

**Abstract:** Students on “non-vocational” courses, such as the biosciences, may not be aware of the diversity of jobs that can follow from their initial degree.

Since 2007, we have organised an annual series of Careers After Biological Sciences (CABS) talks in which Leicester bioscience graduates speak to current students about their careers. Presentation are later made available on the internet for the benefit of the wider community. Over 50 different jobs have been discussed in this programme, which encompasses “careers *from* science” alongside “careers *in* science”.

Social media tools are crucial throughout this work, including for recruitment of speakers, hosting open access resources derived from the presentations, and dissemination to the wider community.

**Details of activity:** Alumni are usually asked to talk for 20-25 minutes and to include three core pieces of information: What the current job involves; how they got there from their initial degree (i.e. a brief personal history); and top tips for anyone considering a move into a similar field.

Professions considered have comprised both “Careers *in* Science” and “Careers *from* Science”<sup>[1]</sup> (See Figure 1).

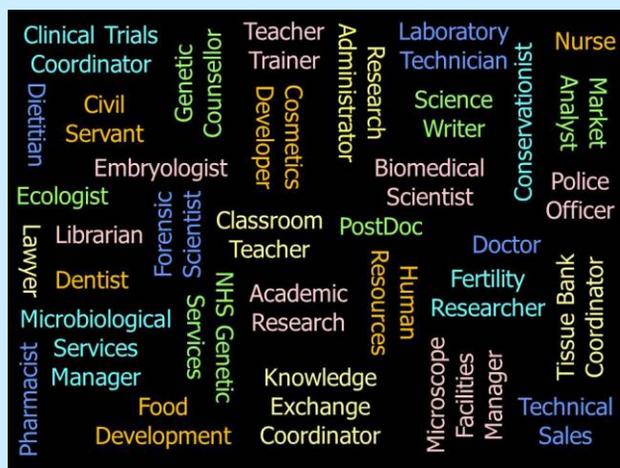


Figure 1: Examples of careers covered as part of the CABS series (2007 to present)



Figure 2: Social media used in the CABS programme

**Importance of social media:** Web 2.0 tools (Figure 2) play an integral role in the success of the CABS programme<sup>[2]</sup> in the following ways.

**Recruitment of speakers:** The majority of speaker are initially contacted via **Facebook** or **LinkedIn**. The establishment of a bioscience alumni group on Facebook (which now has approximately 500 members) has proven a good way to keep in touch with former students

**Open access resources:** A **Wordpress** blog serves as the central hub for the CABS resources. PowerPoint slides from the talks (hosted on **Slideshare**) are routinely included as part of the online record. At various times we have included videos of the talks (hosted on **Vimeo**) and also bespoke videos interviewing alumni in their workplace (hosted on **YouTube**). In recent years we have also posted a photos of the speaker, which helps to humanise the resource.

**Dissemination:** Although the primary audience for these presentations are University of Leicester students, they have value too for anyone taking a degree in the biosciences. We have therefore used both **Twitter** and, to a lesser extent, **Google+** to promote awareness of the resources.

**References:**

- [1] Osborne J. and Dillon J. (2008) *Science Education in Europe: Critical Reflections*. Nuffield Foundation.
- [2] For further reading about this project see: Willmott C. (2011) “Here’s one we prepared earlier”: involving former students in careers advice, *Bioscience Education* 18-3SE & Willmott C. (2012) Life after Biochemistry. *The Biochemist* 34:4-6.

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