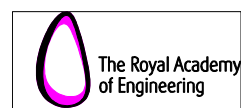




Media Fellowships

Evaluation 2010



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British Science Association Media Fellowships 2010

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Aims of the scheme

The British Science Association Media Fellowships create a greater awareness and understanding of the workings of the media among practising scientists, social scientists, clinicians and engineers. They aim to address the misunderstanding and mistrust between scientists and journalists and provide vital communication between the two to improve the quality and quantity of science stories in the press.

The scheme was set up in 1987 following the Royal Society's Public Understanding of Science report (1985) which stated that '*scientists must learn to communicate better with all segments of the public, especially the media*'. This was echoed in the House of Lords select committee on Science and Technology Third Report (2000), which emphasised that '*the culture of United Kingdom science needs a sea-change, in favour of open and positive communication with the media. This will require training and resources*'. The department for Business, Innovation and Skills also recently published a report, 'Science and the Media: Securing the Future' (January, 2010) which emphasised the need for a Media Fellowship scheme. Currently the Media Fellowship scheme is the only one of its kind in the UK.

Specifically the Media Fellowships aim to:

- provide opportunities for researchers to learn how the media operates
- improve communication skills, in particular writing skills
- increase confidence and willingness to engage with the media
- encourage participation in wider public debate on issues involving science
- disseminate learning from the Media Fellowship with colleagues and within the wider research community

1. Summary

In 2010, 155 scientists, clinicians, social scientists and engineers applied for the scheme. A shortlist of 25 applicants was drawn up and in consultation with the media hosts and sponsors, the final 10 Media Fellows were selected (see Appendix). The Media Fellows, 8 women and 2 men, ranged in age from 26-57 years old and were from different scientific backgrounds.

Fellows attended an intensive one-day briefing on 1 June at the Dana Centre in London and then spent 3-8 weeks on placement with their host organisation before attending the British Science Association Festival in Birmingham. The Fellows' placement reports and summaries are available on the British Science Association website.

Media Fellows learnt vital communication and writing skills and gained real insight into the media and what journalists need from scientists and vice versa. All Fellows produced news articles for print and online and their placements have had lasting impacts on them and their institutions.

1. 3 Key Outcomes

- There were 53% more applicants than in 2009
- More professors and senior academics applied than previous years
- We were able to continue to offer regional placements and offer a choice of print and broadcast hosts
- All the Media Fellows described their placements as enjoyable and interesting
- All Fellows found their placements interactive
- All Fellows thought the Fellowships were quite or very well-organised by the British Science Association
- All Fellows rated their productivity on placement as medium or high
- 90% of Media Fellows rated their personal growth as medium or high
- Media Fellows produced over a hundred science stories between them including a front page article and a BBC most read story of the day
- All Media Fellows have passed on their news skills to colleagues at their institution
- All the media hosts were pleased with their Media Fellow

1.4 Impacts on Media Fellows

- Greater confidence and trust in working with the media- for example, how to be in control of the message, how to approach and react to journalists and a greater appreciation of the daily work of journalists
- Improved writing skills which are transferable to academic writing and the writing of concise grant and ethics committee applications
- Increased understanding of how to translate research into news- for example how to see the human angle to their work, how to pitch a story and what makes a good or bad press release
- Improved verbal communication which impacts on teaching and collaborations
- Improved time management and multitasking
- Awareness of new media such as podcasts, blogs and twitter
- A wider understanding and appreciation of science beyond their personal field
- Contacts in the media

1.5 Impacts on Fellows' institutions

- Better promotion of institution through the media through greater links between the university press office, media host and academics which can attract higher quality staff and students and increase funding
- Increased likelihood of research funding through improved grant applications
- Dissemination of skills from the Media Fellows onto colleagues and other departments through media workshops, presentations and discussion groups
- Higher quality teaching due to communication skills acquired
- Increase in science communication activity
- Increase collaboration with other organisations

1.6 Impacts on media hosts

- Help understanding statistics and the scientific process
- Insight into the academic world
- Access to untapped science and health stories
- Access to academic contacts
- Help researching stories, finding pictures, writing copy

1.7 Impacts on sponsors

- Potential spokesperson/contact to bridge the gap between academia and media
- Help with media and communication enquiries
- Contact for science communication activities
- Mentions in the UK press

2. Marketing

Marketing method

A variety of methods were used to market the Media Fellowships, including:

