

RDM Newsletter

December 2019

Dear all,

I'd like to begin by highlighting the excellent news we had this term: our Athena SWAN Silver award has been renewed for the next five years. The application for this award really was a cross-departmental effort, with researchers and support staff from every part of RDM contributing their data and reports, and the RDM Strategic team working over many months to put the application together.

More importantly, the ideas about how we can continue to foster gender equality in RDM have also come from across the department, and we will be calling on your help to implement our [action plan](#). If you have more ideas, or think you might want to join the Athena SWAN self-assessment committee, please do get in touch with our Athena SWAN facilitator, [Charlotte Smith](#).

This term we also had 26 new DPhil students join us – a very warm welcome to all of you, and I hope your time at the Radcliffe Department of Medicine is fruitful and enjoyable.

We also end the year with four new Professors in the department, including [Professor Amanda Adler](#), Professor of Diabetic Medicine and Health Policy, who has now formally taken up the Directorship of the Diabetes Trial Unit; [Professor Hal Drakesmith](#), Professor of Iron Biology; [Professor Jim Hughes](#), Professor of Gene Regulation; and [Professor Stephen Hyde](#), Professor of Molecular Therapy. We also have one of only seven researchers across the whole University who have been chosen as Public Engagement Leaders at the University, with the aim of bringing about culture change and embedding public engagement as part of normal business of research – many congratulations to [Dr Katharine Owen](#), and we look forward to the developments in this area.

Congratulations also to our 2019 Graduate Prize winners: Yi-Ling Chen, Falk Schneider and Yale Michaels. As with previous years, they will be presenting their work at the next RDM annual symposium, which takes place Monday 23 March at the Maths Institute, and we very much look forward to hearing about their work and future career plans.

Thank you to each and every member of the department, for all your hard work and commitment this past year and for helping to make RDM an excellent place to work, and a contributor to scientific excellence: this November, Oxford University was ranked as the world's best institution for medical and health teaching and research for the ninth consecutive year.

I wish you all a wonderful break over the festive season,

With best wishes for Christmas,

Hugh Watkins

Save the date

RDM Researchers Careers Day

The [RDM Researcher Association](#) are planning a busy day of careers talks and workshops for the annual RDM Researchers Careers Day, which will take place Thursday April 23 at Somerville College.

By way of reminder, the RDM Researcher Association is a community, led and run by researchers, that serves to enrich the researcher experience, through social events, career development and advice.

If you would like to get involved or join the RDM Researcher Association, contact researcherassociation@rdm.ox.ac.uk.

RDM Annual Symposium 2020

The 8th RDM Annual Symposium will be held on Monday 23 March 2020, in the Maths Institute. It is a great opportunity to learn more about the world leading research in RDM and to talk to, and network with, colleagues from across RDM. The day will feature talks by RDM researchers, a keynote lecture, talks by our Graduate Prize Winners and a poster event. Please put the date in your diaries and further information will be circulated in the New Year.

Congratulations

Congratulations to our new Professors

The title of Professor has been awarded to [Hal Drakesmith](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) (now Professor of Iron Biology), [Jim Hughes](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) (Professor of Gene Regulation), and [Stephen Hyde](#) (NDCLS) (Professor of Molecular Therapy).

[Professor Amanda Adler](#) (OCDEM), the new Director of the Diabetes Trial Unit, is now Professor of Diabetic Medicine and Health Policy. Amanda has been recruited from her roles in NICE and the University of Cambridge.

Professor Damian Tyler Honorary Skou Professor at Aarhus University

[Professor Tyler's](#) (OCMR, CVM) award recognises and consolidates his collaborative work at the MR Research Centre, part of the Department of Clinical medicine at Aarhus University.

Professor David Ray awarded 2020 Society for Endocrinology medal

The medal is awarded every year to a British endocrinologist in recognition of outstanding studies. As part of the award, [Professor Ray](#) (OCDEM) will give the Society Medal Lecture during the Society for Endocrinology BES conference in November 2020.

Important reminders

Research Excellence Framework 2021

The Research Excellence Framework ([REF](#)) is a UK-wide assessment of research in universities, and provides an objective peer reviewed score of the quality and impact of research at subject level in each university. The next exercise will be conducted in 2021, and preparations are now underway for Oxford's submission which is due in late 2020.

