

AWiSE aims to help retain and enhance the participation of women in science, engineering and technology in industry and academia. We do this through **networking** meetings, personal development workshops, access to a **mentoring** scheme and gathering and disseminating **information**. AWiSE members come from the whole range of career stages, from undergraduates and postgraduates through to company directors and professors.

## Welcome

Welcome to our bumper Easter edition!

The **Cambridge AWiSE website** continues to grow and now contains even more information and a new **In the News** section. If you have been in the news recently or read anything you think would be of interest to our members, please let me know. We would also love more member profiles. We hope that this page encourages women from all SET fields and at all stages of their career to join Cambridge AWiSE as well as help you. We can include a link to your company if you have your own business or to your own personal web page. I'm happy to draft a profile for you so **PLEASE** contribute, the more the merrier!

And if you've been meaning to join Cambridge AWiSE for a while why not do it now! You can download a membership form from the web!

Lucy  
info@camawise.org.uk



## In the News

### Portraits of the 2007 Women of Outstanding Achievement in SET unveiled.

On the 8th March the portraits for the **2007 Women of Outstanding Achievement in SET** were unveiled at the Science Museum. This exciting collection of portraits is both a celebration and tribute to the collective and individual contribution that women are making to SET. Cambridge AWiSE Steering Group member, **Tennie Videler** successfully nominated her supervisor, Prof. Carol Robinson of the University of Cambridge.

Tennie believes "Carol is a great role model as she has kept a very warm human side and has not succumbed to pressure to become as

masculine as the world she is successful in. Carol is a great supporter of the many female members of her research group, encouraging us to fulfill our ambitions and giving advice and guidance along the way. She is very positive about providing the flexibility necessary to raise a family for the parents in her group. She has achieved her goals through much intelligence and determination rather than privilege. She inspires women to follow her lead because she remains very approachable and personable."



To see Carol's portrait and those of the other Outstanding Women, visit the UKRC website: [www.setwomenresource.org.uk/en/home/about/women\\_of\\_outstanding\\_achievement\\_in\\_set/the\\_2007\\_collection](http://www.setwomenresource.org.uk/en/home/about/women_of_outstanding_achievement_in_set/the_2007_collection)

### Women with young children face the greatest employment inequality.

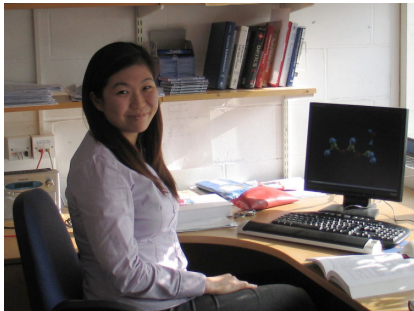
So says the **Equalities Review** commissioned by Tony Blair and chaired by Trevor Philips ([www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk](http://www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk)). The review highlights that women with young children face the greatest employment inequality. Jenny Watson chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission ([www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)) says "Our own work has shown that achieving equality for women at work is far from done, and it's good to have this recognised in the Equalities Review. But today, 3 in 4 people say it should be as easy for men to take time off for caring responsibilities as women, indicating the challenge of balancing work and family isn't only an issue that affects women. If we are to make these recommendations fit the future, part of the solution must be

extending the right to request flexible work to everyone. Only then can we cope with the social revolution we are living through, with far more women at work, far more fathers wanting to spend more time with their children and far more of us caring for older relatives. Forward looking businesses already do this, and they see the positive impact it has on their staff -- and their bottom line."

See the Cambridge AWiSE website at [www.camawise.org.uk/news.html](http://www.camawise.org.uk/news.html) for more!

### HSBC Very Early Career Women Physicist of the Year Awards.

Cambridge University final year Ph.D. student, **Andrea Ma**, has been announced as a runner up in the HSBC Very Early Career Women Physicist of the Year Awards.



These awards, made by the Women in Physics Group of the Institute of Physics and HSBC, publicise the success of young women physicists so that women studying physics at school and university can see how their careers could develop. Andrea's research is in the area of Quantum Monte Carlo techniques. She uses these to calculate the properties of materials, including diamonds, as well as developing technical improvements to the method.

**Jenny Koenig** found an interesting snippet in *New Scientist* recently. Research by *Matthew Symonds et al.* in the journal *PLoS One* shows that **women publish fewer papers than men but their papers have higher impact!** See our website for more information.

