



February 2012

Chemistry Athena SWAN News

Athena SWAN Working Group Remit

The Department of Chemistry strives to provide the facilities and the working environment that allows staff and students to contribute fully, to flourish and to excel. The Department provides support for all categories of staff in their applications for promotion, role reviews, awards and prizes and rewarding excellence nominations. The Department recognises the importance of representation of women at all levels in a subject that has traditionally been, and is still, male-dominated. The Athena Swan working group strives to address gender inequalities and ensure that there is a culture that supports equality and encourages better representation throughout the department. Support for women at all stages of their career is recognised as being extremely important.

Chemistry at York is currently the only academic department in the UK to hold the Athena SWAN Gold award for our commitment to women in science. The Gold Award was achieved in October 2007 and awarded again in October 2010. The Athena SWAN Charter recognises and celebrates good employment practice for women working in science, engineering and technology (SET) in higher education and research.

More information on Athena SWAN can be found at:

<http://www.athenaswan.org.uk/html/athena-swan/>

The Athena SWAN Working Group looks at current practices and procedures within the Department and considers ways of improving these to ensure fairness for all staff and students and raise awareness of equality and diversity. Examples of best practice are already embedded in many of the Department's activities but there are many areas where improvements can still be made.

Ongoing activities

- Work on submission of renewal for Gold award
- Upkeep of statistical data on student numbers, degree classifications, staff numbers, promotions, recruitment etc
- Addition of information to departmental website
- Improvement of transparency of information with regard to appointment of key academic administrative roles and to departmental committees
- Improvement in provision of careers information to graduate students and staff
- Development of Alumni Networks for external mentoring support

Athena SWAN Working Group Members

Robin Perutz (Chair), Luisa Ciano (Graduate student Representative), Helen Coombs, Sue Couling, Caroline Dessent, Verena Gortz, Kirsty Penkman, Katie Read (Post-doc Representative)

Thanks to Michèle Schulz, a Graduate Student from YSBL who is shortly due to finish but has been a member of the working group for the past two years.

If other graduate students or staff members (include post-docs) would like to get involved then please contact a member of the working group. Katie will shortly be taking maternity leave so we are particularly looking for post-docs to help represent the research community within the Department.

New Chemistry Maternity and Paternity Leave Policy

A Chemistry Maternity and Paternity Leave Policy which covers all staff and graduate students can be found on the Departmental website

L'Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science UK and Ireland National Fellowships 2012

The L'Oréal-UNESCO UK and Ireland Fellowships for Women in Science UK are awards to promote, enhance and encourage the contribution of women pursuing their research careers in the UK or Ireland in the fields of the life or physical sciences.

Four Fellowships will be offered in 2012 to outstanding women scientists in the early stages of their career to enable and/or facilitate promising scientific research. The fellowships are tenable at any UK or Irish University or research Institute to support a 12-month period of postdoctoral research in any area of the life or physical sciences.

The value of each fellowship is £15,000. The Fellowships are designed to provide flexible support. The prize money can be spent in innovative ways to enable women scientists to pursue and continue their research careers – such as buying equipment, paying for childcare or funding travel to overseas conferences.

More information can be found at www.womeninscience.co.uk, applications must be made online. The closing date for completed applications is **23 March 2012 at midday (BST)**.

New grant scheme for Gender Equality in Science from the Biochemical Society

The Biochemical Society has announced a new grant scheme supporting Gender Equality in Science. Three grants of £500 are available and the scheme is open for anyone to apply.

The scheme is non-prescriptive and all proposals will be considered, but some examples of how grant money could be used include supporting the mainstreaming of gender in science issues; identifying and promoting best practice; generating data which looks at existing schemes and supporting mentoring, training or a forum or network in a sustainable way.

2012 Application Deadline: 31 March 2012

You can apply and find further information at:

<http://www.biochemistry.org/SciencePolicy/Womeninscience>

If you have any enquiries, please email James, Policy Officer at the Biochemical Society, at James.Lush@biochemistry.org

For further information about the Chemistry Athena SWAN working Group, please contact Robin Perutz (robin.perutz@york.ac.uk) or Helen Coombs (helen.coombs@york.ac.uk)