REF is important because the results inform the selective allocation of funding, known as QR (quality-related) Funding. The University of Oxford currently receives approximately £80m per annum based on its performance in REF 2014. For each submission, three distinct elements are assessed: the quality of outputs (e.g. publications, performances, exhibitions); their impact beyond academia; and the environment that supports research.

For REF 2021, research is grouped into 34 subject-based units of assessment (UOAs), under the guidance of four main panels. Researchers in RDM will be included in UOA1 - Clinical Medicine, along with researchers from many of the other clinical departments in Oxford. In REF 2014, the University of Oxford ranked top for overall quality in Clinical Medicine (out of 31 institutions), and we hope to do the same again in REF 2021.

The University has developed a [Code of Practice](#) which sets out how the University will identify which staff are eligible to be submitted to REF 2021 and how the University will select which research outputs will be submitted. Based on this Code of Practice, the University held a REF dry run exercise in 2019, to help inform the actual submission in 2020. We anticipate that approximately 100 researchers from across RDM will be returned in REF 2020.

If you have any questions or concerns around REF 2021, please contact the RDM Research Strategy Coordinator [Dr Ruth McCaffrey](#), in the first instance.

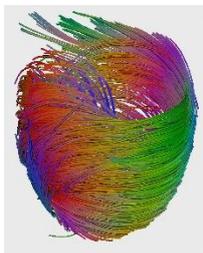
In the News

Study decodes gene function that protects against type 2 diabetes

An international research collaboration led by researchers from the Universities of Helsinki and Oxford has identified the biological mechanism through which a genetic variant protects against type 2 diabetes. The study, co-led by [Professor Anna Gloyn](#) (OCDEM), with [Dr Benoit Hastoy](#) (OCDEM) as the co-first author, was published in [Nature Genetics](#). Find out more about the study on the [RDM website](#).

Promising eczema therapy in early stage trials

[Professor Graham Ogg](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) has led a small, proof-of-concept trial for a therapy that targets the immune system, and which shows promise for treating atopic dermatitis – the most common form of eczema. This is the first trial to show that atopic dermatitis could be treated by targeting the immune signalling molecule IL-33. Find out more about the study on the [RDM website](#).



New AI technology for advanced heart attack predictions

A team of researchers led by [Professor Charalambos Antoniades](#) (CVM) have developed a heart 'fingerprint' to tailor personalised treatments. The technique uses artificial intelligence to identify people at high risk of a fatal heart attack at least five years before it strikes. These findings were presented at the 2019 European Society of Cardiology conference – read more about it on the [RDM website](#).

OCDEM live tweets on World Diabetes Day

OCDEM researchers marked World Diabetes Day (November 14) by taking over the RDM twitter account, and tweeting 'a day in the life of OCDEM' diary, with visits to the clinics and labs that OCDEM staff work in. Find out more on the [RDM Oxford Twitter account](#).



Congratulations to the following DPhil students on passing their vivas

Jonny Hertzog worked on 'Innate Immune Recognition and Evasion by Viruses', and was supervised by Associate Professor Jan Rehwinkel (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) and Rachel Rigby (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD).

Dr Mark Peterzan worked on 'ATP Delivery Rates in Myocardial Hypertrophy', and was supervised by Dr Christopher Rodgers (formerly OCMR, CVM, now at the University of Cambridge), Professor Stefan Neubauer (OCMR, CVM), and Associate Professor Oliver Rider (OCMR, CVM).

Joost Van Haasteren worked on 'Strategies to facilitate the long-term expression of transgenes for treatment of chronic liver disease', and was supervised by Professors Stephen Hyde and Deborah Gill (both NDCLS).

Dr Amina Ismaeel worked on 'The Role of Fungal-Responsive CD1a-Reactive T cells in the Pathogenesis of Atopic Dermatitis', and was supervised by Professor Graham Ogg (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) and Dr Luzheng Zue (NDM).

Xiao Huiyan worked on 'Characterisation and Application of EBOV-GP Pseudotyped Influenza Virus (E-S-FLU)', and was supervised by Professor Alain Townsend (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD).

Charlotte Philpott worked on 'Studies of Genetic Variants in Monogenic Renal Tubular Disorders', and was supervised by Professor Rajesh Thakker (OCDEM) and Dr Caroline Gorvin (formerly OCDEM, now at the University of Birmingham).