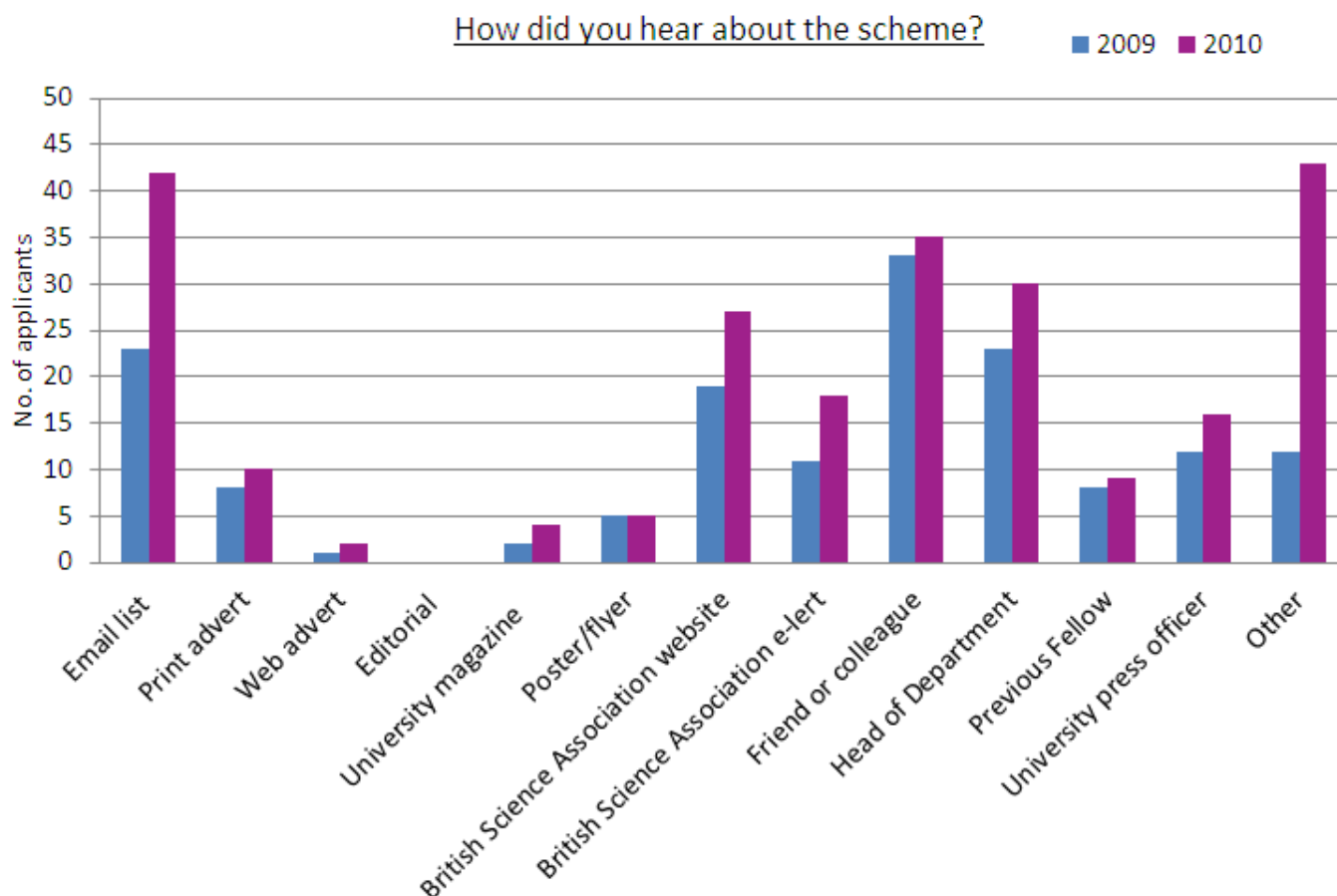
Email: Targeted emails were sent to networks of scientists and science communicators including psci-com, STEMnet, membership organisations, the BBSRC training bulletin and British Science Association e-lerc. 742 scientists signed up to receive e-lerc (5 e-bulletins) about the scheme.

Online: adverts were posted on *Nature*, the Engineer, BioNews and Times Higher Education supplement jobs alert. Details of the scheme were also included on the British Science Association website and university training and news webpages.

Print: A PDF flyer was distributed to university contacts and sponsors, and a one week advert was included in *New Scientist* and the Engineer magazine.

