Making an impact
The Daphne Jackson Trust in 2013

For more than 20 years, the Daphne Jackson Trust has been successfully returning scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians (women and men) to their careers after a break of two or more years taken for family, caring or health reasons.

We want to celebrate the successes of the Trust and its fellows, and highlight the valuable role the Trust’s alumni are playing in encouraging and supporting a diverse array of talented individuals to return to research careers.

The Daphne Jackson Trust in 2013

40% of two or more years taken for family, caring or health reasons.
During the last year there were several changes to the Trust’s staff team. We welcomed two new Fellowship Advisors, Dr Helen Marsh and Dr Katherine Rooke. We also said goodbye to Dr Nicky Evans who was recruited to the University of Surrey.

The new Fellowship Advisors replace Dr Thomas Hesselberg who left to concentrate on his own research at the University of Oxford. Dr Caroline Cross joined the Trust in May 2013 as Communications and Alumni Manager and works 3 days per week.

All our Fellowship Advisors have research backgrounds covering fields as diverse as biochemistry, chemistry and genetics. This research insight, coupled with many other relevant skills and experience, contributes to the unrivalled level of support they offer candidates applying for Daphne Jackson Fellowships.

As before, our Fellowship Advisors remain your main point of contact and support throughout the application and Fellowship.

The new Fellowship Advisors will join the team.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy hearing individual stories from the diverse array of individuals applying for Daphne Jackson Fellowships. This ongoing support, together with the flexibility the Fellowship offers, undoubtedly contribute to the high success rate we have of Fellows continuing their research after completing their Fellowship.

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Why do you continue to be a Fellowship Advisor?

I continue to be a Fellowship Advisor because I believe in the work of the Trust. Research careers are very weighty against family life. I was faced with a proposal to take forward to our Awards Assessment Panel. Each candidate, applicant or Fellow has a named Fellowship Advisor as soon as their eligibility and suitability are confirmed and this Advisor remains their main point of contact and support throughout their Fellowship and afterwards post Fellowship. I also enjoy working as part of the Trust’s friendly and approachable team.

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The conference was introduced by Dr Julie Maxton, Executive Director of the Royal Society and Professor Dame Glynis Breakwell, Chair of the Daphne Jackson Trust’s Board of Trustees. Both speakers highlighted the importance of removing the barriers facing women wishing to return to research and emphasised the importance of returners schemes like the Daphne Jackson Fellowships.

We enjoyed presentations from 8 Fellows who gave us a flavour of their research on topics ranging from the fine structure of DNA to exploiting decomposing biomass as a renewable fuel source. The prize for best oral presentation was awarded to Dr Morag Maskey, a Daphne Jackson Fellow at Newcastle University, who gave a fascinating talk on developing virtual reality environments to help reduce anxiety in children with autism (you can read more about Morag’s research on Pg17).

In addition, 25 Fellows presented their research as posters and again, the standard was very high. Dr Tamsin Majerus, a Fellow at Nottingham University, won a prize for her outstanding poster in which she presented a colourful perspective of how the spot patterns of ladybirds can influence survival and reproductive fitness. Dr Divya Tiwari, a Fellow at Cranfield University, was also highly commended for her poster which the judges thought was particularly clear and easy to navigate.

Vivienne Parry, science journalist and Patron of the Daphne Jackson Trust, presented prizes to the deserving winners and shared a few of her own top tips on how to successfully present research to non-expert audiences. She also congratulated all the Daphne Jackson Fellows on their determination and commitment, which she said are the hallmarks of the Daphne Jackson Fellowship.

Networking at the conference was a highlight for many of the delegates who responded to our post-conference survey, and as a direct result of the event we welcome on board several additional organisations who will be sponsoring Daphne Jackson Fellows in the future.

The event was generously sponsored by the Royal Society and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851.

The 2013 Daphne Jackson Trust Conference was a huge success with 120 delegates, including 44 current and former Daphne Jackson Fellows, enjoying an inspiring day of talks and poster presentations in delightful surroundings at the Royal Society in London.