Melissa Bedard worked on 'Sterile activation of Invariant Natural Killer T cells by ER-stressed antigen presenting cells', and was supervised by Professors Christian Eggeling and Vincenzo Cerundolo (both MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD).

Mehroz Ehsan worked on 'Characterization of the Cardiomyopathy Causing Mutation in Muscle Lim Protein (C58G)', and was supervised by Associate Professor Katja Gehmlich (formerly CVM, now at the University of Birmingham) and Associate Professor Charles Redwood (CVM).

Dr Ioannis Akoumianakis worked on 'Regulation of human vascular redox state in obesity and insulin resistance', and was supervised by Professors Charalambos Antoniades and Keith Channon (both CVM).

Dr Jennifer Rayner worked on 'The Effects of Obesity and Weight Loss in Heart Failure: Imaging the Obesity Paradox using Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Spectroscopy', and was supervised by Professor Stefan Neubauer (OCMR, CVM), Associate Professor Oliver Rider (OCMR, CVM) and Dr Christopher Rodgers (formerly OCMR, CVM, now at the University of Cambridge).

Jade Bailey worked on 'Redox Sensor and Effector Functions of Tetrahydrobiopterin and the Mitochondria in Molecular Models of Cardiovascular Disease', and was supervised by Professor Keith Channon and Dr Mark Crabtree (both CVM).

Laurienne Edgar worked on 'Hyperglycaemia Induced Immunomodulation of Macrophages in Diabetic Vascular Disease', and was supervised by Professor Robin Choudhury and Dr Naveed Akbar (both CVM).

Katia Mattis worked on 'The role of RREB1 in human pancreatic beta cell development and function', and was supervised by Professor Anna Gloyn (OCDEM) and Dr Ben Davies (NDM).

Andrew King worked on 'The regulation of ζ -globin expression', and was supervised by Professors Richard Gibbons and Douglas Higgs (both MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS).

In addition, **Dr Syed Gardezi** passed his viva for MSc (Research), and worked on 'The clinical epidemiology of atrial fibrillation in a population cohort and its association with valvular heart disease', and was supervised by Associate Professor Saul Myerson (OCMR, CVM).

Many congratulations to all our students.

Prizes and awards

We're always keen to hear about your prize wins: please email communications@rdm.ox.ac.uk to let us know.

2019 RDM graduate prize winners

Many congratulations to [Yi-Ling Chen](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD), [Falk Schneider](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) and [Yale Michaels](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS), who are the 2019 winners of the RDM graduate prize. As in previous years, they will be giving a presentation about their research at the 2020 RDM Annual Symposium on Monday 23 March.

Dr Mira Kassouf recognised in '50 Movers and Shakers in BioBusiness' list

[Dr Kassouf](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) was one of the researchers listed in the sixth annual '50 Movers and Shakers in Biobusiness' report, published by the magazine BioBeat. The report highlights the trailblazers and trendsetters shaping the future of the UK life sciences sector.

Dr Nikolaos Nikolaou wins EYES meeting and British Endocrinology Society prizes

[Dr Nikolaou](#) (OCDEM), a postdoctoral researcher from the Tomlinson group, won the 'Best Oral Presentation' award at the 7th European Society for Endocrinology European Young Endocrinologists (EYES) meeting, and followed this up with winning the 'Best Metabolism and Obesity Oral Communication Prize' at the British Endocrinology Society conference.

Christos Kotanidis awarded Council on Cardiovascular Surgery and Anaesthesia Abstract travel grant

[Christos Kotanidis](#) (CVM), a DPhil student from the Antoniadis group, was awarded a \$1,000 travel grant, which is given to the highest ranking abstracts from young investigators in the field of Surgery and Anaesthesia.



Dr Betty Raman wins her third prize for the year

[Dr Betty Raman](#) (OCMR, CVM) (pictured, left) won the American Heart Association Melvin Judkins Early Career Clinical Investigator award, taking her tally of award wins for the year to three. Earlier this year, Dr Raman also won the Young Investigator award at the British Society of Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance meeting, and later won a European Society of Cardiology conference award, in the Coronary Pathophysiology and Microcirculation category.

Oxford University teaching awards

[Dr Deborah Hay](#) (NDCLS), [Dr Ricardo Carnicer](#) (CVM) and [Professor Marella De Bruijn](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) were all winners at the 2019 University of Oxford Teaching Excellence Awards, which formally acknowledge significant educational achievements. Dr Hay was awarded an 'Excellent Teacher' award, and together with Dr Carnicer, she also picked up a project award for their project entitled 'Bench to Classroom: linking researchers with clinical teaching in Laboratory Medicine'. Professor De Bruijn and her colleagues also won a project award for their project entitled 'Pilot Course in Innovation Strategy for DPhil Students'.

