

March 2010

Back to a physical newsletter this month, to accompany the mailing of our latest report on the Bologna Process and its impact on UK Higher Education. Many thanks to the Fellows and colleagues who participated in the symposium and who contributed to the report - an important issue that will be costly for UK universities to ignore. Many thanks also to the 300 or so Fellows who have provided referee reports for the new and existing candidates in this year's Fellowship election.

The 2010 election is set to be the most competitive yet and the standard of candidates is simply staggering. You will see that we are now searching for a new Honorary

Treasurer, who will follow Professor Ian Lauder when he steps down in November 2010. The Treasurer is a key post in the Academy's affairs, not only overseeing our financial management, but also contributing to our strategic direction through the Officers group. Do not hesitate to get in touch if you are interested in this post. And look out for the 2010 Directory of Fellows, which will hit your desks in March.

Helen Munn

Developments at 41 Portland Place

Work onsite at 41 Portland Place has progressed rapidly since the contractors, Knight Harwood, began the main structural element of the building works in January. Most significantly, the old lift has been removed from the well of the main staircase allowing the entrance hall to regain its original Georgian grandeur. Partition walls have been removed to create the Academy's new offices and exhibition area and the Georgian plaster ceilings at first floor level have been stabilised to ensure they are preserved and returned to their original state.

New underground drains have been installed, the new lift shaft has been created and the mechanical and electrical services are being fitted in the basement.

With the project progressing so well onsite it is important that our fundraising keeps pace. We have been successful in raising substantial funds, with generous donations from the Fellowship totalling £280,000. We are extremely grateful to all our donors and everyone who has given to the Fellows' Appeal is listed on our website

www.acmedsci.ac.uk/index.php?pid=214

We still need to raise £500,000 to complete the project; if all Fellows donate £1,000 we will reach our goal. If you have not yet given we are asking you to consider two options:



Option A: A donation of £250 per year for 4 years, to give a total of **£1000**. **Donors of £1,000 and over will be listed on the appeal board in our new headquarters.**

Option B: A donation of £125 per year for 4 years, to give a total of **£500**. All donations to 41 Portland Place will be acknowledged in a commemorative publication.

To make a donation please visit the website to see how you can give www.acmedsci.ac.uk/p211.html



Ministers discuss Academy's vision for medical science

Following the launch of the Academy's latest position paper 'Reaping the rewards: a vision for UK medical science' on 11 January 2010 the Academy has been busy pressing home its messages about the importance of medical science to the future health and wealth of the nation. The President is currently undertaking a series of high-level meetings with senior figures, including Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP (Secretary of State for Health), Mr Andrew Lansley CBE MP (Shadow Conservative Secretary of State for Health), Mr Norman Lamb MP (Shadow Liberal Democrat Secretary of State for Health) and Dr Evan Harris (Shadow Liberal Democrat Science Minister), to disseminate our findings and build support prior to the forthcoming general election.

Upon its publication the vision was covered in an editorial in the Lancet and an article in the Times. We are also working with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Medical Research and Association of Medical Research Charities to organise a Parliamentary reception in the summer to draw the attention of newly elected MPs to the importance of medical science.

In the run up to the general election, we are interested in hearing from Fellows willing to draw attention to our vision document among their local MPs and prospective Parliamentary Candidates. This would be of particular value in constituencies where universities or medical science industries have a major presence, or constituencies that are marginal, or where MPs or candidates have a known interest in medical science.

If you are able to help, please contact
laurie.smith@acmedsci.ac.uk.

Copies of the vision and associated documentation are available from www.acmedsci.ac.uk/index.php?pid=99&puid=172

Mentoring and Outreach Scheme 2010

The Academy's Mentoring and Outreach Scheme provides one-to-one mentoring to Clinician Scientist Fellows and Clinical Lecturers by Academy Fellows. The scheme also offers a range of outreach activities for Clinical Training Fellows, Academic Clinical Fellows and MB PhD students, including regional events that aim to inspire and inform trainees.

Academy Fellows are offered the opportunity to attend mentor development workshops to clarify the role of a mentor and explore the elements that lead to an effective mentoring relationship.

The following events are confirmed for 2010:

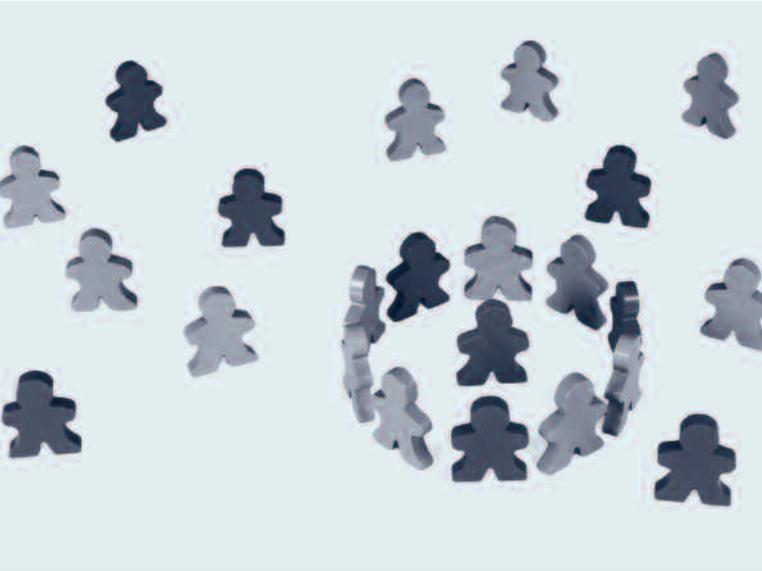
12 March	Mentor Development Workshop	London
22 March	Outreach Event	Belfast
11 May	Outreach Event	Bristol
9 June	Outreach Event & Mentor Development Workshop	Sheffield

We are grateful to Fellows for the support they provide to these activities. Trainees' feedback confirms that access to Fellows is a key strength of the scheme. We warmly encourage Fellows to attend events, where ample time is allocated for discussion and networking.