Marketing Impact

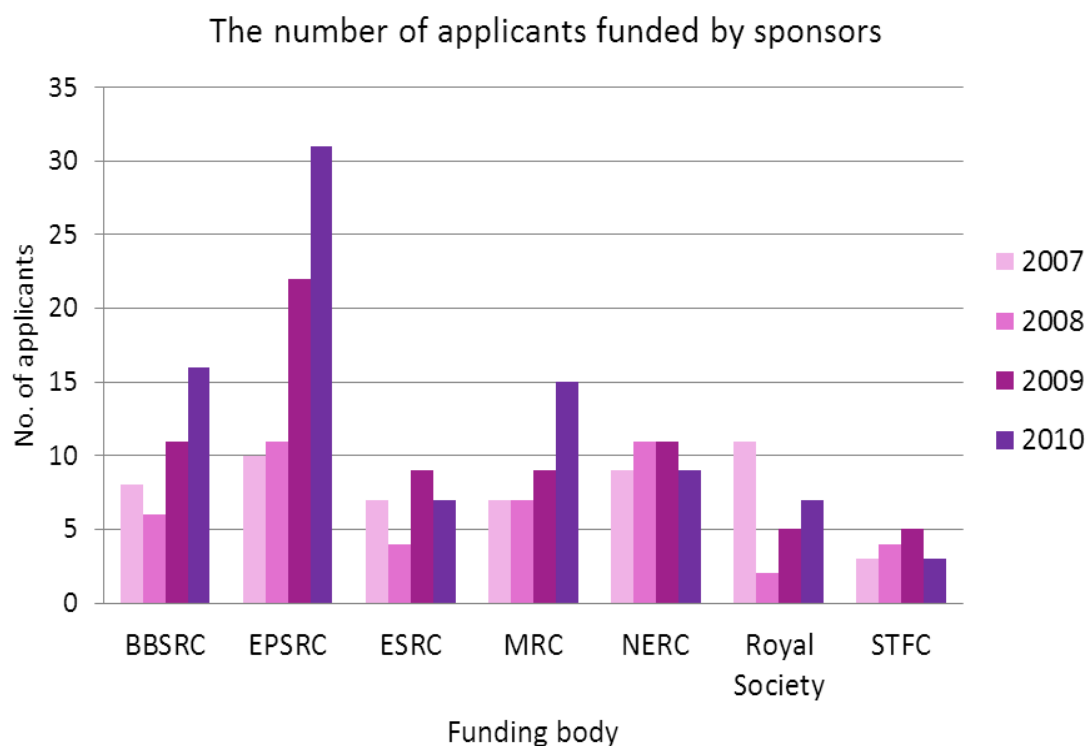
The most common means by which applicants heard about the Media Fellowship scheme was through an email list. The second was by a friend or colleague and then their head of department. Other means by which applicants heard about the scheme were through communication training workshops, university newsletters, and the British Science Festival.



3. Funding

The 2010 Media Fellowships were funded by the Royal Society, EPSRC, MRC, BBSRC, NERC, ESRC and the Royal Academy of Engineering and we would like to thank them for their generous support.

Applicants could be funded by any source but below is a breakdown of how many applicants applied per sponsor.



4. Online Application

Applications were made via an online form which Fellows praised for being simple to use and a manageable length and a good opportunity to display their level of writing skill.

Application was opened as early as possible and ran from 4 January 2010 to 2 March 2010 (Appendix C) to allow applicants time to plan for a summer away from their research.

A release letter from the applicants employer was required along with their application. A downloadable information letter about the scheme was provided on the website for applicants to give to their employer to make this process easier.

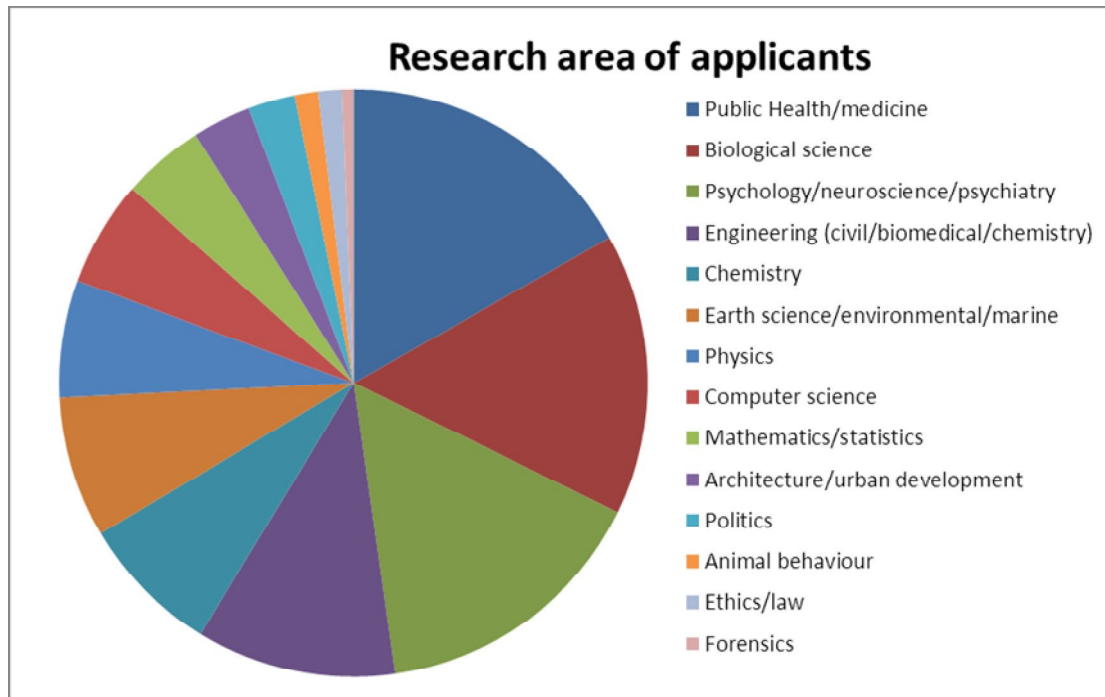
4.1 Applicants

The Media Fellowships are open to any academic with a minimum of 2 years postgraduate experience in their field and from any physical science, life science, social science, medical or engineering discipline. Applicants could be funded by any organisation or be self-funded.