RDM researchers win multiple awards at the European Society of Cardiology conference

[Dr Evangelos Oikonomou](#) (CVM) won the clinical research Young Investigator Award at the conference, and [Dr Parag Gajendragadkar](#) (CVM) won the population science Young Investigator Award. Drs [Naveed Akbar](#) and [Jillian Simon](#) (both CVM) were the runners-up in the Basic Science and Coronary Pathophysiology category.

Dr Simona Valletta wins Fellowship

[Dr Valletta](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded an Intermediate Research Fellowship from the Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund, to study the effects of ageing in haematopoiesis and cancer.

New College and Cancer Research UK fellowships for Dr Beth Psaila

[Dr Psaila](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) was awarded an Advanced Clinician Scientist Fellowship from Cancer Research UK, to study abnormal megakaryocytes and bone marrow fibrosis. She was also appointed a Senior Fellow at New College.

Oxford-Celgene Fellowship for Dr Supat Thongjuea and Dr Kate Lines

[Dr Thongjuea](#) (MRC Centre for Computational Biology, MRC WIMM, NCDLS) has been awarded the fellowship to apply single-cell biology and computational methods to translational medicine challenges.

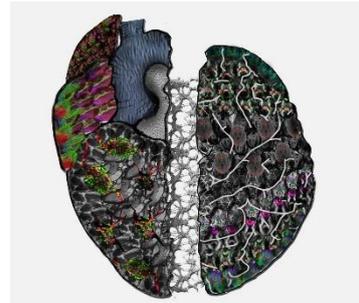
[Dr Kate Lines](#) (OCDEM) has been awarded the fellowship for her project entitled 'Targeting Epigenetic Mechanisms for the Treatment of Pancreatic Neuroendocrine Tumours'.

RDM team wins 2018 Hypertension Top Paper award

[The award](#), given by the journal *Hypertension*, recognises the publication as the top paper in its category of basic science. The paper's first author was [Dr Surawee Chuaiphichai](#), and the work was led by [Dr Gillian Douglas](#) and [Professor Keith Channon](#) (all CVM).

RDM image is 'Supporters' Favourite' in British Heart Foundation (BHF) image competition

The image (pictured, right), created by DPhil students [Cheryl Tan](#) and [Maryam Alsharqi](#), together with Drs [Winok Lapidaire](#), Mariane Bertagnolli and [Adam Lewandowski](#) (all CCRF, CVM) represents the complex interactions between the heart and the brain. The image won the popular vote in the BHF 'Reflections of Research' image competition.



Student with OCDEM project wins Physiological Society undergraduate prize

Eleanor Sharpe, an Oxford University student who did her Final Honour School project under the joint supervision of Drs [Reshma Ramcherya](#) (formerly OCDEM) and [Claudia Guida](#) (OCDEM) has won this year's Physiological Society prize for best overall student at Oxford University – the prize recognises excellence in final year undergraduate physiology students.

Many congratulations to all award winners!

Research funding

Don't forget to visit the ['Find Funding'](#) section of the website to learn about the support that we can provide with your grant applications. Details of all RDM internal deadlines can also be found there. For any funding related queries, please contact the [RDM Research Strategy and Funding team](#) (Drs [Ruth McCaffrey](#), [Serena Briant](#) and [Kathleen Dolan](#)).

External funding awards

[Dr Svetlana Reilly](#) (CVM) has been awarded a two-year extension to her BHF Intermediate Basic Science Research Fellowship for the project entitled, *MicroRNA-mediated proarrhythmic mechanisms in atrial fibrillation*.

[Dr Simona Valletta](#), from the Nerlov lab (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS), has been awarded a Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund Intermediate Research Fellowship for work on *'The aged bone marrow microenvironment and its role in acute myeloid leukaemia: a new potential treatment target?'*

[Professor Leanne Hodson](#) (OCDEM) has received funding from the BHF for a project grant *'Revealing the mechanisms by which milk sugars exaggerate postprandial lipaemia – implications for cardiovascular disease risk*. This has been awarded in collaboration with the University of Bath.

