

Career Paths in Cardiovascular and Metabolism – making the connections

An ECR, post-doc and graduate student networking event

Friday 11 March 2022

McGrath Centre, St Catherine's College, Trumpington St, Cambridge CB2 1RL



Heart & Lung Research Institute (HLRI) set to be open in April 2022

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Cambridge Cardiovascular is one of several [Interdisciplinary Research Centres \(IRC\)](#) funded by the University of Cambridge. It has been in place since 2013, spanning the Schools of Biological Sciences, Clinical Medicine, Humanities & Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Technology. It acts as an overarching organisation providing support to the related research Centres and communities in Cambridge. It aims to connect researchers across Cambridge area, maximise opportunities for collaborative research, and nurture the next generation of research leaders.

Cambridge Cardiovascular has developed a number of enhanced strategic roles across schools, including:

- Provide a platform for cross-disciplinary research collaborations, major funding bids, research training and educational activities.
- Develop strategic partnerships between disciplines and between academia and industry.
- Identify new ways of influencing cardiovascular health through collaborations between clinicians, public health, and social sciences.
- Create a portal for engagement with clinical trials units and with clinicians for the translation of research findings into new therapeutics, devices and approaches.

Joining the Initiative is simple - visit www.cardiovascular.cam.ac.uk to get started. Members are invited to create their own online research profiles, discuss potential collaborators, help organise seminars and other events, or to advertise events and job opportunities.

Contact: Dr Tammy Dougan, Research Manager webmaster@cardiovascular.cam.ac.uk

Twitter: [@Cambridgecardio](#) YouTube: [Cambridge Cardiovascular](#)



The Cambridge Metabolic Network, is one of several [Strategic Research Initiatives and Networks](#) funded by the University of Cambridge to build on areas of existing research strength by bringing together a critical mass of expertise from across the University Schools and beyond. The four key aims of this approach are to:

- address large-scale inter-disciplinary research challenges
- strengthen research collaborations and knowledge transfer across disciplines
- increase research capacity and profile by providing a platform for large-scale funding applications, recruitment and international research partnerships
- enhance our ability to influence national and international research, policy and funding agendas.

Joining the Cambridge Metabolic Network is free and is open to Cambridge-based researchers, at any level of their career, with an interest in research relating to metabolism. The online researcher directory allows people to search for network members with interests or expertise in particular areas. We encourage everyone based in Cambridge and with an interest in metabolism to join us at Network events and we are always open to new ideas from our members.

www.metabolism.cam.ac.uk

Contact: Angela Lumsdon, Network Co-ordinator, aml95@medschl.cam.ac.uk

Twitter: [@CamMetaboNet](https://twitter.com/CamMetaboNet)

We will be taking some photos during the event. Information you supply to us in connection with your booking will be held securely by Cambridge University on behalf of Cambridge Cardiovascular and the Cambridge Metabolic Network. We will not otherwise, without your consent, supply your information to any third party except where we are required to do so by law. You have a right, under UK data protection law, to obtain certain information from us including a description of the data that we hold on you. Should you have any queries concerning this right please contact us

Cambridge Cardiovascular and The Cambridge Metabolic Network are very grateful for financial support from the Isaac Newton Trust to enable this meeting to take place.

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12.30-1.30pm	Registration and light lunch
1.30pm	Welcome and overview of event – Giles Yeo
	PHARMA AND CLINICAL TRIALS Co-Chairs: Emily Miedzybrodzka and Gemma Basatemur
1.40pm	Joseph Poley-Wolf, Novo Nordisk, Denmark 'Staying close to science whilst leaving the bench – my journey from Cambridge to Novo Nordisk'
1.55pm	Viknesh Selvarajah and Sam Daniels, AstraZeneca Early Clinical Development 'A career pathway to Early Clinical Development in Industry'
2.10pm	Dave Smith, AstraZeneca 'A Career in Industry/Big Pharma: Life on the Dark Side'
2.25pm – 2.40pm	Panel / Discussion
	COMMERCIALISATION AND GENERAL CAREERS
2.40 – 3.00pm (5 mins each)	Cambridge Enterprise - Katja Kostelnik & Katie Sloan Connect Health Tech - Paula Rogers-Brown Milner Therapeutics Institute - Alison Schuldt University Careers Service – Sally Todd
3.00pm-3.30pm	Networking and Refreshments Table Top/Pop Ups in foyer with 4 above
	PUBLISHING, CONTRACT RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS, COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA Co-Chairs: Meri Nus and Alice Williamson
3.30pm	Isabella Samuelson, Nature Metabolism 'Careers in scientific publishing'
3.45pm	Sarah Williams, Charles River Laboratories '12 years in ion channels - transitioning from academia to CRO research'
4.00pm	Giles Yeo, Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science, Cambridge 'Working as a scientist in media'
4.15pm	Jane Sugars, Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science, Cambridge 'Academic-related careers'
4.30-4.45pm	Panel / Discussion
	START-UPS Co-Chairs: Isabella Inzani and Lucas Pantaleao
4.45pm	Felipe Serrano, Mogrify 'Looking for scientific excellence: The odyssey'
5.00pm	Fernanda Schreiber, Microbiotica 'Following bacteria from academia to biotech'
5.15pm	Panel/Discussion
5.30pm	Wrap Up/ Thanks – Giles Yeo
5.40pm – 6.30pm	Networking, Pizza, Canapes, Drinks

