RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES

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UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Your voice within a national landscape

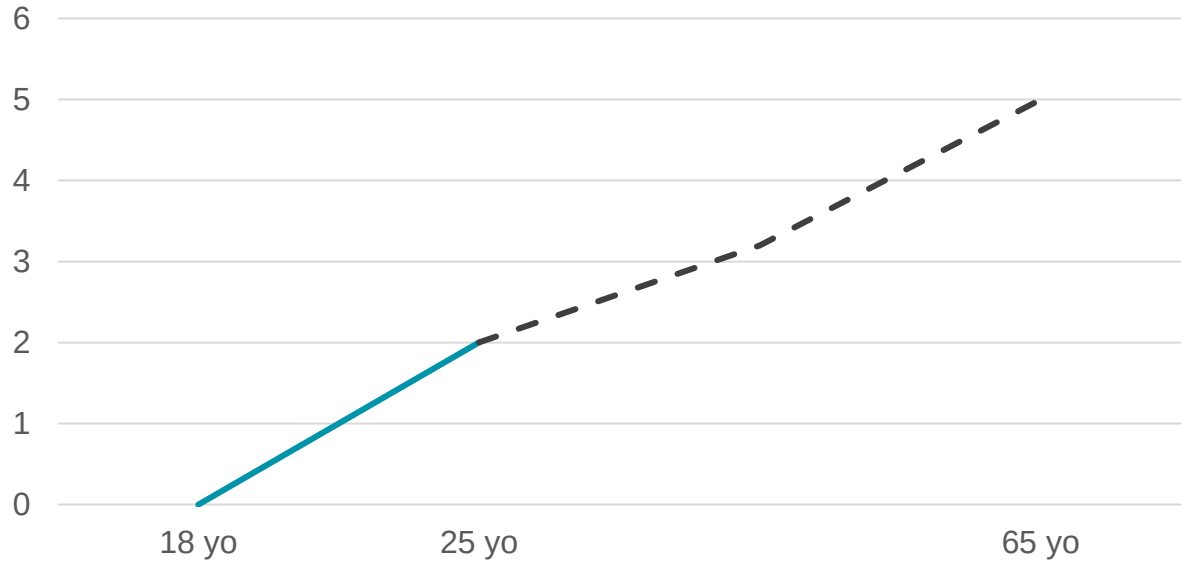
1. Why am I stood here? Who am I, and a quick career overview
2. Benefits to you of being involved in national discussions and committees
3. Benefits for the funders to include your perspective and contributions
4. Benefits to your institution of these national insights
5. An example of the potential outcomes

Who am I?

- Mum, partner, daughter, friend
- Yogi, cook, gin drinker…….

- **Mass spectrometrist**
- Director of Research Infrastructure & Facilities, **University of Bath**
- Member of **GW4** Research Infrastructure and Sustainability Steering Group
- Member of **MRC** Strategic Advisory Group for Capital Infrastructure
- Chair of **EPSRC** Research Infrastructure Strategic Advisory Team

The career plan



Aim: Become the Dutch version of Jacques-Yves Cousteau, travel, share my knowledge with others, and give back to my community

- BSc in Marine Science with French at Southampton
- Masters in Oceanology at the University of Bordeaux
- PhD in Environmental Engineering at the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton (mass spectrometry with several oceanic research cruises)

Several revisions later

BMSS
BRITISH MASS SPECTROMETRY SOCIETY

Traveling and sharing my knowledge with others

- 6 years working for Bruker Daltonics (European MS Applications Scientist)
- 3 years Mass Spectrometrist in Dept of Chemistry at University of Bath
  Member of British Mass Spectrometry Society (BMSS) Committee
- 4 years as Mass Spectrometrist, working part-time to juggle family responsibilities

