

[Postdoctoral researchers get together for professional development day](#)

Apr 11, 2014

Researchers from across the Faculty of Science got together for their first ever professional development and networking away-day on Tuesday 8th of April.

The event, which will take place annually, covered a range of topics for postdoctoral researchers, with a particular focus on innovation, academic career development, successful academic writing and collaboration.



It was organised by researchers from number of different departments, with support from the Faculty of Science Researcher Development Team and researchers in Biomedical Science BMS, who have had their own researchers' away-days in previous years.

The day, at Kenwood Hall in Sheffield, started with a talk by education expert [David Price OBE](#). He spoke about innovation in the business world and how this can be related to research.

The delegates then formed smaller multi-disciplinary groups, so that they could introduce themselves to one another and come up with their own innovations by taking part in a 'collaboration challenge' sandpit session. They were given an open-ended brief to come up with a research idea that used all of their diverse skills. The proposals were then peer-reviewed by other teams of delegates, who provided one another with some firm but constructive criticism. Ideas included early interventions in Alzheimer's, novel cancer therapies and programmable clothing.

In the next session, a panel of early career academics from across the Faculty then fielded questions from delegates on a range of topics around progression in academia, balancing family life with a career, and the question of how to land that elusive permanent academic position. The discussions from this session were continued over a buffet lunch.

The afternoon session was began talks on successful scientific writing by speakers from the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University.

The speakers shared their expertise on various aspects of writing, including appropriate use of language styles, writing collaboratively, academic publication and overcoming obstacles. Their talks gave delegates ways to improve their own work in different fields and encouraged them to develop a personal approach to writing.

Finally, Faculty of Science Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Tony Ryan spoke about the importance of collaboration in research. He used [Project Sunshine](#) as an example of how successful cross-disciplinary research can be and how it can be used to answer the "big questions".

[Researcher development in the Faculty of Science](#)