## Changes in the Law

### Maternity Rights

New provisions for maternity leave come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 as part of the 2006 Work and Families Act. Women with babies who are due after 1<sup>st</sup> April will now be entitled to 9 months paid maternity leave and three months off unpaid. This act also

extends the right to request flexible working to carers of adults. More information at: [www.dti.gov.uk/employment/employment-legislation/workandfamiliesact/index.html](http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/employment-legislation/workandfamiliesact/index.html)

### The Gender Equality Duty

The Gender Equality Duty comes into force on 6<sup>th</sup> April. All public authorities in England, Wales and Scotland must demonstrate that they are promoting equality for women and men and eliminating sexual discrimination and harassment. Visit the Equal Opportunities Commission website at [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk) for more information.



## Meeting Reports

### Secret Paths: Seeking balance and confidence amid competing needs.

**Dr. Terri Apter, University of Cambridge.**

Terri Apter came to Lucy Cavendish College at the end of January. Her talk drew on detailed interviews she has had with women in their forties and fifties. The meeting was very well attended and extremely thought provoking!

Terri's research finds that young women face enormous pressure from ideals. Thinking you can have it all and finding out that you can't, can lead to a great loss of confidence. As women age they realise that they really can't 'have it all' but they can assess what is deficient in their lives and this can also challenge their confidence. However, it appears that women in midlife undergo a series of changes through which they gain a newly powerful sense of their own identity. She sees midlife as a time where women gain greater control over their decisions and a strengthened sense of their potential. These midlife women realise that it matters less what other people think, they realise that their own needs matter and they are more able to confront their own internal voices - how do people see me? What ideal do I strive towards?

Terri believes it is better to accept the fact that you can't have it all sooner rather than later and find strategies to help you gain balance. She believes that role models are not the answer. We can all learn from each other but should not set each other up as ideals. We should continually focus our goals and learn to adapt and improvise. We must also realise that there will be special times of

conflict in our lives, as we move from child to adolescent, from school to work and as we become part of new families.

### **Taking Control of Your Own Career** **Ruth Sapsed and Leonie Isaacson** ***Career Insight Partnership***

Ruth and Leonie came to the Royal Society of Chemistry in February to speak about how best to take control of your career. Their tips for managing your career are:

1. **Develop a Network** - networks are useful for support and advice and can help you build knowledge and contacts or solve problems.
2. **Know Yourself** - build a picture of who you are, your strengths and weaknesses, values and goals. Get objective feedback from as many sources as possible.
3. **Develop transferable skills** - these skills you can take with you wherever you go.
4. **Be watchful** - keep an eye out on what's going on in your company, your industry or your profession and think about what your view of the future looks like.
5. **Develop key interpersonal skills** - skills such as influencing, communication, leadership and team working will help you succeed in different environments.
6. **Take opportunities to develop yourself** - use company career and training resources, volunteer for projects, tasks or new experiences.
7. **Make yourself valuable in your own company** - anticipate how you can add value to the company and step forward.
8. **Stay aware of other possibilities** - what other careers interest you? Don't rule out changing your job, company or even starting your own business.
9. **Develop your own career management skills** - design, implement and review a career action plan and revisit it regularly.
10. **Define career success to you** - explore and understand your own values so you can decide what career success really means to you.

Their company, *Career Insight Partnership* offers career coaching in a supportive and non-judgmental environment, and CV preparation and interview technique advice. For further information, contact:

Leonie Isaacson

[leonie@careerinsightpartnership.co.uk](mailto:leonie@careerinsightpartnership.co.uk)

Ruth Sapsed

[ruth@careerinsightpartnership.co.uk](mailto:ruth@careerinsightpartnership.co.uk)

### **Career Goals for Women in Science -** **Setting up your own scientific business** **Jenny Koenig (Science ETC)** **Diane Turner (Anthias Consulting Ltd)**

Cambridge AWiSE steering group members, Diane and Jenny came to the Royal Society of Chemistry in March to talk about setting up their own businesses. Both spoke extremely enthusiastically about the benefits of being your own boss and provided the audience with lots of practical advice. Diane's presentation, which includes links to many useful websites, is in the resources section of our website.



On Saturday 17th March, Cambridge AWiSE was present at the Science Festival. The overall theme was "big and the small". As we have such diverse interests we decided to pull it all together with a "marine" theme. Diane brought lots of posters and folders promoting the Coral Cay charity she is involved in ([www.coralcay.org](http://www.coralcay.org)) and we decorated our table with colourful fish sarongs. To tie in with the overall theme, a poster asked "what is the tale of the tail on the whale", whales being big (to me, whale tails are very interesting as they are horizontal, whereas fish tails are vertical: a fabulous example of convergent evolution). To represent small there was a painting of "Green Fluorescent Protein" - a protein which gives off green light and is isolated from a jellyfish.