[Professor Barbara Casadei](#) (CVM) has been awarded a 5 year programme grant from the BHF for work entitled *'Impact of clinically silent atrial fibrillation on cerebrovascular disease and cognitive decline in the UK Biobank Imaging Cohort'*.

[Dr Shelley Harris](#) from the Tomlinson lab (OCDEM) has received funding from The Society for Endocrinology for the project *'Dissecting the role of role of 5 β -reductase in pancreatic islet cell morphology and hormone secretion'*.

[Professor Doug Higgs](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded a Molecular and Cellular Medicine project grant from the MRC.

Dr Andrew Lewis (CVM) from the Tyler lab has received a Starter Grant for Clinical Lecturers from the Academy of Medical Sciences for work entitled *'Hyperpolarized silicon nanoparticles for non-invasive molecular magnetic resonance imaging of the cardiovascular immune cell compartment'*.

[Professor Keith Channon](#) (CVM) has been awarded a BHF Project grant for work entitled *'Regulation of Uteroplacental Remodelling by Maternal Endothelial Cell Tetrahydrobiopterin: Role in Pre-Eclampsia and Programmed Cardiovascular Risk in Mothers and Offspring'* and received funding from Merck & Cie for work entitled *'Targeting the Endothelial Tetrahydrobiopterin Pathway with Metformin to Improve Cardiovascular Function in Pre-Eclampsia'*.

[Anna Gluck](#) from the Thakker lab (OCDEM) has been awarded a Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds travel grant to enable a 3 month exchange at the University of Montreal with Professor Michel Bouvier.

[Dr Ellie Tzima](#) (CVM) has received a BSSRC Project grant for the project *'Investigating reciprocal regulation of the cytoskeleton and protein translation machinery'*.

[Dr Nikolaos Nikolaou](#) from the Tomlinson lab (OCDEM) has been awarded funding from the Bioscientifica Trust for the project *'Elucidate the role of 5 β -reductase (AKR1D1) in oxysterol signalling in human hepatocytes'*.

[Dr Matthew Burrage](#) (CVM) from the Ferreira lab has been awarded a BHF Clinical Research Training Fellowship for work entitled *'Early detection of cardiotoxicity using cardiovascular magnetic resonance and spectroscopy in patients with breast or other thoracic cancer receiving radiotherapy and chemotherapy'*.

[Professor Claus Nerlov](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded a Molecular and Cellular Medicine project grant from the MRC, and a project grant from the Oxford Emerson Collective Cancer Research Fund.

[Professor Patrik Rorsman](#) (OCDEM) has received funding from Alan & Babette Sainsbury Trust for the project '*Pancreatic Islet Dysfunction and the risk of hypoglycaemia in type 1 diabetes: a focus on the somatostatin –secreting delta cell*'.

[Dr David Sims](#) (MRC Centre for Computational Biology, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded an Infrastructure Award from the CRUK Oxford Centre, and Research Capability Funding from NIHR.

Ms Rebecca Grossman from the Ray lab (OCDEM) has been awarded a MRC Clinical Research Training Fellowship.

Dr Christopher Leeson (CVM) has been awarded Research Capability Funding from NIHR to support Annabelle Frost.

[Associate Professor Charles Redwood](#) (CVM) has been awarded a UK-Malaysia MRC Research grant for a project entitled '*Genomic profiling of Cardiomyopathy in Malaysia*'.

Internal funding awards

[Professor Adam Mead](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded pump priming from the CRUK Oxford Development Fund and equipment funding from the EP Abraham Cephalosporin Fund.

[Dr Supat Thongjuea](#) from the Vyas, Mead and Nerlov labs (all MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded an Oxford-Celgene fellowship entitled '*Single-Cell Computational Biology for Translational Medicine*'.

[Dr Kate Lines](#) from the Thakker lab (OCDEM) has been awarded an Oxford-Celgene fellowship entitled '*Targeting Epigenetic Mechanisms for the Treatment of Pancreatic Neuroendocrine Tumours*'.

[Dr Bethan Psaila](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) has been awarded a project grant from the Oxford Emerson Collective Cancer Research Fund.

Medical Sciences Internal Fund (MSIF) pump priming awards were made to:

- [Dr Andrew Lewis](#) (CVM), from the Tyler lab, for a project entitled '*Defining the novel cardiovascular phenotype of IgG4-related disease*'.
- [Dr Claudia Guida](#) (OCDEM), from the Rorsman lab, for a project entitled '*Exploring the role of somatostatin in the metabolic benefits of bariatric surgery*'.

