Welcome

Welcome to the first University of Bristol Athena SWAN Newsletter. This newsletter will provide termly updates sharing news, helpful guidance and updates of the Athena SWAN initiative from both inside and outside of the University. If you would like to contribute to future issues - by suggesting a resource you have found useful, sharing information, or writing a few paragraphs about an approach in your department that others might be interested in learning about - please email Vikki Layton at vikki.layton@bristol.ac.uk

Current Award Holders
The University currently holds a Bronze level Institutional Award. Within the University we have the following schools with awards:

Bronze Award Holders
School of Chemistry (2012)
School of Clinical Sciences (2013)

Silver Award Holders
School of Physiology and Pharmacology (2012)
School of Social and Community Medicine (2012)
School of Oral and Dental Sciences (2013)

The University submitted a bronze renewal application for an Athena SWAN and ECU institutional renewal pilot in December. All results, including the pilot, from the November 2013 round are due at the beginning of April 2014.

UoB SWAN Network
The first meeting of all Athena SWAN leads from STEMM Schools at the university took place on 3rd February. This was an opportunity for all SWAN leads to share knowledge and good practice from their schools. Examples of the useful advice shared included;

- it was better to do small and realistic actions, but done well
- don’t underestimate how long it takes to write a submission
- look at other university’s departments’ submissions;
- core working hours are enormously important.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place in on 8th April.

April 2013 Submission Awards Round Update

The Athena SWAN and ECU team provided an evaluation from the April 2013 Submission round with some interesting findings:

- 114 applications from 49 different institutions were received, and assessed across 19 panels with over 100 panelists
- 101 were new applications, 13 were renewals or upgrades
- 13 applications were first time institutional submissions
- 90 awards were conferred, a success rate of 82%. 68 awards were conferred at the level applied for (success rate of 62%)
- Medical schools and clinical departments made up 30% of all successful awards. Engineering departments were the second largest group, gaining 9% of all successful awards
- 10 awards were conferred to institutions, including the fourth silver institutional award (University of Warwick)
- Of the 80 awards made to departments, 60 were made at bronze level, 19 at silver and a gold departmental award conferred (Department of Chemistry at Imperial College London)

At departmental level:
48 new bronze applications were received of which 39 received a bronze award (9 were unsuccessful). The success rate was 81% (equivalent success rate in November 2012 was 66%, 14 out of 21)
39 new silver applications were received, of which 14 received a silver award, 10 a bronze award and 6 were unsuccessful. The success rate for silver was 36% (the equivalent rate from November 2012 was 28%, 9 out of 32)
Equality and Diversity
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News in Brief

Focus Groups for Data Presentation
Athena SWAN asked for volunteers to attend focus groups taking place at the end of March to look at ways to make the presentation of data in award applications more uniform. Please could you let Vikki Layton know if you have been successfully selected vikki.layton@bristol.ac.uk and provide an update or share at the next network meeting. Updates from ECU will be shared via the University SWAN network.

FAQ page
The University of Bristol Athena SWAN FAQ page can now be accessed from the Equality and Diversity website.

Podcast of the University of Bristol Libra Lecture
The podcast of Dr Michelle Ryan’s Glass Cliff lecture is now available on the Women in STEMM Events page. The University of Bristol Libra Lectures are a series of annual events which was launched in 2013. The lectures will focus on current research into gender-related topics and also feature leading academic and non-academic female speakers. Research into the glass cliff examines what happens when women (and other minority groups) take on leadership roles. Extending the metaphor of the glass ceiling, ‘the glass cliff’ describes the phenomenon whereby individuals belonging to particular groups are more likely to be found in leadership positions that are associated with a greater risk of failure and criticism. This talk describes a program of research which has uncovered the phenomenon of the glass cliff and investigates the underlying psychological processes.

ECU Update
The Athena SWAN medical schools working group members have been evaluating the application forms and processes in the light of the specific differences of medical schools. Work has begun on best practice guides and these will be published soon. To enhance communications a new Medical and Dental Schools Athena SWAN Newsletter has been created by Dr Jan Bogg (University of Liverpool, Athena SWAN Steering Committee). Additionally, a website for Athena SWAN matters has been created on the Medical Schools Council website.

A comprehensive guidance document on the Athena SWAN awards process is in development, and expected to be completed soon. The ECU board is currently reviewing these processes and will be outlining an appeals process that is being introduced for the first time.

The ECU commissioned Loughborough University to investigate the impact of Athena SWAN in higher education institutions in the UK, including

- the effectiveness of the Charter in advancing women’s careers in STEMM
- the sustainability of the changes that higher education institutions are making as a result of their participation in Athena SWAN
- the impact of the charter in changing the culture and attitudes across the participating institutions to address inequality and unequal representation
- the suitability of Athena SWAN processes for use in complex and busy institutional environments.

The report should be ready very soon.

Critical Readers
At the first network meeting, there was a discussion surrounding the establishment of a pool of critical readers. A critical reader would read another school’s draft application and provide feedback. A couple of volunteers offered this support to those Schools applying in April 2014. With a total of 9 Schools submitting in November 2014, we need to have a larger pool of critical readers to share drafts with and to provide feedback and comment to those applying. If you or any members of your School’s SAT could volunteer, then please contact Vikki Layton.

Experiences of SWAN
In the Athena SWAN April 2013 Awards Handbook, the School of Clinical Sciences was commended for moving its seminar series as a result of consultation. A new series is being planned with a focus on attracting high profile female speakers. Professor Tim Peters, Head of School, stated: ‘Since it was created in August 2010, the school’s managerial structures and ethos have been designed to emphasise equality of opportunity, helping all staff to maintain excellence and fully develop their careers. Supporting and encouraging women at all levels to aspire to success and to apply for key roles within the school and the wider university have been crucial elements of achieving this aim.’

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