

# The UK Acoustics Network Newsletter

## October 2020

### Dear UKAN Members

UKAN continues to grow. As per 30 October 2020 we have 1126 members. We would like to ask all the new members who joined UKAN since summer 2020 to let us know what you would like to get out of/contribute to UKAN by writing to [info@acoustics.ac.uk](mailto:info@acoustics.ac.uk). It is an opportunity for UKAN to come up with fresh ideas and plan a new range of attractive events.

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#### Events

November is busy with UKAN webinars. Check out our [Events page](#). We would like to remind you that the Early Careers SIG is running a special series of webinars on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of November the details for which are [advertised here](#). We would also encourage our members to suggest new webinar topics/speakers or to be brave and come up with a proposal to present their own work. We will work with you to support the organisation of these webinars and ensure that the presentation is run smoothly on the day. Our webinar audience is international so that it is an opportunity to promote it globally. It is a good time to plan new webinars for the December 2020 – February 2021 period.

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#### Frontiers for Young Minds (FfYM)

Great news that FfYM (<https://kids.frontiersin.org/>) has agreed to a special acoustics collection of articles to commemorate the International Year of Sound 2020-2021. The success of this is due to the excellent

ideas for articles which many UKAN members proposed over the summer. We are so grateful to everyone who have agreed to contribute to FfYM.

The call for abstracts and website which will be home to the collection are planned to be launched by FfYM in mid-November 2020. Our volunteer authors are working on 60 articles from which 15-20 articles will be selected for the publication. The period for the submission for articles/accepted abstracts is likely to run into the spring or summer of 2021. There are now **two additional opportunities for getting involved** and we are looking for 3-4 established academics representing a range of SIGs to act as the **editors** for the submission. In particular, we are looking for those who have journal editorial experience. This is not too onerous work. We expect each editor to handle 5-8 1500-word articles. Do check out [here](#) for the guidelines on hosting a collection and role details.

We also need **10 or more science mentors** to work with pairs of young reviewers (aged 8-15) to help them review the submitted articles and to provide authors with feedback on how to improve them. This is an excellent opportunity for early career development for postdoctoral and junior academic staff and probably 2nd/3rd year PhD students. Acting as a science mentor may well require a day or two of work for an article, but it will look very good on your CV as it contains a mix of both reviewing experience, science communication and outreach. Find out more in the [Science Mentor Guidelines](#). Please do support

this initiative by writing your expression of interest to [info@acoustics.ac.uk](mailto:info@acoustics.ac.uk) or by encouraging anyone who may be interested to get in touch with us.

Anyone who needs a bit more context or reminder about this initiative can read about it [here](#). The original application for FfYM can be found [here](#).

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### Filming virtual tours around acoustics labs

In our September 2020 newsletter we encouraged our members to film virtual tours around their labs to make them available via the UKAN website. A few members responded to us positively and ISVR provided us with two examples they filmed already. One lovely example, [Welcome to the Institute of Sound and Vibration Research](#), can be used to inform anyone who would like to make a similar film to promote their laboratory facilities to a wider community. An alternative is to create a 3D space explore in a way the [Laboratory for Validation and Verification at Sheffield](#) did it. This is a good project for an enthusiastic PhD/PDRAs who know how to film. This is a good project for an enthusiastic PhD/PDRAs who know how to film. Funding is available from UKAN to support this activity.

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### One-to-one grant writing sessions

We would like to remind to our members that Dr Elaine Massung, a former portfolio manager from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), continues to offer to our members one-to-one sessions (funded by UKAN). These sessions provide in-depth feedback on the presentation quality of any current or past written work, such as grant proposals, journal or conference papers, and PhD

thesis. Feedback includes suggestions regarding the clarity of the language, flow of the document, and potential improvements. These sessions are excellent to improve your chances in winning UKRI funding or getting your paper published in top-class journal with fewer reviewer comments. For dates and times please see [here](#). No evaluation of the scientific or engineering validity of your research idea can be provided, nor can funding or publication be guaranteed. Sessions will take place remotely and last for one hour.

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### Telling a story of being an acoustician via Neon

ALN Acoustic Design produced an [excellent film on being an acoustics engineer](#) (funded by EngineeringUK and helps teachers bring STEM to life with real examples of engineering). The Neon website was launched recently to help schools to find brilliant experiences, inspiring career resources and stories that showcase modern engineering. The website is [www.neonfutures.org.uk](http://www.neonfutures.org.uk) is where you can find the Tomorrow's Engineers careers resources and case studies. Neon are keen to include the UK's most brilliant engineering outreach activities including more of those related to acoustics. We would like to encourage all our SIGs and individual members to develop materials for Neon to include at least one item from each SIG to demystify their work for school children to making acoustics more visible and attractive to them. This is an opportunity for us to put acoustics well and truly of the map of life/career choices, and to demonstrate that it is a key to the UK's economy and exciting enabling science.