The National Institute for Health Research generously supports the scheme in England, and we are delighted that Fellows in Scotland and Northern Ireland are helping the Academy to expand the scheme. Following a successful one-day event for aspiring clinical academics in Glasgow in November 2009, NHS Education for Scotland has agreed to fund the scheme in Scotland. Following discussions with colleagues at Queen's University Belfast, an event is also being held in Belfast on 22 March.

For further information contact mentoring@acmedsci.ac.uk

Human rights network



As part of the Academy's growing portfolio of international activities the Foreign Secretary, Professor Robert Souhami CBE FMedSci, recently joined the UK Academies' Human Rights Committee. This group was established by the Royal Society in summer 2009 to engage the UK national academies with the US National Academies' International Human Rights Network.

The Network assists scientists, scholars, engineers, and health professionals around the world who are subjected to severe repression solely for having non-violently exercised their rights as promulgated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Further information is available from sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/humanrights/index.htm

While the Academy will be engaging with the Network as an organisation, there is also opportunity for Fellows to participate individually. For further information please contact laurie.smith@acmedsci.ac.uk.

The Academy's policy team is currently reviewing its interactions internationally. To help increase the impact of this review, the policy team would like to know of any international activities undertaken by the Fellowship. This might include sitting on advisory committees or similar bodies for international organisations, or as part of the international activities of a national organisation. If you are involved in this kind of activity, we would be grateful for an opportunity to talk to you about your experiences. Please contact Laurie Smith (details above).

Blueprint 2010 and plans for a new UK Life Sciences Super Cluster

January marked an important milestone in a unique partnership between Government, industry and academia to improve the UK environment for life science companies. Since its formation a year ago, the Office for Life Sciences (OLS) has introduced new initiatives to support the sector and a new report, 'Life Sciences Blueprint 2010', describes progress to date.

Plans for a Life Sciences Super Cluster are at the heart of the OLS vision to foster health delivery and economic growth. Supported by a £1 million investment and building on existing infrastructure, the Super Cluster aims to harness the UK's capability in translational research and to coordinate R&D across the sectors. The concept will be realised through therapeutic 'Capability Clusters', focusing on exploratory development and each consisting of a small number of academic and NHS centres of excellence. The first of these Capability Clusters will be in the area of inflammation and immunity, with two pilot clusters in inflammatory respiratory diseases and joint & related inflammatory diseases. A call for initial applications from interested NHS/academic centres has now been released and for information on an awareness-raising meeting on 3 March 2010 please visit: www.nihr.ac.uk



The Clusters will complement other OLS initiatives including: fiscal incentives for companies to invest and locate in the UK; an investment fund for high-tech businesses; and an Innovation Pass to give patients earlier access to promising licensed medicines. To view the Academy's recent submission to the Department of Health's Innovation Pass pilot consultation please visit www.acmedsci.ac.uk/publications

Diabetes & obesity



The Academy and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) are holding a joint symposium in Edinburgh on the topic of diabetes and obesity on Wednesday 26 May 2010.

The aim of the high-level interdisciplinary meeting is to review contemporary findings in the obesity-diabetes 'epidemic' and to discuss implications for future developments. The symposium will cover topics including epidemiology and genetics, disease mechanisms, novel imaging approaches, and new therapies, with the intention of horizon-scanning rather than simply reiterating what is already well known.

With support from the RSE Scotland Foundation, the symposium will bring together leading UK and international speakers and participants from academia, industry, the health services and research funders. Confirmed speakers (and topics) include: Professor Bruce Spiegelman, Harvard Medical School (regulation of energy homeostasis); Professor Stephen O'Rahilly FRS FMedSci, University of Cambridge (monogenic causes); Professor Andrew Morris FRSE FMedSci, University of Dundee (societal change); and Dr Tim Rolph, Pfizer (novel therapies).

This event will provide an important opportunity to explore this important topic and to engage with Fellows and scientists north of the border. A report of the meeting will be produced and circulated to all attendees and wider stakeholders. For further information and to register for the meeting, please contact robert.frost@acmedsci.ac.uk

Nominations for the role of Treasurer

Professor Ian Lauder FMedSci will be retiring as Treasurer of the Academy of Medical Sciences at the Annual General Meeting in November 2010 upon completion of his term of office. The Academy office is now seeking nominations for his successor. The post is open to all Academy Fellows. Any Fellow who wishes to make a nomination, or is personally interested in the post, should contact the Chair of the Search Committee, Professor Patrick Maxwell FMedSci p.maxwell@ucl.ac.uk.

A nomination form and description of the role is available from susan.burningham@acmedsci.ac.uk. The Treasurer is one of the Academy's six Honorary Officers, alongside the President, Vice-President (Clinical), Vice-President (Non-clinical), Registrar and Foreign Secretary. The closing date for nominations is Wednesday 14 April 2010.

Dates for your diary

22 June 2010

New Fellows Admission Day, Royal Society, London

22 June 2010

Jean Shanks Lecture, Genetic Fingerprinting and beyond, Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys FRS FMedSci

24 September 2010

Deadline for new Fellows nominations

18 November 2010

AGM, 41 Portland Place, London