

EDC12D004

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ATHENA SWAN AWARDS - NOVEMBER 2012 UPDATE - CURRENT POSITION AND NEXT STEPS

1. Progress since the last update:

1.1 The University has been awarded the University-wide Bronze Athena Swan award following its submission in April. This covers our STEMM Schools (Allied Health Professions, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Development Studies, Environmental Sciences, Medical Sciences, Nursing Sciences, Pharmacy) and means we can now go on to complete individual School awards with a view to then completing a Silver standard University award.

1.2 In September Jessica Corby started a year-long contract as Equality and Diversity Project Officer whose role will be heavily focussed (although not solely) on our Athena Swan Awards. The role is based in the Equality and Diversity Office. Jessica joins us with a great deal of relevant experience, having worked for nine years as an independent consultant, and both members of the Equality Team have worked with other organisations, in previous roles, taking them through accredited standards to successful completion.

1.3 Each School with an interest in NIHR funding has met with the E&D Office to discuss the level and timing of their next submission(s). A submission by Norwich Medical School will be made for a Bronze Level award at the end of November 2012. Athena Swan allows submissions twice per annum. In April 2013 (and beyond) we aim to submit the following:

April 2013:	Bronze:	BIO, PHA, ENV, NSC	Silver:	AHP
November 2013:	Silver:	BIO, PHA, ENV, MED		
April 2014:	Bronze (?):	CHE		
November 2014:	Silver:	University (earliest possible)		

We have yet to engage with the Schools of Computing and Mathematics as those Schools in receipt of NIHR funding have been focussed on as the most critical at this point. However, the Equality Office will meet with those Heads of School in the summer of 2013 to gain their involvement and some interest has already been expressed from this direction.

1.4 Exchange of information is facilitated by a Blackboard site in which an 'open' forum has been set up as well as School-specific groups.

1.5 The Central Steering Group has met twice this Semester and has a further two meetings planned for the first quarter of next year. Meetings have been focussed with good attendance and will help steer the process usefully as well as being a forum for sharing ideas and best practice between participating Schools.

1.6 It was agreed in the first meeting of the Central Athena Swan Steering Group that the University would eventually, as a 'Phase 2', roll the principles of Athena Swan out to engage all Schools in a similar process on gender equality.

The Head of the Law School, Professor Alastair Mullis, is very keen to advance gender equality within the School and has proactively sought to work with the Equality Office on a 'shadow' submission, following the principles of Athena Swan and creating a practicable internal framework as a pilot with the intention of then engaging other Schools and Services in similar work. This will take place over the 2013 calendar year.

1.7 The final 'phase' of work, included in the Equality Action Plan, involves extending work currently focussed solely on gender across all protected characteristics as part of an internal framework against which we can gauge our progress internally.

2.0 Events

2.1 Gill Malin and Sarah Payne of RESNET organised an excellent event on 7 November, in the shape of a talk by Professor Dame Athene Donald of the Physics Department of Cambridge University, also made an Honorary Graduate at UEA during the summer of 2012, who spoke about the work carried out within her department and how they had moved to Silver status. A copy of her presentation has been posted on the Blackboard site and circulated to senior management. The Vice Chancellor, PVC Research, Director of Human Resources and Head of Norwich Medical School were among those who attended the talk. Dame Donald was very generous, spending time networking with members of RESNET and then meeting with a small group of those involved in Athena Swan submission work to discuss initiatives and share ideas.

2.2 A further event for the first quarter of 2013 has been agreed in the form of a presentation by David Ruebain, Head of the Equality Challenge Unit to ResNet and others involved in work on Athena. Members of the Committee will be kept informed of this and the invitation will be extended to colleagues across the Norwich Research Park as work has been started on their Bronze submission.

3.0 Central Action Plan

Progress against the central Action Plan, part of the University's Bronze Submission, is being monitored via the Central Athena Swan Steering Group. A summary of progress against plan will be brought to the Committee at the February 2013 meeting and again in November 2013.

4.0 Date of next Update

The Committee will be kept informed of further progress in the meeting of May 2013 when a number of submissions will have been made.