Overall the breakdown of applicants was as follows.

- 155 researchers applied which was a 53% increase on last year
- 56% were female and 44% male which is the same as last year

- Over half of applicants had a doctorate and 6 Professors applied compared to 2 professors in 2009 and 1 in 2008
- 20% were from Black, Asian, minority or ethnic groups (BAME) which was a 6% increase from 2009
- The age range of applicants was 24-63 with an average age of 33. 11% of applicants were under 25, 61% were 26-35, 19% were 36-45 and 9% were 46-60.
- There were 4 applications from Wales, 1 less than last year and 18 applications from Scotland, 3 more than last year



4.2 Selection

A judging panel shortlisted 25 applicants. This was then narrowed down to 10 Media Fellows (Appendix E) in consultation with hosts and sponsors). Fellows' details were then sent to media hosts for their consideration. For the hosts who preferred not to choose their Fellow, the details of their Media Fellow were sent to them for their confirmation. Once the Hosts had confirmed that they were happy with their Media Fellow, the applicants were told of the decision in April and a letter sent to their head of department detailing their success and aims of the scheme. Feedback was offered to unsuccessful applicants.

5. Briefing day

All Fellows attended a one day intensive briefing day on 2 June at the Dana Centre, London. The style of the briefing day was similar to previous years and consisted of three sessions (Appendix A). There were plenty of opportunities for Fellows to meet each other throughout the day and discuss their expectations and what they hoped to gain from the Fellowship.

Session 1: Introductory talks from Media hosts

Fellows had introductory talks from Martin Redfern and Nick Higham from BBC News and Radio. The hosts gave a brief introduction to working in the media world from their perspective, and answered Fellows' questions.

New to 2010 was then a session from Helen Jamison, Senior Press Officer at the Science Media Centre about when science hits the headlines. The Science Media Centre provide invaluable support connecting scientists and journalists when there is a new or controversial science story and her session was a real asset.

Session 2: Mock Press Conference

Next a mock press conference was set up and Fellow's asked to write an article from the information they gathered. They were then given advice and feedback on their articles from Stephen White from the British Psychological Society. After a brief introduction to the 'rules' of a press conference, Stephen morphs into a scientist who has just arrived off a plane at Heathrow airport. The Fellows are told that they are a young journalist sent to the press conference by their news desk, with little or no briefing, to get a story. They have 10 minutes to ask questions and 20 minutes to write a 200 word news article. Whilst making the Fellows somewhat uncomfortable, the process of having to write something opens the Fellows' eyes to the world they are about to enter. Stephen gets one or two Fellows to read out their first few sentences and, using those as examples, he unpacks the whole news-writing process.

Session 3: Meeting past Fellows

In the last session of the day, Fellows were given the opportunity to meet three former Media Fellows who talked about their experiences and answered questions about the scheme while British Science Association staff left the room.

Feedback from Media Fellows

Suggestions for 2011 included having a younger journalist come to speak at the briefing day, a glossary of different news terms and layout of a newsroom and writing exercises to do as homework.

"The support and advice from the British Science Association was great. The briefing day was invaluable for meeting other media fellows and the key contacts at the British Science Association. It also served as a real motivator for the placement and it was really useful meeting previous fellows."

"Excellent, very good introduction"

"The briefing day was interesting and good fun"

6. Placements

6.1 2010 Media Hosts

The British Science Association continues both to strengthen links with existing hosts and to try to develop possible new placements. We are very grateful to all the hosts for the time and energy that they invest into their Fellows. The scheme would not be possible without them.

In 2010, 7 of the 10 placements were in London at BBC Radio & online, the Guardian, the Times, Times Higher Education and Financial Times. Three placements were regional to allow greater flexibility and were offered at The Scotsman in Edinburgh, the Irish Times in Dublin and BBC Countryfile in Birmingham.

Available funding did not allow us to take up the generous offer of placements at BBC Wales and the Science Media Centre but we hope to take these up in future.

There was no placement at the Royal Society due to workload from their 350 year celebrations.

6. 2 Length

All the Fellows spent between 3 and 8 weeks over the summer on placement with their host organisation before attending the British Science Festival in Birmingham. There was some flexibility and one fellow did their placement in October to fit in with their research and one broke up her placement over a number of weeks, fitting in a research conference in Zambia.

6. 3 Accommodation

Accommodation was provided for all Fellows who needed it. Where possible this was in self-catered accommodation with internet access and kitchen facilities to make it more familiar and more personal than a hotel. To save on cost, two members of British Science Association staff kindly offered to rent out their spare rooms to Media Fellows.

