



The 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Early Career Section of the Royal Microscopical Society was held on Monday 30 June 2025 during mmc2025.

Members present: Katherine Paine (ECC Chair), Liam Rooney FRMS (ECC Vice Chair), Michelle Peckham FRMS (RMS Executive Honorary Secretary), Myfanwy Adams, Tomas Azevedo, Sophie Baig, Alexandra Bailie, Ellie-Mae Bambrick-Sattar, Emily Barot, Dimesh Beniwal, Andreas Boden, Beatrice Bottura, Niamh Burke, Charlie Butterworth, Ian Cardillo-Zallo, Robert Carroll, Jay Christopher, Megan Clapperton, James Crichton, George Doherty, Madeline Doughty, Ashvatti Durai, Bradley Dyer, Fraser Eadie, Roland Fleck FRMS, Matthew Francis FRMS, Olivia Hill, Philip Hubbard, Stefan Koestler, Benjamin Lane, Sarah Lecinski, Corin Liddle, Kirsty MacLellan-Gibson, Ofentse Makgae FRMS, Cristina Martinez-Gonzalez, Jon Moss FRMS, Eoin Moynihan, Lisa-Maria Needham, Richard Osgood FRMS, Alex Payne-Dwyer FRMS, Dana Perry, Greeshma Pradeep, Dina Ratsimandresy, Virginia Silio, Sam Sullivan-Allsop, Matthew Tang, Conor Treacy, Gea van de Kerkhof, Sam Wallis, Helena Watson, Benjamin Weare, Kokila Wickramanayake, Tim Young, Sali Davis (RMS Chief Executive) and Jade Sturdy (RMS Committee Co-ordinator and PA to Chief Executive).*

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from: Rod Shipley, Kerry Thompson FRMS, Steven Servin and Georgina Fletcher (BiolmagingUK).

2. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Report from Section Chair

The Section Chair gave the following report:

"I am now coming up to my first year as chair of the Early Career committee working with Liam Rooney as vice chair and Beccy Saleeb as deputy. The year has flown by and as a committee we have been busy. Firstly, I would like to welcome our new committee members: Emily Barot, University of Manchester, Ross Walsh, University of Galway and Benjamin Lane, Aston University. We are excited to welcome you to the committee and look forward to working with you. I would now like to give an overview of all the things we have been up to this year and the plans we have for the coming year.

RMS Early Career Award 2025

The Early Career Award returns for its 5th year. If I had realised it was the 5th year sooner, we could have organised something, so we will just have to start planning for the 10th anniversary! We had an open call at the start of the year for submissions. It was very competitive with some excellent entries from across scientific disciplines that made judging incredibly hard. We have our three finalists who are presenting their flash talks today which I am looking forward to hearing. I would like to thank those of the committee that gave up their time to judge entries and ECRs that submitted applications. The award will be returning next year so keep your eyes peeled for that.

Connecting with the community

As part of our work, it is important we connect with our community. Committee member Joanna Cull has done a brilliant job working on our social media as we transitioned from X to Bluesky, something that was a unanimous decision amongst the committee. If you are on Bluesky and haven't already then give us a follow to keep up to date with what is going on in the microscopy community. Jo is great at sharing microscopy-based opportunities for ECRs and so you definitely don't want to miss out on that.

We are continuing to find ways to reach early career researchers. Something we felt that would be useful would be to have a mailing list. We hope that this will allow us to keep you all updated with exciting

opportunities we are planning such as our ECC Award and workshops we are planning. The ultimate goal is to have a short newsletter that summarises opportunities such as these. We are currently in the process of building up our list. This has been made possible by Jade Sturdy working behind the scenes with the RMS team to allow members (and non-members) to select “ECR” as an interest. This can be done retrospectively so if you are wanting to hear about the work we do and opportunities then you can log in to your RMS account and select ECR as an interest.

More locally within the committee, Niamh Burke and Nischita Kaza organised a wonderful virtual social that allowed us to connect outside of our normal committee duties. Niamh is based in Ireland and Nischita is based in the states. As a committee we are geographically spread which is great as it allows us to have representation across the world and ties to those respective microscopy communities. But this does mean we are rarely, if at all, able to all meet in person, although hopefully one day this will be possible. It was a really fun social where we played games such as microscopy-based Pictionary and guessing household items under the microscope, a throwback to lockdown zooms which actually felt quite nostalgic! It was really lovely to get to know each other a bit better outside of committee meetings and strengthen those ties. We are planning on hosting another committee social later in the year to welcome our new committee members.