For our watery hands on experience we had the following: the trusty pen chromatography experiment, demonstrating surface tension by floating/sinking paperclips in water, with and without washing up liquid. However, the far best received experiment was seeing how many drops of water fit onto coins. The record was an amazing 69 drops on a 2p coin!! Some younger children just enjoyed the squeezey pipettes and we all had a great time!

For the Cambridge AWiSE message, we had posters showing little girls saying "when I grow up I want to be an engineer or scientist, just like my mum". We had leaflets and cards to take away and spoke to girls about choosing science subjects at GCSE and A levels: the scientists and engineers of the future?

Tennie.



We'd all like to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to **Tennie Videler** for organising our Science Festival Event and to Diane Turner, Esther Haines, Lucy Spokes, Suzanne Doyle Morris, Tabassum Jafri, Cobi Smith, Tanya Morton and Jenny Brookman who helped out on the day.



## Forthcoming Meetings

Our meetings are open to everyone whether a member of Cambridge AWiSE or not. Come along and meet us and find out what we do!

### 1. *Career Paths for Women in Science Series.*

**Moving into Management - Irene Warner**  
**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May - 12:15-13:45**  
**Royal Society of Chemistry, Science Park.**

Irene has had extensive experience in the private and public sectors. She started her business in 2000 and has designed and delivered supervisory and management training and contributed to qualifications development and assessor training. She continues to work in the business support field with support for new enterprises and management training in the voluntary sector. She supports businesses in the process of change and provides help for start-ups.

To register email [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)  
£5 Sandwich lunch, payable on the door.

**Becoming a scientific consultant**  
**Monika Green, Cambridge Consultants**  
**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June - 12:15-13:45**  
**Royal Society of Chemistry, Science Park.**

Details closer to the date! Check the web!

To register email [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)  
£5 Sandwich lunch, payable on the door.

### 2. *Academic Careers*

**The Concordat for Career Management of**  
**Contract Research Staff.**  
**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 20:00-22:00.**  
**Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge.**

The Concordat came into force in 1996 and set standards for career management and conditions of employment for contract research staff (CRS). Its signatories

recognised that fixed term grants play a major role in the funding of research in universities and colleges and that this situation will continue in the future. They also recognised that CRS make a significant contribution to this research. They agreed that funding bodies have responsibility to produce trained people to meet the needs of the research user community. They also accepted that CRS should benefit from their experience, gain skills and test whether they are suitable for a research career in either academia or industry. However, they realised that limited opportunities and the insecurity resulting from employment on a series of fixed term contracts causes tensions and, as a result, talented and highly trained staff leave research and the morale and productivity of others suffers.

The concordat sets out several principles for effective career management of CRS:  
**Recruitment** - that opportunities are publicised widely, training is offered and there are re-entry routes for researchers who have had career breaks.

**Supervision and regular review** - to ensure opportunities for training are known and that suitability for a research career can be assessed.

**Terms and conditions of employment** - in line with established staff.

**In service training** - specialist and general.  
**Career guidance and development** - looking at opportunities in academia and outside.

The concordat also contains special initiatives to contribute to the wider policy of encouraging the participation of women in research: the salaries element of a grant can be used to pay maternity leave and additional funding can be claimed to pay for maternity cover or to extend the period of the grant so that the project can be completed.

The concordat is being revised in light of recent changes in legislation and there will be a period of consultation over the summer. We hope this meeting will allow contract research staff the chance to voice their opinions and experiences relating to short-term contracts, discuss what they would like to see in a revamped concordat and enable Cambridge AWiSE to be in a position to respond to the consultation document.

A link to the research careers initiative and the concordat can be found on the Universities UK web site at:

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/activities/rci.asp>

A statement of principles for the revised concordat can be found at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/rcdu/careermanagement.htm>, the Research Councils research careers and diversity strategy can be downloaded at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/strategy.htm> The European Charter and Code specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers. The following document identifies actions that might need to be taken to align the UK with its broad principles: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rescareer/rcdu/internationalconnections/gapanalysis.htm>.