6. 4 Placement feedback

Fellows completed a feedback form and produced a report about their time on placement. This could be in the format they felt best showed off what they'd learnt and would be helpful to future Media Fellows.

The reports and placement summaries can be found at

<http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety/MediaFellowships/Reports.htm>

Fellows were asked to rate five aspects of their placement- how enjoyable, interesting, informative, interactive and well-organised their Media Fellowships were.

- All Fellows found their placement enjoyable and all thought their placement interesting
- All Fellows said their placement was quite or very interactive
- All Fellows found their placement informative
- All Fellows thought their placement was quite or very well-organised by the British Science Association and 90% thought it was quite or very well-organised by their host. One Fellow felt that their placement was not well structured by their host so for 2011 the guidelines for hosts have updated to include more recommendations on how to structure the Media Fellows' time to get the most of their placement.

6. 5 British Science Festival

An integral part of the Fellowship experience is the British Science Festival. Working alongside their placement host, the Fellows attend a constant stream of press conferences and write copy for their hosts. For some Fellows this is quite different to the rest of their placement – some write articles based purely on desk research and telephone interviews. Most Fellows are extremely busy at the Festival.

Fellows are given a free pass to attend Festival sessions and the opportunity to see examples of best practice such as the British Science Association award lectures. They also have the opportunity to network with other scientists, sponsors, science communicators and journalists. The 2010's Fellows made good use of the opportunities available to them- attending press conferences, writing for People & Science magazine and one Fellow interviewed the Science Minister David Willetts.

"The Festival was great to compare how our hosts covered stories"

6. 6 Self-Assessment

Fellows were asked to rate, on a scale of low/medium/high, their placement in terms of both how productive they had been (no. of articles written, no. articles published) and in terms of how they had grown personally (writing skills, understanding of the media, ability to distil complex information etc).

All the Fellows rated their productivity as medium to high. Even if they did not get many articles into print, they were still productive in writing copy and learning communication and media skills.

Fellows commented that the short time scales in which to write articles allowed them to get a lot of work published and that host's blogs meant that if not in print, work could be published online.

Fellows felt they had learnt a lot about what makes science newsworthy and how the public view their work. In particular, Media Fellows learnt a lot from feedback from members of the public who were able to comment on their news stories online.

Fellows agreed that a key skill they had gained was confidence in interviewing and in particular conducting phone interviews. They enjoyed the new opportunities and were surprised at how much they were trusted by the journalists to get on with writing.

6. 7 Published work

Links to the work Fellows got published are available in their placement reports on the website. All the 2010 Media Fellows had work published whilst on placement and worked in media ranging from newspapers, magazines, online, fact sheets, blogs, podcasts and radio.

One of the 2010 Fellows' story was in the top 5 most read on the BBC website for that day and another had a front page article on the Irish Times.

Fellows were particularly productive during the British Science Festival, producing articles for their host publications and the British Science Association website as well as being involved in the Press Centre.

7. Debrief Day

A Debriefing Day was held on 3 November to enable Fellows to reflect on their Fellowship and provide feedback and is an integral part of the British Science Association's monitoring and evaluation of the scheme. Only half of the Fellows attended due to transport disruption caused by snow but the rest sent in their feedback by email and phone.

The debrief day took the same format as previous years (see agenda, Appendix B). Fellows were given the opportunity to comment on every aspect of the scheme, from the logistics to their individual hosts and placements. They also had the chance to offer any suggestions for improving and developing the scheme in future years.

All Media Fellows are presented with a certificate of achievement signed by the British Science Association CEO and President.

7. 1 Fellows' future involvement in science communication

Fellows were asked whether they were more or less likely to be involved in science communication in the future as a result of the scheme. All 10 Fellows said they were more likely to be involved in science communication in the future. A number of the

Fellows have already taken opportunities to find out more about public engagement with science and how they might continue to be involved in the future and have applied to come to the 2011 Science Communication Conference. Some commented that their new skills were already being called upon within their university department.

Media Fellows commented that while involvement with sponsors of the British Science Association could be beneficial i.e. increased public engagement activity and collaboration, it would not be a good idea to replace the label of British Science Association Media Fellow with the name of the sponsor. This is because they felt if they were branded with the name of their sponsor, they would feel pressure to write about a particular area of science and show their sponsor's research in a positive rather than neutral light.

7. 2 Future employment

Fellows were asked to respond to the comment, "I will leave research science in the next 5 years." The majority of Media Fellows stated that they would ideally like to combine research and science communication. One said she was more likely to stay in research since her Fellowship because she liked the slower pace of academic life, and one that she is more likely to leave research since her placement because of the opposite- that she preferred the faster pace. They all felt that the scheme had opened their eyes to new possibilities and had shown them how their present skills could be used in a variety of ways. All said that they hoped to sustain the ability to work to faster deadlines. They stated that variables such as funding would be more likely to make them leave research than the Fellowship.

7. 3 Working with the media

Fellows were asked to consider the media and state, firstly, whether they were more or less confident in communicating with, and through, the media and, secondly, whether they were more or less positive about the media.

