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WELLCOME GENOME CAMPUS
CONNECTING
SCIENCE
ADVANCED
COURSES+
SCIENTIFIC
CONFERENCES

Profile Feature as seen in *Nature* 20th December 2018

A FLOURISHING, CUTTING-EDGE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

A conversation with **DR TREASA CREAIVIN**, Science Programme Manager, Advanced Courses and Scientific Conferences, Wellcome Genome Campus, UK



Advanced Courses and Scientific Conferences (ACSC) has been delivering training and conferences for the past 30 years. World renowned for the quality of its events, the programme is expanding to complement the rapidly changing world of genomics and biodata. The conferences cultivate an environment where new ideas can thrive, drawing together researchers and health-care professionals with different perspectives around a common goal. ACSC has recently launched an open call for new conferences and retreats.

What are the aims of the scientific conference programme?

We fund, develop and deliver conferences and retreats spanning basic research, cutting-edge biomedicine and the application of genomics in health-care. We bring together clinicians and researchers, ensuring that groups who work in different disciplines get the opportunity to meet, exchange ideas, develop collaborations and drive research forward. For example our 'genomics of brain disorders' conference brings together psychiatrists, neurologists and researchers working on a variety of rare and common diseases affecting the brain. Our immunogenomics conference encourages discussion between immunologists and geneticists on immune-mediated disease genetics. It's quite rare for these different professional groups to meet and discuss new research in depth.

In what ways will your existing programme be expanded?

We are aiming to increase the number of events and the breadth and diversity of topics we include, as well as the communities we serve. We're expanding the number of conferences from around 16 per year to 22, increasing the number of delegates we attract to the campus. The

annual programme is dynamic with new areas included each year. We closely follow current trends and emerging topics in biomedicine and aim to provide timely meetings focusing on new biological insights that are enabled by new technology. We've recently expanded into new areas such as plant science, with a meeting that focused on how genomes vary across different and changing environments, and antimicrobial resistance, with a meeting that emphasized big data and machine-learning approaches to tackle this major challenge. Furthermore, as genomics is incorporated into healthcare, we're facilitating meetings for health-care professionals including clinicians, nurses and genetic counsellors as they upskill in these areas.

To help us continue to reach new audiences and ensure a diverse programme, we've launched an open call for researchers to propose new conferences and retreats.

What draws people to your conferences - what's unique?

In addition to the exciting science on offer, there are several reasons why attending an ACSC conference is a unique experience. Our campus is in a beautiful rural location near Cambridge, where we have a purpose-built conference centre and facilities. The delegates stay

OUR CONFERENCES ARE VERY INTERNATIONAL, SO DELEGATES CAN CONNECT WITH LEADERS IN THEIR FIELD.

on site so they can maximize opportunities for interactions and discussions, professionally and socially. Eating together, networking during the poster sessions, and discussing science after dinner means that people can form real connections. This sets us apart from large conferences with thousands of delegates staying in hotels across a big city; our meetings have a personalized feel. This helps scientists get to know each other, which can encourage future collaborations and even job offers! The varied format of our conferences - with invited speakers, selected talks, posters and lightning talks - increases the visibility of emerging research, often from the next generation of scientists. Our conferences are very international, so delegates can connect with leaders in their field. Finally, we implemented a gender equality policy two years ago, which is now bearing fruit. Now, 50% of all invited speakers and session chairs are women, as are half of our programme committees. Our conferences have improved the visibility and voice of women in research.

What practical support do you offer conference attendees?

Our conferences are open to all researchers and health-care professionals. To foster an inclusive programme, we offer financial support for PhD students from anywhere in the world - the sole prerequisite is that they submit a conference abstract. Successful applicants receive a 50% discount on registration fees.

We also offer carer grants up to £500. This support is open to all and can be used to cover childcare or care for elderly relatives while attending one of our conferences.

What advice do you have for budding contributors?