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The Trust supports networks in a number of ways: promoting online networking via LinkedIn and Twitter, encouraging Fellows to meet up informally with others, Daphne Jackson Fellows, and organizing larger networking events. In 2013 the Trust organised two events, the Research Conference at the Royal Society in London (read more on pages 4-5), and an event at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL) in Oxfordshire.

We were privileged to host the Science & Technology Facilities Council and our Trustee Professor (Jessica Kantrowitz) for a day at the site which included a fascinating tour of the ISIS facility. ISIS is an accelerator-based neutron source that produces sub-atomic particles called neutrons and x-rays. The facility supports a national and international community of more than 3000 scientists carrying out research into wide-ranging applications including materials science, nuclear science, food safety, and pharmaceuticals and health care, to nanotechnology and materials engineering.

Over 30 delegates attended the event in June 2013, including past and present Fellows, Trustees and representatives from the BRPC (the Physiological Society) and a number of host universities. In addition to the Fellows, the event included a networking reception and presentations from former Fellows and current researcher at RAL, Dr Jakob Rose and Rosie Sherry (HR Manager for the facility).

The 2013 Research Conference was an opportunity for many of our current Fellows to showcase their research and for them and others to discover common research interests and build collaborations. It was also an excellent opportunity for our sponsors and potential sponsors to see at first hand, just how successful our Fellows scheme is in attracting researchers to their careers, with confidence.

As a result of networking at the conference, five current fellows and two Wellcome Trust postdoctoral research fellows met in Birmingham in January 2014 and discussed experiences and plans for the future. The group now plan to meet quarterly.

The Fellows network will complement existing active networks in Scotland, Cambridge, Oxford and Surrey. Others are planned for the Bristol area, the North-East and the North-West. These networks allow past and present Fellows to support one another and share common experiences. Applicants are also invited to join a network whilst in the application process.

Fellows also have the chance to network with others when they attend one of four compulsory training courses during their Fellowship. This year’s Wellcome Trust balance course held in Gulfport gave current Fellows an opportunity to glean useful advice and tips on how to successfully make the transition from Fellowship to independent researcher.

Plans are also underway to develop a network of Fellows with the Science & Technology Facilities Council and the Royal Society in London (read more on pages 4-5). Daphne Jackson Fellows continue to return to research as a key part of the Daphne Jackson Trust’s work to support its Fellows.

Daphne Jackson Fellows starting in 2013

Daphne Jackson Fellows continuing in 2013

Building networks

Bringing people together to share their experiences of returning to research is a key part of the Daphne Jackson Trust’s work to support its Fellows.
12 organisations agreed ongoing sponsorship to support one or more Daphne Jackson Fellows annually, or biennially

Number of Fellows supported
33 42 69 76

7 out of 10 Fellows stay in research after successfully completing their Fellowship

Regional locations of current Fellows

Sponsors

Universities

University of Birmingham
University of Bath
University of Blantyre
University of Bradford
University of Cambridge
University of Canterbury
University of Cardiff
University of Derby
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Hampshire
University of Hertfordshire
University of Kent
University of Leeds
University of Leicester
University of London
University of Manchester
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
University of Plymouth
University of Reading
University of Roehampton
University of Sheffield
University of St Andrew's
University of St Andrews
University of Southampton
University of Sussex
University of Surrey
University of Warwick
University of Wollongong
University of York

Charities

Donations

We are extremely grateful to all the sponsors and donors who have supported our work.
In the spotlight

Daphne Jackson Fellows are inspirational and by sharing their stories demonstrate just how successful our fellowship scheme is in providing the flexibility and support people need when returning to research after a career break. In 2013 we were pleased to see several Daphne Jackson Fellows, past and present, in the media.