Speaker / Organisation Biographies and Talk Briefs

(In order of programme)

Speaker:



Dr Joseph Poley-Wolf, Scientific Strategy Lead, Strategic Development, Global Drug Discovery, Novo Nordisk, Denmark

Title: Staying close to science whilst leaving the bench – my journey from Cambridge to Novo Nordisk

Brief: I will share my experience of moving into pharma roles with a strong scientific focus but without hands-on bench work. I'll aim to give you a taste of the variety that has characterised my work life at Novo Nordisk, as well as what it's like to live and work in Denmark.

Biography: Joseph Poley-Wolf is a scientific strategy lead in the research organisation (Global Drug Discovery) of Novo Nordisk in Denmark. Prior to his current role he worked as a research portfolio manager working both with early drug target maturation as well as supporting late stage clinical programmes in cardio-metabolic disease and Alzheimer's disease. He has neuroscience background with a focus on metabolic disease research. Joseph completed his PhD and Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Cambridge investigating dysregulation of brain food intake control in rare disorders with severe obesity. He also holds a business degree; Master's in Bioscience Enterprise from the University of Cambridge.

Novo Nordisk is a global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered just outside Copenhagen, Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity, cardiovascular disease and rare blood and rare endocrine diseases. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines and working to prevent and ultimately cure the diseases we treat. We employ more than 43,000 people in 80 offices around the world, and market our products in 170 countries. We have global research sites in Denmark, the US, UK (Oxford) and Beijing. As an employer, we recognise the need to embrace experimentation and strive for diversity and inclusion to help make better decisions by ensuring that multiple perspectives are considered.



www.novonordisk.com/careers.html

Speakers:



Dr Viknesh Selvarajah, Medical Director, Clinical Development, Research and Early Development, Cardiovascular, Renal and Metabolism (CVRM), BioPharmaceuticals R&D, AstraZeneca, Cambridge

Dr Sam Daniels, Associate Director, AstraZeneca, Cardiovascular, Renal & Metabolic Disease (CVRM)| Early Clinical Development, Cambridge



Brief: There are many roles and opportunities in early clinical science, Vik and Sam will outline their pathways to working in Early Clinical Development at AstraZeneca and will define the various roles associated with conducting a clinical trial and drug development program in the CVRM disease area.

Biographies:

Vik Selvarajah trained in Medicine at Glasgow University and Clinical Education at the University of Edinburgh. He then moved to Cambridge where he completed his specialty training in Clinical Pharmacology and Nephrology at Addenbrookes Hospital. During this period, he completed a PhD under a BHF Clinical research Fellowship at the Experimental Medicine unit in Cambridge, studying the role of interstitial sodium in modulating human haemodynamic responses to dietary salt in healthy humans, co-developing methods for interstitial elemental analysis at the Elsie Widdowson Lab. This was followed by industry placement with GSK, as part of his Clinical Pharmacology training. In 2020, Vik joined the early clinical development team in CVRM at AstraZeneca as a Medical Director, serving as clinical lead and study physician in early clinical development programs in Nephrology.

Sam Daniels obtained his BSc in Biomedical Science from the University of Surrey, he then moved to Denmark to pursue an MSc at the University of Southern Denmark in Biomedicine where he completed his thesis in conjunction with Nordic Bioscience Biomarkers and Research investigating the efficacy of salmon calcitonin analogues within preclinical models of osteoarthritis. Sam continued at Nordic Bioscience where he completed his PhD while being enrolled at the University of Southern Denmark. For his PhD, Sam investigated the translational value and clinical value of fibrosis biomarkers within the metabolic liver disease, non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). After his PhD, Sam continued to work at Nordic Bioscience leading various commercial and academic liver fibrosis projects as a Research Scientist. In 2020, Sam joined the early clinical development team in CVRM at AstraZeneca as an Associate Director in Early Clinical Research working on a variety of clinical programmes in different disease areas.