If you're a PhD student attending one of our conferences for the first time, make every effort to contact scientists you'd like to meet ahead of time to arrange to discuss your research. Speakers and leading scientists are busy people, so it would be a shame to miss out! If you're a researcher working on an emerging topic that will have an effect on healthcare and genomics, and would like to organize a conference or a retreat, get in touch to discuss it further.



ADVANCED COURSES + SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

2019

CONFERENCES

- Immunogenomics of Disease 5-7 February
- The Challenge of Chronic Pain 4-6 March
- Genomics of Rare Disease 27-29 March
- Personal Genomes: Accessing, Sharing and Interpretation **NEW** 11-12 April
- Animal Genetics and Diseases 8-10 May
- Applied Bioinformatics and Public Health Microbiology 5-7 June
- Health Data Science **NEW** 11-12 June
- Evolution and Ecology of Cancer **NEW** 17-19 July
- CRISPR and Beyond: Perturbations at Scale to Understand Genomes **NEW** 2-4 September
- RNA Informatics 9-11 September
- World Congress on Genetic Counselling 2-4 October
- Plant Genomes in a Changing Environment 16-18 October
- Exploring Human Host-Microbiome Interactions in Health and Disease 23-25 October
- Human Evolution Autumn
- Mechanisms of Intergenerational Change: From Evolution to Health and Disease **NEW** Autumn
- Epigenomics of Common Diseases 6-8 November
- Mitochondrial Medicine 11-13 December

COURSES

LABORATORY COURSES

- Genomics and Clinical Virology 10-15 February
- Genetic Engineering of Mammalian Stem Cells 10-22 March
- Next Generation Sequencing 5-12 April
- Malaria Experimental Genetics 12-18 May
- RNA Transcriptomics 19-28 June
- Single Cell Technologies and Analysis 19-26 July
- Molecular Pathology and Diagnosis of Cancer 17-22 November
- Derivation and Culture of Human Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells (hiPSCs) 9-13 December

COMPUTATIONAL COURSES

- Mathematical Models for Infectious Disease Dynamics 18 February-1 March
- Working with Pathogen Genomes 24-29 March
- Fungal Pathogen Genomics 7-12 May
- Computational Molecular Evolution 13-24 May
- Summer School in Bioinformatics 24-28 June
- Systems Biology: From Large Datasets to Biological Insight 8-12 July
- Bioinformatics for Immunologists 15-19 July
- Genetic Analysis of Mendelian and Complex Disorders 17-23 July
- Proteomics Bioinformatics 21-26 July
- Genetic Analysis of Population-based Association Studies 23-27 September
- Next Generation Sequencing Bioinformatics 1-7 December

LECTURE/DISCUSSION COURSES

- Genomic Practice for Genetic Counsellors 28-30 January
- Public Engagement Masterclass 8-10 July
- Science Policy: Improving the Uptake of Research into UK Policy 19-21 August

OVERSEAS COURSES

- Next Generation Sequencing Bioinformatics 27 January-1 February (South Africa)
- Genomics and Epidemiological Surveillance of Bacterial Pathogens 3-8 March (Peru)
- Practical Aspects of Drug Discovery 7-12 April (South Africa)
- Viral Bioinformatics and Genomics 23-28 June (Uganda)
- Molecular Approaches to Clinical Microbiology in Africa 7-13 September (Kenya)
- Helminth Bioinformatics **NEW** 8-13 September (Ghana)
- Antimicrobial Resistance in Bacterial Pathogens 28 September-4 October (Vietnam)
- Working with Protozoan Parasite Database Resources 10-15 November (Uruguay)

ONLINE COURSES

- Bacterial Genomes: Disease Outbreaks & Antimicrobial Resistance
- Bacterial Genomes: From DNA to Protein Function Using Bioinformatics
- Bacterial Genomes: Accessing and Analysing Microbial Genome Data

Please see our website for scheduling of online courses