### **New grants related to acoustics**

UKAN would like to congratulate Professor Alastair Hibbins at Exeter University and his team on getting a new network grant from the EPSRC entitled [UK Metamaterials Network](#). The 'Metamaterials' topic is inherently interdisciplinary bringing exciting elements of acoustics together with other types of advanced materials used in RF, photonics, chemistry and quantum physics applications. There is a considerable interest from our Acoustic Metamaterial and Physical Acoustics SIGs in collaborating with this new Network. It is a £878k grant which will run until the end of 2023.

We would also like to congratulate Dr Enzo De Sena at the University of Surrey on his £407k EPSRC New Investigator Award, [Scalable Room Acoustic Modelling \(SCReAM\)](#). This project aims to overcome some limitations of existing prediction models for room acoustics by defining a novel, unifying room acoustic model that combines appealing properties of all main types of existing models and that can scale on demand from a perceptual model to a full-scale physical model. SCReAM will bring benefits in many applications, ranging from consumer electronics and communications, to computer games, immersive media, and architectural acoustics. A 3-year Research Fellow position for this grant is currently advertise ([check here](#)), deadline is the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2020. Please get in touch with us if we miss your new grant. We are keen to promote all new investments in the UK's acoustics related research in our newsletters.

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### **STEM Ambassador takes the lead for Future Acousticians**

Vicky Stewart (see photo below), an Associate acoustic consultant and National STEM Co-ordinator

at Atkins, has stepped up to the key role with Future Acousticians group, within the [Association of Noise Consultants \(ANC\)](#). Future Acousticians aims to encourage people to study relevant subjects with a view to entering the industry.

Since 2009, Vicky has volunteered in schools promoting STEM subjects and since then has become synonymous with STEM at Atkins in the UK, becoming National Coordinator in 2016. In recent years, Vicky has turned her focus to promoting acoustics as a career choice outside the industry and has been involved in number of initiatives with the ANC and the Institute of Acoustics. In her appointment as Chair of Future Acousticians, Vicky has been co-opted to the ANC Board. UKAN are delighted to have the



opportunity to work with Vicky on matters related to outreach and advocacy for acoustics.

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### **New Acoustics Podcast Coming Soon**

UKAN supported a monthly podcast *The Rest Is Just Noise*. This programme explores the relationship between sound and cities. Each episode our passionate and excitable hosts are joined by an expert guest from fields such as environmental psychology, architecture, and acoustics discussing their latest work; introducing our audience to the science, beauty, and noise of urban sound. Andrew Mitchell, an acoustics consultant and soundscape researcher at the University College London, is joined by his colleagues, Drs Francesco Aletta and Tin Oberman, to dig into anything and everything about urban sound with an obsessive fascination! Keep an eye out for our first episode “Queen of the Birds” coming soon, featuring Dr Ellie Ratcliffe talking us through the restorative potential of birdsong. If you are interested in being a guest, or have a topic or paper you’d like to see featured, reach out to [andrew.mitchell.18@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.mitchell.18@ucl.ac.uk).

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### **Request for Information related to Soundscape Ecology**

Jodie Smith asked UKAN to help her with information on soundscape ecology. She is an undergraduate at the University of West England in Bristol, studying Wildlife Ecology. She has a strong interest in soundscape ecology and how to use acoustics as a tool in conservation. These are a fascinating aspects to her. She is asking UKAN members for audio data which she could utilise and make comparisons with. In particular, she is searching for underwater audios of

different soundscapes, environments or organisms. She is motivated to mitigate the effects of anthropogenic noise pollution on marine animals and would like to research this further through her dissertation project. Please get in touch with her directly at [Jodie7.Smith@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Jodie7.Smith@live.uwe.ac.uk) if you could help her with this request.

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### **Online Networking/Communication Skills**

UKAN has supported Online Networking Skills webinar which was attended by around 50 UKAN members. It was run by Will Kintish. A short report on this webinar can be found [here](#). There was a very good feedback on this webinar.

There is also a series of YouTube videos related to art of the *Engineering Professional Development* and the *Communication Skills for Engineers*. These videos were written and produced by Professor Lucy Rogers (FREng), Brunel University (London), with support from the Royal Academy of Engineering Visiting Professor Scheme. *Speaking to an Online Audience Technical* video can be found [here](#). *Speaking to an Online Audience – Content* video can be found [here](#). *Speaking to an Online Audience – You* video can be found [here](#). *Speaking to an Online Audience – Voice* video can be found [here](#).

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Do send your ideas/requests at [info@acoustics.ac.uk](mailto:info@acoustics.ac.uk).

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Stay well.

Kirill Horoshenkov and Richard Craster