Research Institute Athena SWAN Workshop
Welcome

Professor Paul Workman
Chief Executive & President
ICR
Our mission is to make the discoveries that defeat cancer.
The Institute of Cancer Research, London

How we work

- Basic cancer biology & genetics
- Discovering new treatments & biomarkers
- Translational research
- Late stage clinical trials

- Research institute – primary partner the Royal Marsden Hospital
- A college of the University of London (PhD and MSc students)
- Leading UK institution for research quality, intensity and impact in the 2014 REF
- Two sites: Sutton and South Chelsea
- Bronze 2009, Bronze renewal 2012 (as a ‘University’), Silver 2016 (as a Research Institute)
Our strong track record in research

We are ranked as the UK’s top academic research centre (REF 2014)

We lead the world at isolating the genes that predispose to cancer

And in discovering and developing innovative drugs and targeted radiotherapy

We provided the first conclusive evidence that the basic cause of cancer is damage to DNA & discovered the basis for the new immune therapies

We made major contributions to modern high precision radiotherapy techniques, leading to new MR-Linac

We discovered and developed abiraterone – a life-extending prostate cancer drug
Our Athena SWAN Steering Group
Why I took on the role as Co-Chair

• ICR’s work on diversity and inclusion is really important to me – as is an open and collaborative culture

• I’ve always been interested in supporting researchers through their careers – supervision, mentoring, collaborations

• It became clear that we – as a sector – were losing women and other minorities and I wanted to address this.

• Leading and advocating from the top – showing ICR is serious in our ambitions

• Direct involvement helps me understand better the challenges of staff & students and how I can support them

• Our Steering Group has voices from every part of ICR

• Focus is on gender equality and wider diversity

• Loss of women from academic career paths is a key issue
Equality and diversity are embedded in the ICR’s research strategy

Foundation 3. Culture and Team Science

“We want to create the best possible culture at the ICR and The Royal Marsden – open, equal and collaborative. If we are to defeat cancer, we must make use of all the talents available to us…”

“We will ensure all researchers are given the same opportunity to flourish and progress through a strong commitment to equality in everything we do.”

“We will pioneer new ways of working that maximise the opportunities for all our scientists, and particularly women, as part of our application for an Athena SWAN Gold award.”
Consultation processes we’ve used

**Issues raised**

- Mapping career paths
  - Where are we losing women?

  - What are the factors affecting career choices?

**Issues identified**

- Steering Group analysis

- Focus groups & interviews
- Facilitated discussions at conferences/retreats (e.g. ICR Conference)
- External consultation
- Research Divisions and staff association consultation

**Further consultation**

**Actions agreed**

**Actions implemented**

**Key**

- Green arrow: Input from internal consultation
- Orange arrow: Exploration of issues & possible actions identified
- Black arrow: Wider consultation & information gathering
- Pink arrow: Dissemination & implementation of actions

- CEO & Management
- Research Divisions
- Research Associations
- Professional services (e.g. HR policy changes)
“We are proud of our SWAN Silver Award, which we won in 2016 in recognition of the impact of our work on women’s careers in research.”
Leadership development

• Women in Science Group for senior staff at ICR and Royal Marsden – addressing equality in the number of women in the most senior research leadership roles

• Future Female Leaders Programme – a series of workshops aimed at women early in their career with potential for taking a future leadership role

• Aurora Leadership Programme – ICR sends four women on this national women's leadership development programme run by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

“It is really valuable to be surrounded by like-minded people who are all in similar stages of their careers – we are able to share experiences and support one another. It is a huge leap to start thinking of one’s self as a leader, but this course is giving me the tools to realise my strengths and how to build on my weakness. It is fantastic that the ICR is committed to building the skills of its staff by holding this course in-house.”

Future Female Leaders Participant
Support for parents and parents-to-be

- Stopping the Tenure Clock
- Maternity mentoring
- Parents groups and new parent buddies
- Flexible working practices
- Contributions towards care costs for Learning and Development events

Mentoring programmes

- Career Development Faculty and ICR Fellows
- Postdocs
- Scientific Officers
Impact of Athena SWAN and related initiatives

“Historically the view on what constituted academic achievement was more rigid. In the last 12-18 months there has been a substantial shift to a broader recognition of Team Science and the individual’s expert academic contribution within a multi-disciplinary environment.”

Quote from female Professor and manager of female statistician promoted to Reader (now Professor) under new guidelines

- No unsuccessful tenure reviews or technical staff promotions since 2012
- More than doubled number of female non-clinical Professors between 2011 and 2017 from 3 to 7 (15 male)
- Above national average for the proportion of female clinical Professors (4 women and 16 men)
Impact – postdoc’s current careers after leaving the ICR

- **Postdoctoral position**: 40% of female leavers
  - Female: 44
  - Male: 42
- **Academic team leader**: 9% of female leavers
  - Female: 10
  - Male: 13
- **Industry**: 17% of female leavers
  - Female: 19
  - Male: 18
- **Technician/Scientific officer stream**: 7% of female leavers
  - Female: 8
  - Male: 13
- **Science communication/teaching**: 7% of female leavers
  - Female: 8
  - Male: 2
- **Research-related**: 9% of female leavers
  - Female: 10
  - Male: 8
- **Other**: 6% of female leavers
  - Female: 7
  - Male: 11
- **NHS**: 4% of female leavers
  - Female: 4
  - Male: 4

*Research-related encompasses Funding bodies and Scientific Consultancy

^Other encompasses further study, non-scientific employment and not in formal employment
Developing our technicians

Dr Jumi Popoola studies cancer at The Institute of Cancer Research, London. She works to understand the networks of signals within cancer cells, and how they are affected by drugs. Her work here could pave the way for new-generation treatments that can overcome cancer evolution and drug resistance.

Biochemical Society @BiochemSoc · 18h
Our beautiful new posters have arrived! Perfect for brightening up a drab lab or bleak break room. Ideal for schools, universities and bedroom walls.
Get your hands on all three by emailing the education team or sending us a DM. Frames not included.
Embedding Athena SWAN: creating an institute wide conversation

Athena SWAN: what it means to me
Collaborative culture

Meetings in “core hours”

Seeking gender balance on committees

Flexible working

Social events for everyone

Networking events for staff associations

Challenging the status quo

65% staff & students build contacts in areas where they want to work (47% in 2011)

90% staff & students think the ICR is a good place to work
Some reflections

• Our Athena SWAN work has opened up the space for discussion on wider culture change

• We’ve become more ambitious in our plans – and more inclusive

• With Royal Marsden we’ve set up networks and support programmes for LGBT staff and students

• Also for Black and Ethnic Minority staff and students

• Athena SWAN activities give staff the space to challenge us and advocate for changes they’d like to see

• For example, the postdoc mentoring scheme I mentioned was initiated from a proposal made at our ICR conference
Expanding our equality and diversity programme
Final thoughts

- If I said we’d solved all the issues this wouldn’t match either our and your experience – so work in progress

- For example while 50% of postdocs are women, only 1/3rd of applications for Team Leader roles come from women

- We will publish this week our Gender Pay Gap which shows that there is work to do – our gap is in line with the expected national norm of 17-18%, mainly due to more men in senior roles

- We believe that many of our actions to retain and develop women will help reduce the Pay Gap to zero

- Research increasingly involves collaboration & Team Science – similarly we need to work together to bring about changes in equality and diversity in our sector

- Making it more welcoming and inclusive – benefiting both the science and the people
Thank you and good luck today