One of the highlights of this year for the Daphne Jackson Trust team was when Dr Josephine Mmojieje was invited to join the Trust president of the Royal Society of Chemistry Professor Sally Nyns and former Fellows Rebecca Wood (DJ Fellow ’94-’96) and Pia Ostergaard, Trust Advisor, on Radio 4’s Women’s Hour to talk about career breaks and returning to research with a Daphne Jackson Fellowship. As a direct result of this publicity, the Trust received a very generous donation from a single donor and a request from the charity ‘Plan It Day Better’ to sponsor a Daphne Jackson Fellow. The following weekend, Dr Mary Board was invited to join the then Prime Minister David Cameron at the House of Commons Select Committee inquiry on women in STEM careers. The inquiry received more than 90 written submissions from academics and organisations including Daphne Jackson Fellows and the Trust, and Dr Mary Board, a current Daphne Jackson Fellow and current Trust Advisor who has successfully returned to academic research at St. George’s, University of London, subsequently presented evidence on the Trust’s behalf. She emphasised the difference between planned maternity breaks and extended, often unplanned, career breaks.

Although the inquiry did not uncover any new data, it did prompt several recommendations for action. It calls on the Government to work with the higher education sector to identify the academic career structure and increase the number of long-term positions for post-doctoral researchers. It urges higher education institutions and employers to look to retain women in scientific careers. It recognises the importance of Daphne Jackson Fellowship in encouraging women to return to and progress in STEM careers, and urges universities to support more Daphne Jackson fellows.

In addition, with funding from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Daphne Jackson Trust is now carrying out a feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of a Daphne Jackson Trust Award in Engineering Design. The report recommends that universities do more to retain women in scientific careers. It recognises the importance of Daphne Jackson Fellowship in encouraging women to return to and progress in STEM careers, and urges universities to support more Daphne Jackson fellows.

Despite efforts to improve diversity in the STEM workforce, women still remain under-represented at senior levels across every discipline. Perceptions and biases, often subconscious, represented at societal levels across every discipline. Perceptions and biases, often subconscious, combined with the institutionalisation of combining a career with family are recognised as some of the reasons that fewer women stay in STEM disciplines. The inquiry received more than 90 written submissions from academics and organisations including Daphne Jackson Fellows and the Trust, and Dr Mary Board, a current Daphne Jackson Fellow and current Trust Advisor who has successfully returned to academic research at St. George’s, University of London, subsequently presented evidence on the Trust’s behalf. She emphasised the difference between planned maternity breaks and extended, often unplanned, career breaks.

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Dr Josephine Mmojieje won Birmingham’s Famelab in 2014 after a career break. In 2013 we were pleased to see several Daphne Jackson Fellows, past and present, in the media.
Our breath is like a fingerprint - it contains a unique signature of chemical compounds, some of which relate to health status. Identifying volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in breath samples is an expanding field and three Daphne Jackson Fellows, Dr Modupe Jimoh, Dr Margaret O’Hara and Dr Li Liu have been exploring whether the technique can be exploited as a non-invasive tool for diagnosing disease.

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) can be produced anywhere in the body and are transported via the bloodstream to the lungs, where they are exhaled. VOCs in breath are indicative of VOC levels in blood, and the biochemical processes occurring in the body. It’s possible that differing levels of the same VOCs in the breath of patients versus healthy volunteers could indicate disease, and be used as biomarkers for disease diagnosis.

Dr Modupe Jimoh completed her Daphne Jackson Fellowship in 2013. During her Fellowship, she explored high-throughput methods for analyzing aldehyde compounds in breath samples. She developed a reliable and rapid non-invasive clinical tool for biomarkers of oxidative stress which might in future be developed as a screening method for detecting development of cancers and neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease. She has been invited to write a paper for the Journal of Breath Research and hopes the diagnostic capabilities of the method will now be assessed in clinical trials. Modupe is now a research fellow in the Division of Food Science, at the University of Nottingham working in a related research area that involves studying the dynamics of in-mouth release of volatile flavour compounds that influence food taste perception.