To register for this, send an email to: [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)

So you want to become an academic?  
Cambridge AWiSE and WiSETI  
Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 17:00-19:00  
Robinson College, Cambridge.

Continuing the academic theme, Cambridge AWiSE and University of Cambridge Women into Science, Engineering and Technology Initiative are holding a joint meeting about becoming an academic. We have invited women academics to come and speak about

their experiences, others to talk about the resources available to help you succeed and a chance to air your views and ask questions.

Note the different time and venue!  
To register, email [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)

The Steering Group are now discussing future topics for our networking meetings.

**PLEASE, PLEASE CONTACT US WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS!!**

We really want our meetings to be of interest to you, our members. Email [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk) with your ideas.

Our website ([www.camawise.org.uk](http://www.camawise.org.uk)) contains flyers for you to download, please use these to publicise our events where you work.

If you have any queries about our meetings, please contact Lucy at [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)



## Mentoring

The concept of mentoring has been around for a very long time, the idea was first introduced in Homer's *Odyssey* in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC. When Odysseus went to fight in the Trojan War, he left his son in the care of his friend Mentor who provided support and encouragement to the boy. The word mentor has become to mean someone who acts a guide and advisor. One of the best known modern definitions of mentoring is by Eric Parsloe. He describes the purpose of mentoring as:

*“To support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be”.*

Retention of women in SET is of great concern to the Government. Several factors are known to influence a woman's decision to leave SET, including the pressures associated with balancing a family and a career. A number of specific actions have been recommended, one is mentoring. Mentoring has many advantages, particularly access to role models who can provide qualified unbiased advice. Many of us have had unofficial mentors in our lives. These people have helped us on our way, listened to us, offered help and support and enabled us to get to where we are today. Frequently we find our own mentors, but when this is not possible, a mentoring scheme can help.

Women turn to mentoring for many different reasons:

- Women who are climbing the career ladder come across the 'glass ceiling', an invisible barrier preventing progression to senior positions. Networking with successful women can help.
- Another issue that women face is combining responsibilities at home with a career. Some women take a career break when they have a family and then have to re-integrate themselves in the work place after an extended absence. They may need help in rebuilding their self-confidence and advice about updating skills. Other women continue to work after maternity leave and may find it difficult to establish a reasonable work-life balance. Others may find themselves as a carer for older relatives. It is often difficult to raise issues like this in a male-

dominated work environment. A trusted mentor who has, herself, grappled with these problems can be a valuable source of support and advice.

- Women working in engineering or the physical sciences can find that they are the only professional woman working within a small organisation or section of a large company. They often have no role models and can feel very isolated. Being able to talk to a woman working in a similar environment can be a great source of inspiration.
- Unfortunately some women still face serious discrimination at work. Often they do not realise that this is not acceptable until a mentor points it out.
- A large number of women simply wish to improve career progression and realise that mentoring can help. Mentees in a new job may find it useful to speak to someone who has been in that, or a similar role, for a number of years. Mentoring enables them to discuss what the job entails and how best to progress.

Our lives are busy and we often only have the time to think about day-to-day issues. Mentoring can give us some valuable ‘me time’ and the opportunity, space and confidence to think about our longer-term objectives. Feedback from both mentees and mentors show that mentoring is fun. It assists in career planning, develops useful transferable skills and is an opportunity to challenge and be challenged. It also provides access to the networks of other women. Mentoring helps people answer the question “where am I now, where do I want to be and how will I get there?” It helps people set and achieve their own objectives and goals. **If you think having someone to talk through your own objectives will help you achieve them, why not consider mentoring?**

## MentorSET



Cambridge AWiSE is affiliated to the national MentorSET women’s mentoring scheme and our members can join for free. MentorSET connects women in SET with independent mentors who can offer career based advice and guidance. If you would like to find out more about MentorSET, either as a mentor or a mentee, please visit the MentorSET website at [www.mentorSET.org.uk](http://www.mentorSET.org.uk) or contact me at [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk).

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## Contact Cambridge AWiSE

To join our email list and receive information on our meetings and events, email:

[ucam-awise-request@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ucam-awise-request@lists.cam.ac.uk)

To contact us, email: [info@camawise.org.uk](mailto:info@camawise.org.uk)

Membership costs just £20 per year for individuals, £10 for women on low wages and £5 for students. Membership gives you reduced entry fees to our meetings and access to the MentorSET women’s mentoring scheme as well as supporting the running costs of AWiSE.

[www.camawise.org.uk](http://www.camawise.org.uk)