

## GI-MS45 Women in crystallography

Chairs: Dr. Julia Contreras, Dr. Annalisa Guerri

### GI-MS45-O1

#### The role of the Athena Swann initiative in supported women researchers

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This is an initiative to highlight the (rising) number of women working in the high pressure research field. We come from all domains (geology, biology, physics, chemistry...). Indeed, we are not many, but we are many more than many people think. We are building up a public data base of women under high pressure group. We are several scientist women who work in the high pressure field. <http://www.lct.jussieu.fr/pagesperso/contrera/index-hp.html>

We have also created a FB and twitter accounts for everybody to be able to follow updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/WHP-1731930103697127/?code=95036>

The aim of our group is to provide the community with facilities to count with gender equality at any of the high pressure events and lists. It has also helped organizers of events and committees to have a fair gender representation and provide a great example of women in science and references to many women graduate students and postdocs in the audience. We are trying to get as visible as possible not to be complainers and neither to build up a “women” club, our goal is to bring awareness and make us think twice in order to create a fair gender community.

**Keywords:** Work-life balance, institutional support

### GI-MS45-O2

#### Gender, race and age diversity in crystallography: the impact of john desmond bernal & dorothy hodgkin on our science today

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Crystallography owes much to JD Bernal who in the 1930s extended its impact to biology, cements and water – a diversity of interests – and attracted a multidisciplinary and diverse group of scientists to Cambridge – not only crystallographers Dorothy Hodgkin, Max Perutz and John Kendrew, all later Nobel laureates, but also others with an interest in materials such as cements and water structure and dynamics. This first impacted on me when as an undergraduate in Oxford University in 1963 I selected a project with Professor Tiny Powell FRS in the Department of Chemical Crystallography and discovered Dorothy Hodgkin FRS there as well. As a politically motivated undergraduate and Chair of the Joint Action Committee Against Racial Intolerance (JACARI) in Oxford University, I had read JD Bernal’s Social Function of Science and even dipped into the books of Dorothy’s husband, Thomas Hodgkin, on the politics of Africa. However, I was not familiar with Dorothy’s work on penicillin and Vitamin B12, for which she was awarded the Nobel prize in 1964, just as I joined the group full time. Dorothy’s group was the international, multidisciplinary and gender diverse “hub” of Chemical Crystallography and this had attracted me to do a PhD in the Department. However I first learnt some basic crystallography and computing before joining her international group in 1967 – with Guy and Eleanor Dodson, Margaret Adams already there on insulin and later Liang Dong-cai, M. Vijayan and Ted & Heather Baker joining. I moved eventually to be Bernal Professor & Head of Department of Crystallography in Birkbeck in 1976. This research centre was Bernal’s creation that had attracted Aaron Klug (later Nobel Laureate) and Rosalind Franklin (DNA structure) to join in the 1950s. I inherited a gender, race and discipline diverse department with Christine Slingsby, working on the structure of crystallins of the eye lens, and Beatrice Gorinsky on transferrins, making it easy to recruit Janet Thornton (now Dame & FRS), Julia Goodfellow (now Dame and recently VC of University of Kent) and Bancinyane Lynn Sibanda from Zimbabwe in 1978. As they say, “the rest is history”!

**Keywords:** Gender, Race, Diversity