90% of Fellows said that they were now more confident about communicating with the media. One Fellow said she felt less confident because she was weary of writing about her own research in case her university weren't supportive and that it was too close to home, and that she was happier writing about research outside her immediate field.

The Fellows said they now know what journalists want from researchers. They understand the news process and the networks and how they work. They understand that journalists need clarity in explanations and that often a bad piece in a newspaper is due to bad explanations from the scientists interviewed.

"By being upfront and well-prepared, and by expressing ourselves clearly, we can increase the chances of getting our story heard and making the point we think is important" Media Fellow

Perceptions of the media were more varied, although the more significant changes were towards a more positive view of the media. On the positive side, Fellows said that they were greatly encouraged that journalists want to do a really good job and they were surprised that many of the science editors had a science background. They aim, and feel responsible, for their reporting to be as accurate as possible and don't go for a story at any cost. They developed a great respect for the journalists and saw how they loved their jobs. They saw the journalists asking very astute questions in press conferences and being very aware and savvy about 'bad' science and scientists who were merely out for personal gain. They also saw some non-

specialist journalists being 'scared' of science and not wanting to touch it for fear of getting it wrong.

On the negative side, the Fellows were concerned about the proliferation of soft science over hard science. They felt that sub editors have a lot to answer for in writing headlines and re-writing and re-sizing the journalist's copy to give misleading stories. They also said that greater understanding of the media made them more aware of the divide between scientists and journalists and that this could be taunting for the future of science and the media. Some Media Fellows also felt unsure about the accountability of news journalists and whose fault it was if a story was taken out of context. Some were also concerned that media work may reduce their reputation as a scientist if the story was taken out of context.

"I saw how our successes are measured so differently – by accuracy and rigour on the one hand and by spectators and scoops on the other" Media Fellow

8. Impacts

Fellows were asked to identify impacts of their Media Fellowship.

8. 1 On the Fellow

The most considerable impacts of the scheme are on the Fellows themselves. Numerous comments were made about understanding the media world more clearly and the resultant benefits of this.

"I learnt that almost all of my preconceptions about journalism and news media were wrong." Media Fellow

Fellows said that they can now write to much shorter deadlines as well as writing more concisely and making complex issues easy to understand. An increased level of confidence in working across different types of media, in approaching other scientists, talking about science and even in making telephone calls was also a key impact. All the Fellows said their confidence was now greatly increased to do science communication. They also commented that they now had more perspective on the world of science communication and enthusiasm about future engagement opportunities.

8. 2 On the Fellow's institution

A Media Fellowship may be viewed in many different ways within university departments. Over the years Fellows have experienced everything from intrigue and interest through to suspicion and derision. It was agreed that impacts depend very much on the individual Fellow and their position within their institution. All Media Fellows are encouraged to disseminate their new skills to their colleagues. The British Science Association offer post-placement advice and suggestions on maintaining media work (Appendix D) and keep in regular contact with Media Fellows through an email discussion list. We also have a 'Working with the media' webpage with media guides, practical suggestions and advice on media work.

Some of the immediate impacts have been:

- New university research group blogs
- Media Fellows running statistics and basic science training workshops to journalism students in partnership with the national co-ordinator for science journalism
- A new science section in Aberdeen's researcher newsletter and magazine
- Help with press enquiries

- One of the 2010 Media Fellows is now freelancing for the BBC
- 2 Media Fellows have set up media seminars for public health doctors
- One of the Media Fellows has joined the British Science Association engineering section and is involved in public engagement with engineering

8. 3 On the hosts

Fellows were asked to describe the impacts of the scheme on their media host. The overwhelming response was that many of the hosts appreciate the “extra pair of hands” in the newsroom and also having a stream of new story ideas.

Fellows also felt they raised the profile of the British Science Association, provided a wealth of contacts in their particular research area and also increased the journalists’ awareness of the constraints of the research world.

All Media Fellows were grateful to their host for the opportunities given to them. Some felt their host was more supportive than others but they agreed that differences were due to personality and the ‘ruthless’ nature of the media in terms of competitiveness and time pressure.

9. Evaluation

A five year evaluation of the years 2004-2008 of the Media Fellowships was carried out by independent evaluator the Susie Fisher Group. An Online questionnaire was sent to all 2004-2008 Media Fellows, hosts, and heads of Media Fellows’ departments, to assess the short and long term impacts of the scheme and two focus groups of Media Fellows were conducted.

The evaluation came out overwhelming positive and can be found online at www.britishecienceassociation.org/mediafellows along with past evaluations.

10. 25th year celebration

2011 will be the 25th year of the Media Fellowships and to celebrate we are holding a drinks reception at the British Science Festival in Bradford for media hosts, sponsors and all those involved in the scheme. The evening will thank those involved and highlight the positive impacts of the scheme from the recent evaluation.