About AZ, CVRM

At AstraZeneca, Early CVRM is accountable for discovery and development (up to phase II) of new drugs in the CVRM therapeutic area within three main strategic areas - cardiovascular/heart failure, metabolism and chronic kidney diseases. ECD consists of experienced physicians (medical directors), clinical scientists and clinical program directors, who in a collaborative manner define clinical development strategy, design innovative clinical trials and translate novel scientific ideas to proof of concept in target populations.



Speaker:



**Dr Dave Smith, Principle Scientist, Emerging Innovations Unit
Discovery Sciences, R&D, AstraZeneca, Cambridge**

Title: A Career in Industry/Big Pharma: Life on the Dark Side

Outline: I will start a discussion on the transition between academic research and a research position in big pharma. First, I will talk about my own experience and some of the similarities and differences between the two ways of working. I'll finish by talking about the experience of some recent post-docs joining AstraZeneca from academia. I hope to be around later to carry on the discussion!

Biography: Dave Smith studied biochemistry at Bristol University and then undertook PhD research at the National Heart & Lung Institute. He pursued a career in academic research on obesity and diabetes as a senior lecturer at Imperial College London (Hammersmith Campus). In 2001 he moved to AstraZeneca in Cheshire and later Gothenburg to work in the diabetes research group. Currently he is a member of AstraZeneca's Open Innovation team in Cambridge, UK working on bringing external target screening proposals forward to deliver new chemical leads and improve target validation. He has authored 140 peer-reviewed publications, mainly in the metabolism area. He is also a fellow of the Royal Society of Biology, the British Pharmacological Society and an honorary senior lecturer at the William Harvey Research Institute, QMUL.

LinkedIn profile: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dave-smith-3738065/>

Speakers: Katja Kostelnik & Katie Sloan, Cambridge Enterprise

Dr Katja Kostelnik is a Commercialisation Manager at Cambridge Enterprise, the commercial arm of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Enterprise helps researchers and students to turn ideas and inventions that come out of their research into commercial opportunities. The support provided can be in the form of funding, advice and contract management to the University's staff, students and affiliates who wish to commercialise their research or share their expertise.

Katja has joined the Life Sciences Technology Transfer Team at Cambridge Enterprise in March 2018 and has since worked closely with academics in order to help with translational research funding applications, protect inventions via patenting, support spinning out companies and licence out technologies arising from the University. Prior to joining Cambridge Enterprise, Katja worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Queen Mary University of London in the field of microvascular research, investigating the role of endothelial junctional proteins in inflammatory diseases. Katja studied Biology with a focus on Human and Molecular Biology and holds a PhD in Biochemistry from the Leipzig University in Germany having worked on novel peptide-drug conjugates and therapeutic peptides in the fields of breast cancer and obesity.

www.enterprise.cam.ac.uk



Speaker: Dr Paula Rogers-Brown, Business Community Manager,
Connect: Health Tech, Milner Therapeutics Institute

Paula leads on the strategic development and management of the University's Enterprise Zone, Connect: Health Tech. Working with stakeholders from across the University and cluster to build and integrate a thriving business and enterprise community around med tech, digital health and therapeutics.

Previously, Paula has led innovation programmes for the Knowledge Transfer Network/Innovate UK, was Head of Sector Engagement for Transport at the Institution of Engineering & Technology and has run her own successful businesses. Paula has a long-standing record of stakeholder engagement and programme management on an international scale in the not-for-profit and commercial sectors.

www.connect.cam.ac.uk/health-tech



Speaker: Dr Alison Schuldt, Head of Partnerships and Alliance, Milner Therapeutics Institute

Alison is the Head of Partnerships and Alliance, and her role is focused on creating opportunities to bring academics in Cambridge together with business. An essential component of this is working with the pharma companies in the Milner Therapeutics Consortium through our Innovation Board to understand how we can connect priority areas of industry research with outstanding academic research for new collaborations.