RDM have been awarded 4 MSIF [bridging and family leave](#) awards in 2019.

Wellcome Institutional Strategic Support (ISSF) awards were made to:

- [Dr Adam Lewandowski](#) (CVM) for a project entitled '*The Cerebrovascular Phenotype of Children Born Preterm and Relationship with Cardiac Structure and Function*'.
- [Dr Quan Zhang](#) (OCDEM) for a project entitled '*Investigation of paracrine feedback loops in pancreatic islets and their impact in hypoglycaemia*'.
- [Dr Svetlana Reilly](#) (CVM) for a project entitled '*Calcitonin paracrine signalling in atrial and ventricular myocardium in atrial fibrillation*'.

A [Medical and Life Sciences Translational Fund \(MLSTF\)](#) award was made to [Professor Hal Drakesmith](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) for a project entitled '*Iron and the anti-tumour immune response*'.

An RDM [pump priming](#) award was made to [Dr Jillian Simon](#) (CVM), [Dr Yvonne Couch](#) (IMD) and [Dr Paul Holloway](#) (IMD), for a project entitled '*Neuroprotective Effects of PKAR1 α Oxidation in Models of Stroke*'.

A [Human Iron Research at Oxford \(HIRO\)](#) award was made to [Dr Andrew Armitage](#) from the Drakesmith lab (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) for a project entitled '*Do nutritional iron interventions enhance vaccine responses in infants from a low-income country?*'.

RDM Equality, Diversity and Inclusion news

RDM Athena SWAN silver success

We are very pleased to announce that our recent application for the silver Athena SWAN charter award has been successful. The silver award recognises both the work we have done at the department, and our future plans. We are now implementing our action plan, and you can find out more about this and other Athena SWAN initiatives on [our website](#).

RDM cross-divisional committees and working groups come together on a quarterly basis to form a Self-Assessment Team (SAT). The SAT monitors and assesses the action plans and is chaired by Professor Hugh Watkins. At these quarterly meetings we would like to welcome observers and those who would like to find out more. If you are interested in attending, and have ideas about how the department could continue to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, please get in touch with our Athena SWAN facilitator [Charlotte Smith](#).

Mental health first aid training

The first cohort of RDM staff (academics, researchers and support staff) completed the two-day accredited course on mental health first aid in November this year. Analogous to physical aid, RDM aims to have a group of accredited mental health first aiders who can help spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues, and offer staff signposting to the right resources. As with our harassment advisors, details for our mental health first-aiders will shortly be available on the RDM website.

Staff news

Staffing updates

[Professor Bill Haynes](#) joins us as the Visiting Professor of Metabolic Medicine.

[Professor Anjan Thakurta](#) joins us as the Visiting Professor of Cancer Biology and Translational Medicine.

[Professor Jeremy Tomlinson](#) has been appointed the new theme leader for the BRC Diabetes and Metabolism Theme, taking over from Professor Anna Gloy.

Professor Paresh Vyas has been appointed theme leader, and Professor Adam Mead deputy theme leader, for the BRC Haematology Theme.