Appendix A

Media Fellows Briefing Day

Tuesday 1 June 2010, 10.30-17.30
d.study, Dana Centre, Wellcome Wolfson Building
London, SW7 5HD



Agenda

- 10.30 Registration – tea & coffee
- 11.00 Introduction to the day and to the British Science Association
- 11.10 Introduction of 2010 Media Fellows
Fellows introduce themselves: their experiences of the media so far, expectations of the scheme and what they hope to learn
- 12.00 The Media – online, print and broadcast
Martin Redfern (BBC Radio Science Unit) and Nick Higham (BBC News) give a brief introduction to working in the media

When science hits the headlines
Helen Jamison (Science Media Centre) gives a brief introduction of how science becomes news
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 Press conference simulation
Stephen White, British Psychological Society, gives advice and feedback on articles that the Fellows write following a mock press conference
- 15:30 Refreshments
- 16:00 Panel of past Media Fellows
Two past Media Fellows talk about their experiences and answer questions about the scheme
- 17:30 Close
Drinks in nearby pub (optional)

Appendix B

Media Fellowships 2010

Debrief Meeting

Wednesday 3 November 2010, 11.00-15.45
d.study, Dana Centre, Wellcome Wolfson Building

11.00	Arrival and tea/coffee
11.30	Welcome and introduction
11.35	Brief overview of the Fellowships Each Fellow will be asked to give a <i>brief</i> account of their placement - best part, worst part, biggest challenge and what they learned
12.15	Looking at the logistics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• application & web information• possible barriers to applying – young family, time commitment• selection process, preferred hosts• support & preparation provided by the British Science Association/debrief day• preparation by Fellows• accommodation and travel arrangements• Placement logistics/relocation and length• British Science Festival
12.50	Productivity/personal growth Key indicators
13.00	Lunch
14.15	Hosts and News Support from hosts list of other journalists perceptions of the media before and after ability to work with media before and after
14.35	Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On Fellows• On hosts• On Institutions• Other
14.50	Your research and getting into print
15.00	Follow up media work
15.25	The future: suggestions and recommendations Dissemination Other MF events
15.40	Certificates and close

Appendix C

Media Fellows 2010 Schedule

17 January	Applications open
1 March	Applications close
5 March	Applications collated for shortlisting committee
12 March	Initial shortlisting meeting
15 March	Shortlist sent to hosts
26 March	Reminder sent to hosts
2 April	Deadline for hosts to decide Fellow
19 April	Decisions emailed to applicants
1 June	Briefing day Placement dates confirmed
July – October	Placements take place, varying from 3-8 weeks
10-15 September	Fellows attend the British Science Festival in Bradford as a representative of their host
21 October	Fellows are required to submit a report on their placement
2 November	Debrief day



Media Fellowships post-placement

Following the placement most Media Fellows continue with some form of media work. Some freelance as a secondary career, some act as a spokesperson for their institution and others get involved with media work for different organisations or write for fun. They also return to their universities or institutions and disseminate their new found knowledge to their department or colleagues, spreading the benefits of their experience.

This can take up as much or as little time as you like but to help you get started here are some suggestions.

Practice journalism

- ✓ Get to know your press officer! Tell them that you are happy to be contacted and ask them how they like to be approached with stories and what they need from you and your department.
- ✓ Write and issue a press release to journalists via AlphaGalileo and Eurekalert <http://www.alphagalileo.org/>, <http://www.eurekalert.org/>
- ✓ Freelance- Ask your or another Fellows' host whether you can freelance for them or come back and do some work for them at busy times.
- ✓ Write for trade magazines, local newspapers, University/learned society/funding body newsletters and websites and contribute to ResearchResearch http://researchspace.typepad.com/exquisite_life/becoming-a-contributor.html
- ✓ Write for fun for websites like Null Hypothesis: the journal of unlikely science. <http://www.null-hypothesis.co.uk/get-involved>

Speak out- chances are if you don't, someone less qualified will

- ✓ If you think you or another department have a story that has the potential to be big or controversial then contact the Science Media Centre. They organise press conferences on stories they think are likely to come up in the news and are always looking for the next breaking story. One of the press conferences could be given by you or a colleague.
- ✓ Keep up to date with science news and if you feel something has been misreported or there has been bad journalism going on, comment on the story, write to the journalist or editor or contact Sense about Science <http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/index.php/site/about/8/>
- ✓ Join one of the many academic discussion lists on JISCMail <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/> or a science communication list such as psci-com or The British Interactive Group <http://www.big.uk.com/>

Register as an expert

- ✓ Register free on EvidenceBase
<http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/index.php/site/about/8/>
- ✓ I will get you added to the Science Media Centre database so that any journalists wanting a commentator on a specific branch of science will be put in touch with you.
- ✓ Get involved with Behind the Headlines: your guide to the science that makes the news <http://www.nhs.uk/News/Pages/NewsIndex.aspx>
- ✓ If you think an area of research is important, suggest a topic for public and government consultation, to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics
<http://www.nuffieldbioethics.org/future-work> bioethics@nuffieldbioethics.org
- ✓ Register as an expert on [Mad Sci Network](#) or [How Stuff Works](#) or get involved with 'I'm a scientist get me out of here' <http://imascientist.org.uk/>
- ✓ Register as a science speaker at ScienceLive <http://www.sciencelive.net/>

