

Babraham Institute

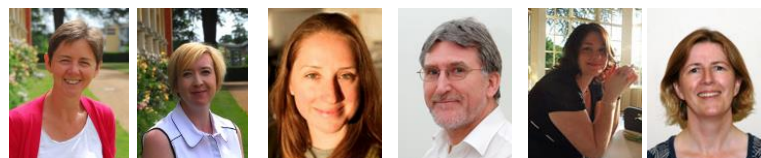
- University Partner Institute of University of Cambridge
- Core funded by the BBSRC (50%), grant funded BBSRC, MRC, WT, NIH, ERC
- H2020 ITNs, consortium grant, LIBRA
- 27 research groups; 105 postdocs, 55 PhD students, 65 science support staff
- 4 research themes: Signalling, Immunology, Epigenetics, Nuclear Dynamics



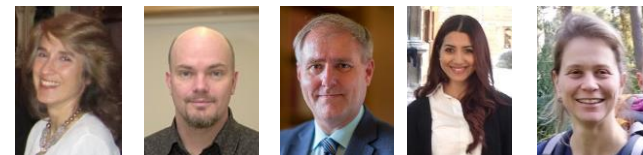
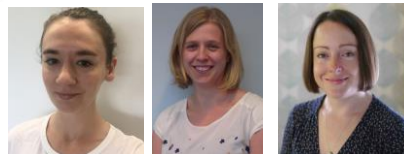
Babraham Institute Athena SWAN Silver Award

- July 2013
- Nov 2014
- April 2015

Athena SWAN project began
Submitted Athena SWAN application
Received silver Athena SWAN award.



Athena SWAN Team



<http://www.babraham.ac.uk/about-us/athena-swan>



Athena SWAN discoveries

Main findings

- Excellent gender balance of PhD student, postdoc and tenure-track group leaders (50%)
- Similar proportions of female and male scientists continue in academic or commercial science after PhD and first postdoc.
- The main 'attrition' point is between tenured group leader and senior group leader.

Excellent practice

- Enthusiastic engagement with Athena SWAN vision from the top down
- Postdoc committee, leadership training, postdoc travel fund,
- Excellent public engagement among PhD students and GLs.
- Work-life balance and flexible working generally very good
- Nursery is an important part of BI life. Excellent maternity return rates
- Mentoring of tenure track group leaders and fellows
- Career progression fellowships

Issues and achievements of Athena SWAN project

- Improved gender balance on senior committees
- Equality of maternity leave between contracts
- Extension of tenure clock to one year for GL on maternity leave
- New My Life in Science seminar series; role models
- Annual celebration of International Women's Day
- Graduate Committee mentors for PhD students
- Annual consideration of all staff for promotion
- Postdoc job-share
- Huge culture change – what would Athena SWAN do?

Ongoing Action Plan

- Formal mentoring schemes for postdocs
- More Leadership and confidence training for postdocs
- A new career re-entry scheme
- Online and one to one consultations every two years
- Unconscious bias training for all staff
- More support for students with childcare needs

Tips for the application process

- Choose the SAT very carefully – balance is key
- Get the Director on board and visibly so
- Spend a lot of time on the staff consultations – as important as the data for the AP. Be prepared to become a focal point for wider issues and re-direct appropriately
- Be prepared to manage opposition sensitively

Issues-Activities-Impact

- Fewer women going for promotion – but more successfully.
- Annual promotion review of all postdocs, SSS and GLS. Now more women put forward and promoted.
- Difficult postdoc - TT transition: Career progression fellowships for postdocs, fewer women applied, but more successful

Writing the application

- Divide up the tasks logically in advance with deadlines
- Agree what data HR provide, assign appropriate individuals to the rest
- Draft best written with one 'voice'
- Ask a wide variety within RI to read application
- Ask other RI and University AS reps to read it
- Give them enough time
- Ask lay people

Action Plan

- Do not leave the Action Plan until the end!
- Make sure every point is embedded in the text
- Make timelines realistic – don't frontload
 - more achievement, less disappointment

Tell the story of the journey

- The data is important
- How you got there and what it reveals is more important
- The unique collection of individual stories is even more important
- Reflection and honest owning of the state of play is even more important
- This is a SLOW and UNFAMILIAR process for scientists
- GIVE IT TIME