

FLIP case studies

BBSRC's Flexible Interchange programme (FLIP) supports the movement of people into new environments to exchange knowledge, technology and skills. For more information on the programme visit: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/flip.

Dr Paul De Sousa's team, The University of Edinburgh

Dr Paul De Sousa's team at The University of Edinburgh has been awarded FLIP funding with the aim of realising the full potential of a new stem cell separation platform developed in collaboration with Dr Nik Willoughby's Cellular Bioprocessing Group at Heriot-Watt University.



Dr Marieke Hoeve, University of Edinburgh

The technology, used to separate human stem cells from specialised cells, has implications for disease modelling, drug discovery and cell therapy. By exploiting FLIP funding, team member Dr Marieke Hoeve will be able to understand how to maximise the commercial potential of the technology through being embedded within the inventor's laboratories, university technology transfer offices and at Roslin Cells Ltd.

Cell biologist Dr Hoeve will not only be able to quickly build up an understanding of the commercialisation process, but also uniquely placed to identify prospective users of the technology as well as funding opportunities for incorporation into stem cell manufacturing.

Dr De Sousa commented: "Through this hands-on experience of the commercialisation process, Dr Hoeve will be well placed to identify additional inventions at the University of Edinburgh with commercial potential and subsequently assist researchers to achieve successful commercial development of their academic research outcomes."



 **BBSRC FLIP Flexible**
Interchange Programme

Professor Ian Graham, University of York

Professor Ian Graham applied for FLIP funding to allow the University of York's Centre for Novel Agricultural Products to build on their existing strengths in industrial biotechnology. The centre is host to pharmaceutical industry expert Tim Bowser from GlaxoSmithKline.

A FLIP fellow, Tim is able to help progress aspects of research that normally would be regarded as high-value, high-risk work which would be of low priority in an industry-based



Tim Bowser, GlaxoSmithKline

FLIP Awards

Funding of up to 150k for up to 24 months is available for interchanges to a new environment, taken on a full-time or part-time basis, or intermittently.

research and development programme. The funding also allows for identification of entirely new opportunities from within the university.

Thanks to FLIP funding, new research and development collaborations have been established both with GSK and across industry sectors.



Professor Emma Raven, University of Leicester

Professor Mark Smales, University of Kent

Professor Mark Smales at the University of Kent has been awarded FLIP funding as a step towards translating research on tropical diseases into practice. Professor Mark Smales and his team are experts in the expression of recombinant protein molecules which can often be used to treat diseases.

The FLIP placement will facilitate the exchange of both staff and expertise, developing a new collaboration between researchers at the university and Medecins San Frontieres (MSF), a well-established charity working on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa.

By working with MSF which diagnoses and treats human African Trypanosomiasis (HAT, sleeping sickness), the team look to use their expertise to help develop new diagnostics and investigate potential for the generation of vaccines. Professor Smales said: "Such a programme is only possible due to the utility and flexibility of the FLIP scheme supporting collaborations across the academic-charity-institute interface".

Professor Emma Raven, University of Leicester

Professor Emma Raven at the University of Leicester was awarded FLIP funding to exchange knowledge with different research environments and at the Research Complex at Harwell. The opportunity to spend time in new scientific environments will allow her to establish links with partner organisations: developing knowledge bases in unfamiliar areas.

Professor Raven found the FLIP application process very accommodating. "I found that BBSRC were open-minded about the kinds of things that they were willing to consider," she said. "It will be beneficial in my case for widening the scope of my research into new areas. I could propose relatively short, focused periods spent at other laboratories and this does not affect other responsibilities that I have within my institution or at home."

Through the placement with the Research Complex at Harwell, Professor Raven will gain access to specialist equipment and expertise which she can now embed within her laboratory.



Professor Mark Smales, University of Kent

Contact

For eligibility and details on how to apply:

Email: FLIP@bbsrc.ac.uk

Web: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/flip