

8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (Email update from Ben Fernando)

<Message from Ben Fernando, PG Rep on the MPLS Board & Chair of the MPLS PG Council>

Hi everyone,

I hope that you are all doing well. As per my email last week, your fellow student reps and I are working hard to ensure that your concerns about our current circumstances are dealt with, on both a social and academic front.

This afternoon I attended MPLS's Graduate Schools Committee where we discussed funding extensions (these are being looked at and clarification should be given shortly - in case of urgent hardship, contact your DGS), furlough payments for cancelling lab demonstrating this term (review underway), and 'mitigating circumstances' for incomplete submitted theses due to COVID-19 (under consideration with strong support from the Committee, fill out your disruption log as evidence).

In addition, the MPLS postgraduate council have arranged the following social events for this week. Volunteers are still welcome, especially for remote outreach efforts which we will be working on developing after the Easter weekend.

You can contact your student reps in your department at any time with concerns, or are welcome to email me: [benjamin.fernando@seh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:benjamin.fernando@seh.ox.ac.uk)

1. **Facebook Group** : We have created an MPLS facebook page where various events across the division will be announced. To join simply search 'MPLS Oxford DPhil Students' on Facebook. Events organised centrally by the Council will still be circulated by email on a weekly basis, though ad-hoc events or those organised by fellow DPhil students may also be featured in the Facebook group only.

2. **'Pub' Social**: A virtual pub social on Saturday at 6pm-8pm. Feel free to drop by anytime within this time period. Just bring yourself, and a soft or alcoholic drink. This meeting will take place via Zoom, email [isabel.creed@seh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:isabel.creed@seh.ox.ac.uk) for a link to join.

3. **EGGsplanations competition**: See below for more detail. I would imagine that this would count as 'transferable skills'...

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## Scientific EGGsplanations!

Are you ready for the super fun Easter competition that all scientists have been waiting for?

The rules:

1. *Design an Easter egg based on your favourite bit of science – this can be anything from displaying your entire thesis on an Easter egg, decorating eggs with the prettiest scientific pattern, or just sciencing-up your favourite classic Easter treats*
2. *Send your design to [Danielle.edmunds@biodtp.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Danielle.edmunds@biodtp.ox.ac.uk)*
3. *Win a prize! (the exact prize will be confirmed shortly!)*

Basically, get creative, have some Easter fun, and we'll pass it off as 'research'! Anything from drawings to decorating actual eggs to getting crafty with chocolate is encouraged!

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Cheers

Ben

*Ben Fernando*

*PG Rep on the MPLS Board & Chair of the MPLS PG Council*