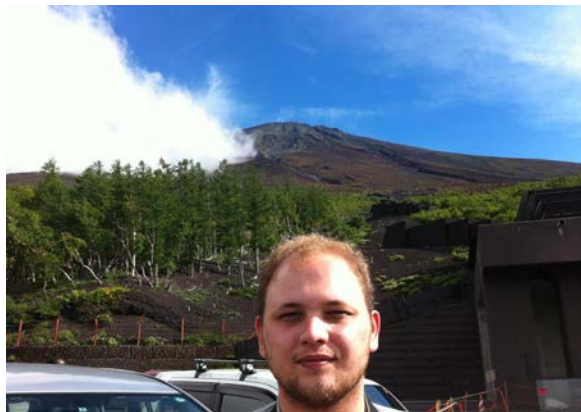


Voice! from Alumni member

Vol.13 Dr Mark Honey



Me and Mt Fuji

Dr Mark Honey from the University of Wolverhampton, tells his experiences as a JSPS Fellow and Alumni member. Please have a look at his experiences below.

Dr Mark Honey

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Biography

2018-present	Lecturer in Pharmaceutical Chemistry, School of Pharmacy, University of Wolverhampton, UK
2015-2018	Research Fellow (I then II) in Medicinal Chemistry, Sussex Drug Discovery Centre, University of Sussex, UK
2014-2015	Postdoctoral Training Fellow, Cancer Therapeutics, Institute of Cancer Research, UK
2011-2014	JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow (Standard), University of Tokyo, Japan
2007-2011	Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry, School of Chemistry, University of Nottingham (including an 18 month placement at GSK Stevenage, UK)
2003-2007	MSci in Chemistry, School of Chemistry, University of Nottingham, UK

I applied for a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship through the British nominating authority, the Royal Society, and gratefully I was successful. Doing postdoctoral research in Japan wasn't an obvious choice for some – quite a few of my colleagues either went to other academic groups within the UK, or ventured further afield to places such as the USA. For me working abroad needed to fulfil two main criteria:

- 1) The research and research group had to be world leading .
- 2) I wanted to learn more about a culture that was quite different to my own – living and breathing it so that I could go some way to understanding and being empathetic to people that may hold slightly different values and ideologies to my own.

Japan therefore seemed an ideal choice. I applied for my JSPS Fellowship with Professor Shu Kobayashi from the University of Tokyo, as I had long admired the quality, quantity and diversity of his published work. I arrived in Japan in July 2011, joining a

group of approximately 50 highly skilled Masters and PhD students and postdoctoral researchers, and started research into the chemistry phosphorus-containing organosuperbases. I was awarded my Fellowship in the September, and in the end spent a total of 2.5 years working in Japan. At times laboratory life was tough, but I believe that has made me a better person and scientist. The amount of chemistry that I learnt whilst at Tokyo was more than I had imagined, but it does not compare to what I learnt about myself and the incredibly hospitable Japanese people.

As my Fellowship was coming to an end, I started to apply for my next position. I had been interested in the drug discovery side of chemistry since my time at GSK, so I applied to the Institute of Cancer Research in London, UK to work on a drug discovery project with Professor Julian Blagg targeting a kinase in the WNT pathway. I joined the ICR in February 2014 and spent a total of 18 months in their laboratories in Sutton, South East London. I learnt a lot about interdisciplinary research at the ICR,

and a sense of pride that my research could possibly help to save the lives of terminally ill patients.

Moving on from the ICR, I joined the group of Professor Simon Ward in the Sussex Drug Discovery Centre at the University of Sussex as a Research Fellow in Medicinal Chemistry. During my time at the SDDC I worked on several projects, all of which were within the neuroscience arena. As with the ICR, my research at the SDDC was very interdisciplinary, and the outcomes had the potential to translate into the clinic, which would hopefully improve the quality of life for countless people. Alongside research, I had always been interested in educating students, but it was at the SDDC that this side of my career really started to flourish, and made my decision to apply for academic positions (both teaching and research) even more desirable.

In April 2018 I started my independent academic career at the University of Wolverhampton as a Lecturer in Pharmaceutical Chemistry within the School of Pharmacy. I must admit that with such strong competition for academic positions in the UK, I feel very privileged that Wolverhampton has chosen me to join them to train the next generation of pharmaceutical scientists and pharmacists. Being a lecturer at Wolverhampton is an incredibly rewarding job – I am able to teach across different courses as

well as being able to establish my own research group, a group that is currently looking at the development of novel chemistry with particular application in medicinal chemistry, as well as initiating an exciting new chemical biology/drug discovery program.

I am just at the very beginning of my independent academic career and am very much looking forward to shaping my own area of research, both independently and through collaborations – feel free to contact me if you feel I could be of any assistance!



Receiving a thank you certificate from the Tokyo Fire Department for helping to free a trapped motorcyclist after a road traffic accident in Bunkyo-ku

JSPS Alumni Association of the UK and the Republic of Ireland (RoI)

Please join the JSPS Alumni Association of the UK and the Republic of Ireland (RoI)!

As a former JSPS Fellow, we would like to ask you to join the JSPS Alumni Association of the UK and the Republic of Ireland (RoI). Our Alumni Association was established in 2003 and carries out a number of activities throughout the UK and RoI with numerous benefits for members. One of them is “The JSPS London Symposium and Seminar Scheme.” The aim of this scheme is to provide support for members holding a symposium or seminar and to create high quality collaboration in cutting edge/ internationally competitive areas at institutional or departmental level between research institutions in the UK or RoI and Japan. Under this scheme, JSPS London will partially support the following matters*:

*The detailed support is subject to change.

1

Costs for inviting symposium/ seminar speakers from Japan

2

Costs for hiring a venue, printing materials, advertising and so on*

3

Strategic support to help advertise and organise the event.

The application details of this scheme will automatically be e mailed to registered Alumni members during our next call. For further information please contact JSPS London by email at enquire@jps.org. Again, this is exclusively open to the JSPS Alumni members.

So why not join us today?



Joining us

Simply register your membership here

http://www.jps.org/alumni_about/

Once registered you will receive an ID number and password to access the Alumni Association web pages and can start networking.