Dr Li Liu began her Fellowship in January 2013 at the University of Leicester after relocating to the UK with her husband’s job. She joined Professor Andrew Ellis’ group as part of a multi-disciplinary team developing non-invasive diagnostics and is exploring the chemical constituents of breath samples from pancreatic cancer patients looking for breath biomarkers. Dr Margaret O’Hara also returned to research in 2013. She is no stranger to breath analysis research and has returned to Dr Chris Mayhew’s research group at the University of Birmingham to carry out her Fellowship. Prior to her career break, Margaret developed a rebreathing protocol to examine differences between breath measurements made using online methods and those made using bags. The work has been cited numerous times. Margaret is currently analysing breath samples looking for biomarkers of liver cirrhosis, using related but different methodologies.

‘Meeting Li at the conference consolidated the links between the Birmingham and Leicester groups and encouraged me to get in touch with them about some common problems. I am organising a half-day meeting and have asked Li to give a talk. We have a great deal of common ground, not only in applications but also in instrumentation,’ explained Margaret.

Non-invasive diagnostics is a rapidly expanding field, and moves are afoot to standardize the methodologies involved so comparisons between different studies can be made. The International Association of Breath Research has established a task force to develop sets of standards for breath sampling, which Margaret says, should help.

‘Our Fellows and their research are making valuable contributions to these efforts and will undoubtedly help maximise the potential of breath analysis as a non-invasive diagnostic tool for clinical use.’

Dr Chris Mayhew, Supervisor

Dr Liu is gaining a broad range of practical and analytical skills in a relatively new area of research for her. She is also learning about the requirements for handling biological and medical samples for analysis. She can already operate all the instrumentation independently and her knowledge of the data analysis side of her work is impressive.

Professor Andrew Ellis, Supervisor

Breath analysis research at the University of Leicester

‘Margaret is doing outstanding work and is already being recognised. For example, she has given a keynote talk at a breath analysis conference.’

Dr Chris Mayhew, Supervisor
**Understanding environmental microbes**

Dr Allan Mswaka was a successful researcher and lecturer in microbiology in Zimbabwe before he had to leave due to instability in the country. He relocated to the UK with his family, but could not get a scientific position due to visa restrictions.

During his career, he joined a number of development projects in the UK, working on a sitting part-time position. After his visa restrictions were lifted, he was able to join the University of Reading, where he is currently working on environmental microbiology.

Allen is studying saprotrophic microbes that play a vital role in natural ecosystems and can be used in diverse applications, including industrial processes such as waste degradation. His research has been funded by a number of grants, and he has published extensively in the field.

Allan has a unique ability to attract funding and has spent time developing research proposals and grant applications. He is currently working on a project focused on the use of virtual reality environments to reduce anxiety in young people with autism.

Allen's research has been recognized with awards and grants, and he is a member of the European Society for Microbiology. He has been instrumental in establishing a virtual reality research group at the University of Reading, and has been a key figure in the development of new research proposals and grant applications.

**Overcoming anxiety in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

Morag Maskey initially trained as an environmental engineer and worked as a consultant before moving into teaching and part-time work, helping two young children. When her third child was born in 2004, she decided to take a career break. But a few years later, when she returned to work, part-time work was not an option.

All activities have helped to boost my confidence and build an optimistic view of my future prospects in research and academia. The Daphne Jackson Fellowship has given the chance to re-discover my passion for science and to experience the cutting-edge of my field.

For Morag, the Daphne Jackson Fellowship has been a valuable contribution to the growing body of autism research that is being carried out worldwide.
Enduring partnerships

The Daphne Jackson Trust and the University of Surrey

The University of Surrey has been home to the Daphne Jackson Trust since it was founded in 1992 following the death of Professor Daphne Jackson, the UK’s first female physics professor and in 1985 she devised a study in nutritional epidemiology which was subsequently developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the MSc Programme in Nutritional Medicine at the university and developed into the 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