Workshop on Communication and Research Culture

MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, 15 Chaucer Road, CB2 7EF

Day 1: 8 December 2026

9:00 Registration and refreshments

9:30 **Opening remarks**
Matt Lambon Ralph, Director, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit

9:45 **Discussion: Which research culture issues need a new approach?**
Chair: Saskia Frisby

10:45 Break (refreshments provided)

11:15 **Short talks session 1: "Tried and trusted" methods of improving culture**
Chair: Rashmi Patel

- The Research Culture Scoping Review – Marie Collier, Kate Dawson, and Liz Simmonds (University Research Culture team)
- Strengthening an inclusive and collaborative research culture at the Cambridge Conservation Research Institute – Arman Pili (Conservation Research Institute)
- The role of Welfare Officers in shaping research culture: a case study from the Child Health and Development Group – Isabella Morse and Cassandra Dawson (Department of Public Health and Primary Care)
- Puzzles "click" people together – Elizabeth-Ann Legere (Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience)
- Co-creating change: Fostering positive collaboration between Technical Services and researchers through Lean principles – Susana Sauret-Gueto (Crop Science Centre)

12:45 Lunch (provided)

14:00 **Keynote: Title TBC**
Marcus Munafò, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, University of Bath
Chair: Rebecca Williams

15:00 Break (refreshments provided)

15:30 **Short talks session 2: Collaboration and impact**
Chair: Sarah Lloyd-Fox

- Communicating research for public engagement – Thana Asaad (Development and Alumni Relations)
- What is impact, and how do we measure it? From research to real-world value – Simone Castello (Faculty of Economics)
- Negotiating positive research culture: Cultivating higher-order collaborative competence – Alison Judge and Réda Guiri (Department of Engineering)

16:15 **Posters** (refreshments provided)

17:30 Close

Day 2: 9 December 2026

9:00 Refreshments

9:30 **Keynote: Expectations, explanations and conversations: How small acts of communication and kindness can shape research culture**
Dr Sam Oakley, Research Governance and Integrity Manager, University of Glasgow

Chair: Dr Rebecca Williams

10:30 Break (refreshments provided)

11:00 **Short talks session 3: Early career initiatives**

Chairs: Rudy Kirchner, Leanne Al-Mrayat, and Jana Tomastikova

- The Cambridge Psychiatry Mentoring Scheme: promoting connection across the career span – Rashmi Patel and colleagues (Department of Psychiatry)
- Learning to Fly – Melissa Gammons (Cambridge Institute for Medical Research)
- Hidden Barrier Workshops for early career researchers – Marlou Perquin and Rebecca Williams (MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit)
- Finding our voice together: Communication, power and collaboration in an ECR manifesto – Aneeza Pervez (Faculty of Education)

12:00 Lunch (provided)

13:00 **Keynote: The Power of Play in Communication**

Dr Rebecca Williams, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit

Chair: Viktorija Smith

13:30 **The Variables Present: Comedy, communication and connection**

The Variables – science-themed comedy team

14:00 Break (refreshments provided)

15:00 **Discussion: Can existing research culture initiatives address new issues?**

Chair: Dr Saskia Frisby

16:00 **Closing remarks**

Marie Collier, University Research Culture team

16:15 Close