in its new *Our Mental Wellness* seminar series. In light of the Covid-19 outbreak, the talk will take place online. The series aims to inform, dispel myths and generate discussion on a range of mental health topics. This is an excellent opportunity for students and staff to hear world-leading researchers share their expertise about mental health conditions and effective evidence-based treatments. The inaugural talk, delivered by Associate Professor Jennifer Wild, will focus on ***Managing Stress and Overcoming Anxiety***.

[Visit the website to register](#) – for further details please contact **Halley Cohen**, the Department's Public Relations and Development Officer (halley.cohen@psy.ox.ac.uk). Please note that this event is open for staff and students only, not the general public.

News

Differential impact of Covid-19 on research outputs

Covid-19 has brought with it concern about differential impacts on research productivity – and those with greater caring responsibilities, often women, being most affected: see [No Room of One's Own, Women academics seem to be submitting fewer papers during coronavirus, Does working from home exacerbate gender inequalities?](#)

Differential impact of Covid-19 on BAME students

There has been much coverage in the media of the differential impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities. Gurnam Singh, Associate Professor of Equity of Attainment at Coventry University, reflects here on [how we should tackle the impact of Covid-19 on BAME students](#).

Staff Experience Survey 2020 – update

In view of the extraordinary impact of COVID-19 on all University staff and operations, the University's Equality & Diversity Unit (EDU) has agreed, in consultation with the Director of HR, Julian Duxfield, that it would be inappropriate to carry out the survey during Trinity term. The EDU is continually monitoring the ongoing situation in order to identify an optimum timetable for the survey. In the meantime, the EDU will continue to carry out all necessary survey planning activities.

Review of Athena SWAN

Advance HE yesterday published its [response](#) to the findings of the Independent Review of the Athena SWAN charter which were published on 19th March (full report [here](#)). The response largely endorses the direction of the Review as a basis for 'the transformation of Athena SWAN'. A few recommendations either reflect existing practice or have already been implemented. The Advance HE response highlights the following key areas of change to the Athena SWAN charter framework:

- Updated Athena SWAN principles that reflect a broader approach to gender 'as a spectrum,' a stronger focus on intersectionality and an expansion of AS to include professional services directorates;
- A reduced data burden for applicants, via a more specific mandatory data set and potentially an online data portal;
- Streamlining of the application process and response times, including using online submissions;
- The need for new panel roles to inform an 'enhanced peer review process'.

The timeline for award submissions will also be changing, and we are communicating with Athena SWAN leads in departments on the detail of that.

Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Awards – update

Nominations were received in February. The process of reviewing nominations and shortlisting nominees has continued, and the University intends to celebrate the awards electronically (rather than via a physical ceremony) in mid- to late-May. Announcements will be communicated when they are finalised.

The University is also hoping to hold a more intimate reception for all short-listed nominees in Michaelmas Term, to celebrate their amazing work and success.

Day 1 Family Leave changes

The new University scheme, which makes family leave available to staff from Day 1 of employment with no length of service criterion, is now in place. See [Maternity Leave](#), [Adoption Leave](#), [Shared Parental Leave](#).

Resources

New University resources to support home-working and staff wellbeing

With sections on looking after dependants, looking after mental and physical health, and guidance for managers on looking after their teams. Includes link to [Covid-19: information for disabled staff](#) - information for staff with pre-existing mental health conditions and for those in the neurodivergent community in light of COVID-19, compiled by members of the University Staff Disability Advisory Group.

Work and Family Space – resource round-up

An range of online resources to help support you and your family with the drastic life changes brought about by the lockdown. If you are not already registered with Work and Family Space see [details of how to register](#).

POD eLearning

The University's People and Organisational Development team have collated a range of self-access courses, guides and toolkits, all of which can be accessed from home at a time that works for you. The University also has a subscription to [LinkedIn Learning](#) where you can access a variety of online learning for free.

Coronavirus welfare advice for students

This [site](#) has been developed to support students at Oxford. A [briefing note on supporting student mental health during the pandemic](#) has recently been published by the Office for Students.

Mental health in lockdown – online survey

The mental health of staff and students while lockdown continues remains a concern, as isolation, stress, and cosmic uncertainty take their toll. Researchers at Middlesex University London, in association with Fika, have initiated a study exploring the impact of Covid-19 on the mental wellbeing of higher education staff and students. Their survey is [here](#) and is open to all staff and students at UK universities

Upcoming dates

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia: 17 May - <https://may17.org/>

Mental Health Awareness Week: 18-24 May - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week>

Carers Week: 8-14 June - <https://www.carersweek.org/>

World Refugee Day: 20 June - <https://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/>

With all best wishes,
Catherine



#WhyDisabledPeopleDropOut:

A Neurodivergent Student—turned—Academic on the Neurotypical University

Dr Kate West

Senior Lecturer in

Visual Criminology,

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DSN

Disabled Staff Network

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