Public Engagement with Research

Public Engagement awards

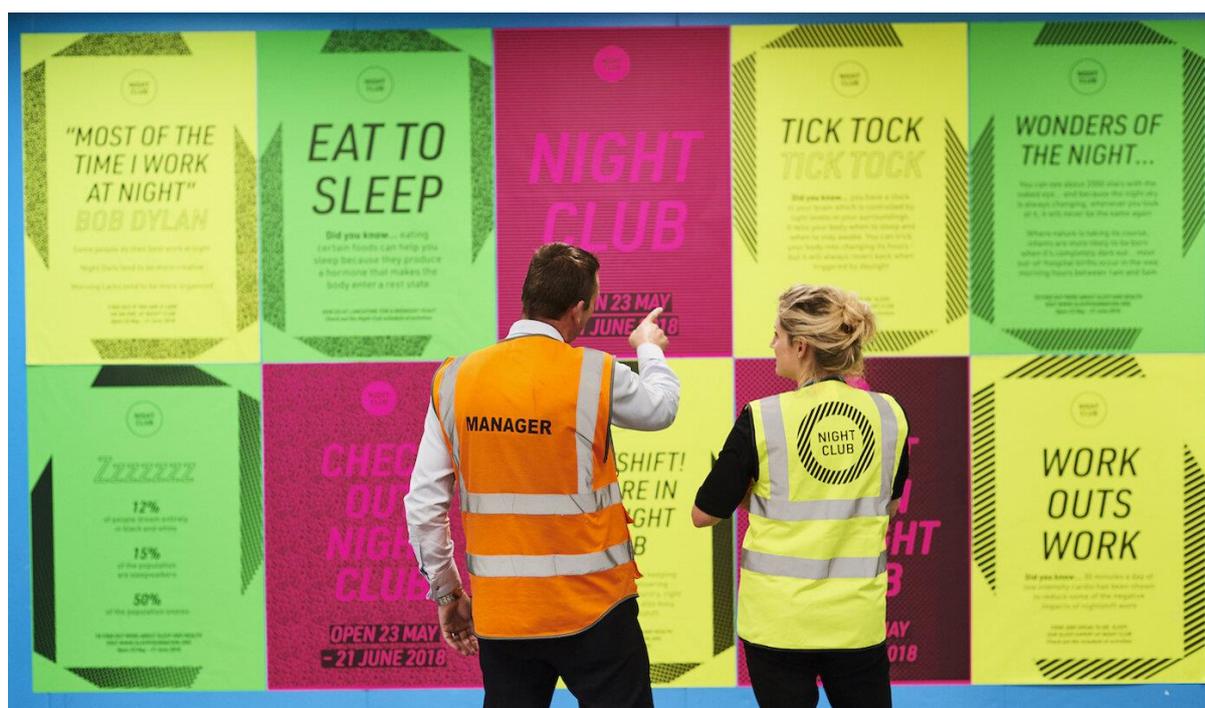
- [Dr Katharine Owen](#) (OCDEM) is one of the seven researchers across the whole University awarded a Public Engagement with Research leadership award. The awards are aimed at fostering culture change within the University, and along with a £5,000 grant, Dr Owen and her cohort of leaders will be taking part in a year-long programme of training.
- [Professor Deborah Gill](#) (NDCLS) was one of only six researchers across the University to win the Wellcome 'Enriching Engagement' pilot project awards. Professor Gill and her group are using the funding to develop a series of hands-on activities about their research work on gene therapy.

Ideas Festival Oxford and other outreach

With a record six events, RDM probably had more events at the annual Oxford Science and Ideas Festival than any other department at the University. The festival ran over October, and events with RDM researchers included:

- [Dr Adam Lewandowski](#) (CCRF, CVM) and [Professor Claus Nerlov](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) were part of the 'Living Library' at the Weston Library on Broad Street.
- [Associate Professor Veronica Buckle](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) and her DPhil student [Caz Harrold](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) were scientific consultants on CELL - an interactive dance performance featuring giant inflatable models of cell organelles.
- 12 students and postdoctoral researchers from across the MRC WIMM presented a series of hands-on activities at their [cancer immunotherapy stand](#) at the Westgate Wonderlab.
- In a highly interactive talk, [Dr Naveed Akbar](#) (CVM) explained how your immune system can cause further damage after a heart attack or stroke.
- [Professor Steve Hyde](#) (NDCLS) separated fact from fiction in his discussion of gene therapy for rare disease.
- [Professor Hal Drakesmith](#) (MRC HIU, MRC WIMM, IMD) and [Dr Noemi Roy](#) (MRC MHU, MRC WIMM, NDCLS) battled for the iron crown against four other iron researchers across the University, with the audience deciding who won (it ended in a six-way tie).

'Nightclub' and school visits



[Professor David Ray](#) (OCDEM) was one of the sleep experts who took part in an innovative project offering shift workers support and advice on mental and physical health, and free face-to-face consultations with sleep experts. The 'Nightclub' project, located at the Rochdale Infirmary in Greater Manchester, is part of the largest ever direct engagement programme in the UK to bring together shift workers and sleep researchers to improve shift workers sleep.

This is in addition to a busy programme of public engagement across RDM, including school visits, such as [Dr Sevasti Zervou's](#) (CVM) talk to year 10 students, which received stellar feedback.

We're always on the lookout to develop ideas and provide training for public engagement with research, so if you've got any ideas or questions, please contact the RDM Communications and Public Engagement Manager [Dr Charvy Narain](#).