A voice for ECRs

ECR roles and the funding landscape are important topics at the moment and Liam Rooney has been working hard with Sali Davis to create a paper in response to a UK government inquiry about UKRI funding. The paper highlights the importance of the microscopical industry in the UK both industrially and in academic research and aims to advocate for the microscopy community. Liam has been working to ensure that ECRs have a voice in this and that our concerns are heard. The paper highlights the positive contribution microscopy has on the UK but also raises concerns relating to funding barriers and insecure employment which affect ECRs across the UK and in other countries.

Special issue of the journal

Early career researchers work incredibly hard, a lot of the time spending long hours on projects laying the groundwork. As an ECR it is great to be involved in the publishing process, so we are planning a Special issue of the Journal of Microscopy that hopes to celebrate and showcase this work. Myfanwy Adams, Colum O’Leary and I are working as Guest Editors and will be approaching people over mmc to ask for Journal submissions. The issue will be titled “Taking the Stage: the Future of Microscopy” and we are looking forward to reading your submissions.

Early Career symposium

Of course, we have our Early Career Symposium this afternoon. We have a selection of abstract talks and flash talks for our Early Career Award. We also have Lisa-Marie Needham who is going to give a career talk which I am really looking forward to. I have no doubt that it will be an inspiring afternoon. Something that the RMS have been working really hard on is Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility or EDI&A. For mmc we have a board outside as the RMS would like to hear what you would like to see in terms of EDI&A. We also have a job vacancy board so please do take a look and pin up any microscopy related vacancies. Additionally, outside of mmc Jo is happy to repost any opportunities on Bluesky.

Mmc2025

After today, I am looking forward to enjoying mmc2025. I attended for the first time in 2023. I came by myself in 2023 and was nervous about whether I would have anyone to talk to but as always, the microscopy community was welcoming, and I met lots of brilliant colleagues who I am looking forward to seeing again this year. We are also hosting an Early Career drop-in session on Tuesday 1st July from 4-5pm. Whether you have come alone or with your lab pop along to check in with other ECRs. We are hoping to use this time to take a break from the packed conference schedule and also gather information from you about what you would like to see from us. We also have some small little games for you to get involved with and I have heard there will be some chocolates so definitely worth dropping by!

Thank you

I think I have covered just about everything and so I would like to thank the staff at RMS for their hard work. In particular, Jade Sturdy and Sali Davis who have made me feel supported and always been an email away for any of my questions! As ECRs to have been given this platform to provide support and a voice for our peers is really wonderful. I would like to thank the members of the committee who have come to the end of their term of office: Liam Rooney, Alex Payne-Dwyer and Basiaz Sánchez Sánchez, it has been great working with you, and I am sure I will continue to see you at microscopy events over the coming years.

I would like to extend my thank you to Liam, who has worked tirelessly as our chair. We were really lucky to have him, and we are lucky as a field to have him paving the way. I think as much as research is about output and results (which Liam has) kindness and openness are important. Those are things that Liam championed as Chair, wanting to create an inclusive and welcoming space for ECRs and I hope that I continue on with that work.”

5. Election of Officers

There being no other nominations, the following Officers were duly elected:

Chair: Katherine Paine, University of Edinburgh
Deputy Chair: Rebecca Saleeb, University of Edinburgh

6. Election of Ordinary Members

There being no other nominations, the following Ordinary Members were duly elected:

Myfanwy Adams, University of Oxford
Emily Barot, Rosalind Franklin Institute
Zoe Barr, St Andrews University
Niamh Burke, University College Dublin
Joanna Cull, Brain Tumour Research
Nischita Kaza, Georgia Institute of Technology, USA
Benjamin Lane, Aston Institute for Membrane Excellence
Ofentse Makgae, Johnson Matthey Technology Centre
Jacob Pattem, University of Nottingham
Dana Perry, Natural History Museum, London
Steven Servin Gonzalez, University of Warwick
Jennifer Simpson, The Pirbright Institute
Madeline Tisi, Imperial College London
Gea Van de Kerkhof, Central Laser Facility, Harwell
Ross Walsh, University of Galway
Tim Young, University of Cambridge

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

***Non-members present:** Anthoula Chatzimpinou, Christos Chouklis, Lewis Frame, Lara Hundsdorfer, Cyril Lai, Lucinda Luque, Rebecca McHugh, Yuliya Safarova, Mathias Uller Rothmann, James White, Freya Whiteford, Sophie Williams, Emily Woodcock, Qimeng Wu, Assaf Zaritsky, Helen Zenner, Alessandro Zunino.