Be Contactable

- ✓ Add yourself free to Journalisted <http://journalisted.com/profile>
- ✓ Redo your University/Institution webpage to include your media work and keep your details up to date.
- ✓ Make your research paper available in your university's Repository or Depot
<http://opendepot.org/information.html>

Get involved

- ✓ Join the science, technology, engineering and medicine public relations association (STEMPRA), <http://www.stemptra.org.uk/index.htm>.
- ✓ Join the Association of British Science Writers (ABSW)
- ✓ Contact your subject's learned society and become a member of their press committee. E.g. at the British Psychological Society, two past Media Fellows (Mark Sergeant and Jennifer Wild) joined the media and press committee to actively promote psychology and psychologists via the media.
- ✓ Become a Voice of Young Science Ambassador
<http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/index.php/site/other/242>
- ✓ Join Nature Networks Science Writer's Forum
<http://network.nature.com/groups/sciencewriters/forum/topics>
- ✓ Join one of the 16 British Science Association scientific sections
<http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/britishtsciencefestival/AboutFestival/ScientificSections.htm> . Various roles are available within the sections such as recorder or Communications Officer
<http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/AboutUs/Volunteering/VolunteeringinthelBASections.htm> and many past Media Fellows are involved. The section

receives a budget from the Association and help organise events at the British Science Festival and promote their research area.

- ✓ Attend professional conference linked to science journalism, many of which offer bursaries for scientists to attend. E.g Apply for a bursary to attend the British Science Association Science Communication Conference <http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety/ScienceCommunicationConference/index.htm> or register for Communicate <http://www.bnhc.org.uk/home/communicate.html> or the UK Conference of Science Journalists <http://www.absw.org.uk/news-events/events/uk-conference-of-science-journalists>
- ✓ If you would like to get involved in public outreach that isn't media related there are some suggestions at <http://lan-cms/web/ScienceinSociety/Researchers/Researchers.htm>

Get your department and Institution involved

At a time of funding cuts to universities and science, helping your colleagues speak to the media will help raise the profile of the world-class research that goes on.

- ✓ Organise a formal or informal workshop or talk for your department about working in the media. I have ordered some Sense about Science media guides <http://www.senseaboutscience.org.uk/pdf/Standing%20up%20for%20Science.pdf> which I can send for you to distribute or if you still have your Science Media Centre tip sheets from the briefing day, you could photocopy them. Alternatively you could circulate the media guide links on our website. http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety/MediaFellowships/why_work_with_media.htm
- ✓ Speak to people in different departments- interesting to hear what other research is going on and get ideas for stories
- ✓ Speak to your Researcher Development Officer or equivalent about opportunities available to you and your colleagues.
- ✓ Give informal advice about working with the media to your colleagues
- ✓ Speak to your head of department/supervisor or contact your funding body to discuss setting up a media and public engagement group for your department or about how to embed public engagement. Also speak to the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/>
- ✓ Set up a journal club where you and colleagues read through journal articles and decide if they are newsworthy.

Make the most of social media

- ✓ Make a Youtube video about your work that might have the potential to go viral, or be used by interested charities, Facebook Groups etc. A good example is David Mackay <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oROB2YXUxvY> or <http://www.ted.com/>

- ✓ Enter Famelab <http://famelab.org/>
- ✓ Promote your work and follow and talk to journalists on twitter. If you need any help getting started on Twitter, the British Science Association has a social media guide.
- ✓ Start a science column or blog on blogger <https://www.blogger.com/start> - A great way to get public feedback about your work and spread the word about your research.

If you would like any advice on managing your time between research and media work, Vitae have advice at

<http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/1238/Public%20engagement.html> .

Amy Lothian 01/10/2010

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2010 Fellow	Media organisation	Institution	Subject area
Dr Jean Adams	The Times	University of Newcastle	Public health
Dr Katie Alcock	BBC Radio and Online	University of Lancaster	Development neuropsychology
Mrs Catherine Davies	Times Higher Education	University of Cambridge	Linguistics
Dr Monica Desai	The Guardian	NHS	Public health
Dr Howard Falcon-Lang	BBC Radio and Online	Royal Holloway	Earth science
Dr Felix Greaves	Financial Times	Imperial College and NHS	Public health
Dr Becky Hothersall	BBC Country file	University of Bristol	Animal cognition and welfare
Dr Alison Jones	The Irish Times	University of Leeds	Biomedical engineering
Dr Colette Jones	The Scotsman	University of Aberdeen	Rural land use and spread of disease
Dr Kate Larkin	Nature	National Oceanography Centre, Southampton	Marine science