A few more decisions……

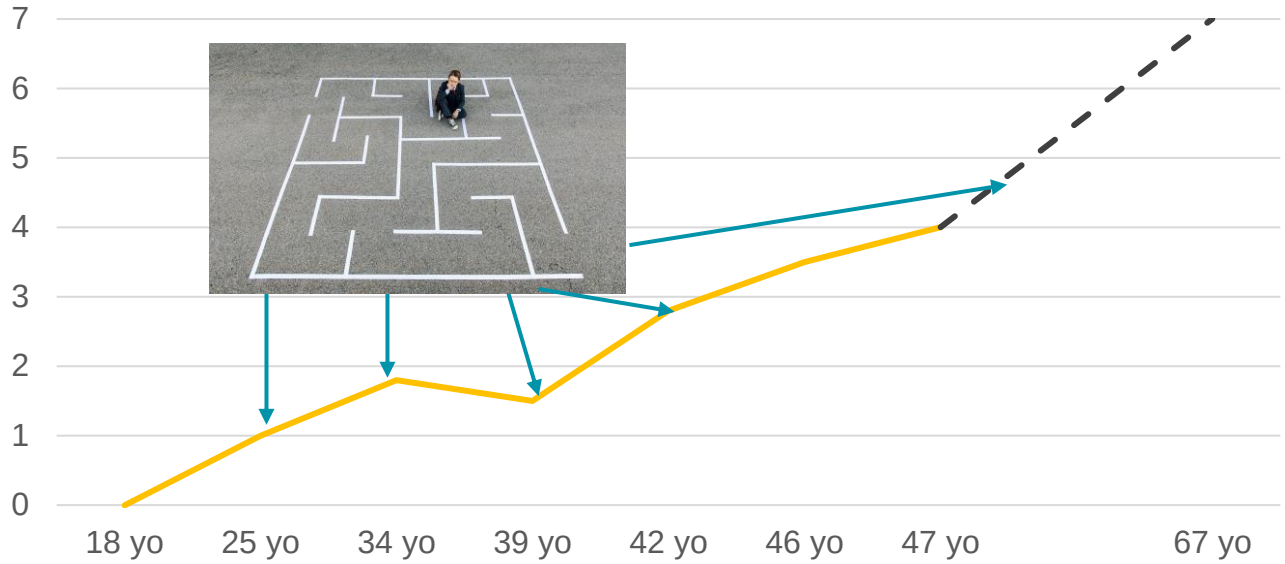
HENRY ROYCE INSTITUTE

UKRI Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Becoming an expert and trusted voice on facilities management at Bath, and giving back to my community

- Head of Material and Chemical Characterisation Facility at University of Bath
  Working with 3 gin companies
- Member of EPSRC Peer Review College
- Member of EPSRC Strategic Advisory Team for Capital Infrastructure
- Member of Strategic Advisory for Board for the Royce Institute

And that brings me to.....



UK Research and Innovation

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

Medical Research Council

GW4

Lead on sustainable Facilities management, RTPs and Research Infrastructure nationally

- Director of Research Infrastructure and Facilities at the University of Bath
- Chair of EPSRC Research Infrastructure Strategic Advisory Team
- Member of MRC Strategic Advisory Group for Capital Infrastructure
- Member of GW4 Research Infrastructure and Sustainability Steering Group
- Panel member/chair for UKRI research infrastructure funding calls and significant infrastructure review groups

AND regular volunteer taster for Still Life Gin

Benefits to you of being involved in national discussions and committees

1. Gain important networks and support systems
2. Gain visibility for career progression (external validation often more powerful than internal recognition)
3. Helps to grow your community
4. Provides important insights for business cases and grant proposals

Benefits to you of being involved in national discussions and committees

Reviewing grant proposals

- Gives insights into national landscape, and framing for national importance sections
- See examples of how to get your message across (good and bad)
- Develops your feedback skills

Sitting on funding panels for funders

- See how funding decisions are made and gain better understanding of good and bad proposals -> ability to support technical proposals yourself
- Develops your networks, and ensures technical staff are visible in these circles

Sitting on UKRI committees

- See emerging priority trends and new funding opportunities
- Bring your unique perspective and help shape future priorities/policy (e.g. RTPs, WCL)

Benefits for the funders to include your perspective and contributions

1. Technical specialist input into **identifying and shaping funding priorities and mechanisms** -> research infrastructure sustainability considerations embedded and consideration of the whole of Team Research

2. Technical specialists input to **review process** -> better and more deliverable investment decisions being made

3. Technical specialists **eligible to apply for funding** -> improved research culture, more proposals being led by the relevant technical specialists, improved retention of key staff

Benefits to your institution of these national insights

1. Institutional reputation for facility/equipment management is enhanced
2. Early information on changes to funder approach or calls coming out
3. Better understanding of national landscape and what other HEIs are up to in this space, including new connections for collaborations/equipment sharing
4. Higher success rate in grant proposals including instrumentation
5. More strategic decision making with limited internal research infrastructure budgets

An example of the potential outcomes

GW4 RTP Community: The issue

Lack of time and opportunities for RTPs to pursue development opportunities

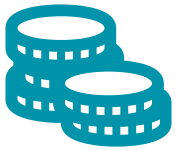
Lack confidence to engage with industry to showcase and share their expertise

Industry need access to our capabilities and expertise in Universities to progress their R&I priorities

GW4 needs to develop and retain our Technical Experts to enable and accelerate our impactful research

UK needs to train and retain their Technical experts

X-CITED: X-disciplinary Challenges from Industry for Technical Expert Development



£2M funding from EPSRC

Development of 200+ GW4 RTPs in engineering and physical sciences disciplines – well beyond simple training and development programme

Regional demonstrator with outcomes which can be translated to other disciplines, regions and sectors

Bath led with technical staff co-leads from Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter

3 years from 1st April 2024

X-CITED: Outcomes and Uniqueness

Communities of Practice around 4 technology specialisms -> knowledge exchange, peer support, and inform new tailored RTP training programme

Sandpits and **industry challenge projects** -> new mechanism for industrial partners to work with GW4 RTPs and progress real-world industry challenges

Talent bank -> resilience of RTP structure and develop a talent pipeline. Extra staff in the RTP system enabling RTPs to release time for professional development

Increased Industrial awareness of capabilities and expertise in our Universities

Evaluation -> **tested model** for implementation more widely

How can NMR facility staff help themselves?

Get involved!

1. Start working within regional networks and national programmes e.g. TSN (www.mitalent.ac.uk/tsn)

2. Join the UKRI peer review colleges to start reviewing grants and be on the register for funding/interview panels

3. Email Tony Chapman (antony.chapman@epsrc.ukri.org) about research infrastructure calls and funding, or Li Covey (Li.Convey@epsrc.ukri.org) to volunteer for equipment panels, focus group discussions etc.