She holds a PhD from Cambridge and since 2000 has had a long-term focus on science communications and strategy. After 15 years working with the international research community through senior editorial roles at Nature Publishing Group (now Springer Nature), she joined the Cambridge Institute for Medical Research in 2014 to work more closely with academics and clinician scientists to develop and implement research strategy. She joined the growing Milner team in 2018.

www.milner.cam.ac.uk



Speaker: Sally Todd, Postdoc careers consultant, University Careers Service

Cambridge University Careers Service works with postdocs and students as they prepare for their next roles, whether in academic research, research in industry or beyond research.

We provide resources through our website www.careers.cam.ac.uk, our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiiU0u8JmKIVtkh09uXDU1Q> and our career development platform, Handshake <https://www.careers.cam.ac.uk/activate-your-handshake-account> and offer panel discussions, workshops and one-on-one appointments. Our quick guides 'Activities in Cambridge to boost your career' and '[Planning an academic career](#)' highlight the skills and experiences researchers may need to develop.



Speaker:



Dr Isabella Samuelson, Associate Editor, Nature Metabolism

Title: Careers in scientific publishing

Brief: A scientific editor gets exposed to cutting-edge research every day. It is our job to filter the many submissions we get, enhance the research quality through review and revision, and give the published work high visibility. As scientific editors, we are at the forefront of scientific research, constantly learning, and have the opportunity to meet and engage with researchers. Simultaneously, a scientific editor is often the bearer of bad news, and our negative decisions can have serious consequences for researchers. I will give an introduction to the scientific editor role at Nature Metabolism, our responsibilities, required skills, and the perks as well as downsides to the job.

Biography: Isabella Samuelson joined Nature Metabolism in September 2020. Isabella obtained her Master's degree in Biological Sciences (Biology of Cells) from University College London, where she specialised in insulin signalling. She then undertook a PhD in Metabolic and Cardiovascular Disease at University of Cambridge, at the Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science, working on adipose tissue biology, human pluripotent stem cell-based models of thermogenic adipocytes, and adipose tissue fibrosis.

Nature Metabolism publishes work from across all fields of metabolism research that significantly advances our understanding of metabolic and homeostatic processes in a cellular or broader physiological context, from fundamental cell biology to basic biomedical and translational research. At its core, the research published in Nature Metabolism sheds light on how cellular metabolism informs cellular function, on the physiology and homeostasis of organs and tissues, on the regulation of organismal energy homeostasis, and on the molecular pathophysiology of metabolic diseases, such as diabetes and obesity, or the treatment thereof.

www.nature.com/natmetab/

nature metabolism

Speaker:



**Sarah Williams, Senior Scientist, Biology Discovery,
Charles River Laboratories**

Title: 12 years in ion channels - transitioning from academia to CRO research

Biography: Sarah Williams is a senior scientist at Charles River Laboratories working at Chesterford Research Park, Cambridge. Sarah is passionate about electrophysiology and in vitro assay development, with 12 years ion channel experience. She has worked in industry since 2016.

Sarah's interest in ion channels started in 2009 during a summer placement, following this she completed her PhD at the University of Southampton. After her PhD, Sarah did postdoctoral research at Brandeis University. Sarah moved back to the UK in 2016 to work for a Cambridge based contract research organization (CRO). In 2018 she moved to Charles River, where she has worked with both manual and automated patch clamp platforms. Sarah has worked on a range of voltage and ligand gated ion channel targets at Charles River, successfully delivering profiling projects and leading an HTS project from assay development into potency phases.

Charles River has supported the development of >80% of the drugs approved by the FDA in the last three years. Chesterford Research Park is a Charles River Discovery site which believes in an integrated approach to drug discovery. We provide drug discovery services covering a spectrum from small, single discipline projects to fully integrated programs involving biology, medicinal chemistry, pharmaceuticals, structural biology, and DMPK.

www.criver.com



Speaker:



Dr Giles Yeo, Programme leader, MRC Metabolic Diseases Unit, Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science, University of Cambridge

Title: Working as a scientist in media

Outline: The world of working in media might seem a million miles away from the bench. However, for every media medic or scientist you see fronting science documentaries on radio or TV, there are teams of post-doctoral level scientists that are researching and integrating complex concepts and findings into lay-friendly and digestible infobites. How can you try and break into the industry?

Biography: Giles Yeo got his PhD from the University of Cambridge in 1998, after which he joined the lab of Prof Sir Stephen O’Rahilly, working on the genetics of severe human obesity. He is now a programme leader at the MRC Metabolic Diseases Unit in Cambridge and his research currently focuses on the influence of genes on feeding behaviour & body-weight. In addition, he is a graduate tutor and fellow of Wolfson College, and Honorary President of the British Dietetic Association. Giles is also a broadcaster and author, presenting science documentaries for the BBC, and hosts a podcast called ‘Dr Giles Yeo Chews The Fat’. His first book ‘Gene Eating’ was published in December 2018, and his second book ‘Why Calories Don’t Count’ came out in June 2021. Giles was appointed an MBE in the Queen’s 2020 birthday honours for services to ‘Research, Communication and Engagement’.

Speaker:



Dr Jane Sugars, Public Engagement Associate, Wellcome-MRC Institute of Metabolic Science, Cambridge

Title: Academic-related roles

Outline: What paths could you follow if you love science, like working with academics but don’t see yourself studying the same enzyme/hormone/condition in ten years’ time? For those who enjoy variety and would like to develop their abilities in writing, organising, or networking and to keep flexing their creative brain, look at academic-related roles where a background in research can be an enormous asset. It’s not only something for the most outgoing people-persons and the types of skills you will develop are likely to be highly transferrable to other settings.

Biography: When Jane Sugars moved from working in finance to being a lab assistant, they hadn’t studied biology since the age of 13 (‘we were allowed to choose just one science and I was only allowed to choose physics’). A first day in the electron microscope suite was enough to inspire Jane to study biology up to PhD level. After one post-doc contract Jane realised that while variety is the spice of life it’s not easy to keep shifting topics in a research career, so she moved on to academic-related roles. Jane has never regretted the move and now has 18 years’ experience working in the fields of Public Engagement, Communications and Researcher Development.

Speaker:



Felipe Serrano, Principal Scientist & Group Leader, Mogrify

Title: Looking for scientific excellence: The odyssey

Biography: Originally from Sedaví (Valencia, Spain), Felipe Serrano obtained his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Valencia (Spain) in 2006.

In 2008, he started his PhD research project at Hospital la Fe (Valencia). His main topics were the role of Gata4 in the reprogramming of somatic cells and the direct conversion of Fibroblasts to Hepatocytes. During the last year of his PhD, He obtained a short-term fellowship to join Professor Richard Ian Gregory's lab (Harvard medical school, Harvard University). In the Gregory lab, He worked on the transdifferentiation of fibroblasts to human hepatocytes using miRNAs.

In 2016, He was awarded the best thesis prize in Medicine by the University of Valencia after receiving his PhD degree in 2013.

In August 2013, He became a research associate in Dr Sanjay Sinha's lab (University of Cambridge). He focused his research in differentiation of Human Pluripotent Stem Cells to Smooth Muscle Cells of different embryonic origins and their role in human disease. In the Sinha lab, he specialised in human aortic aneurysm disease modelling, using CRISPR/Cas9 technology.

In July 2019, He became a Senior Scientist at Mogrify, working in transdifferentiation of human lung fibroblasts to AT2 cells. Currently, he is a Principal Scientist and a group leader in Pulmonology, leading the strategy to deliver specific transcription factors *in vivo* for new lung gene therapies.

Mogrify® is a Cambridge (UK) based biopharmaceutical company focused on developing novel *in vivo* reprogramming therapies and scalable *ex vivo* cell therapies for ophthalmology, pulmonary, immuno-oncology, and other diseases areas. Using its proprietary suite of platform technologies to systematically identify the key transcriptomic and epigenetic switches required to drive direct cellular reprogramming.

www.mogrify.co.uk



Speaker: Fernanda Schreiber, Senior Scientist, Microbiotica

Title: Following bacteria from academia to biotech

Biography: I am Senior Scientist at Microbiotica Ltd. Our company's aim is to develop live bacterial therapies.

I have long been interested in the interaction between bacteria and host. I'm originally from Uruguay, where I got a BSc in Biochemistry, followed by a MSc in Immunology at the Universidad de la Republica. During that time I focused on vaccine development.

I did my PhD at the University of Cambridge, based at the Wellcome Sanger Institute (Prof. Gordon Dougan's Lab), studying the role of flagella in the pathogenesis of *Salmonella typhi* and how it affected the interaction between the bacteria and host cells (epithelial and immune cells).

After a postdoc at the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, University of Cambridge (Dr. Ziad Mallat Lab), I came back to the Wellcome Sanger Institute as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Host-Microbiota Interactions Lab (Dr. Trevor Lawley Lab), where I set up a system using patient-derived intestinal organoid to study the interactions between microbiota and host during IBD.

From there I moved to Microbiotica in 2019, as part of the Cell Biology team and in charge of developing *in vitro* assay to test our products, focusing on bacteria-epithelium interactions.

www.microbiotica.com



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