



Proposal of Activities

- **SPARKS Talks.** Highly successful student-led SPARKS Talks will continue. SPARKS Talks events are designed to inform and enthuse all our medical students through presentations of topical, high profile recent medical research advances yet to find their way into the medical curriculum or textbooks. SPARKS Talks events will comprise a presentation from a local or national principal investigator, along with two or three 20 minute student presentations on any topic relating to medical research. The latter may include presentations of students' own research work, a presentation of recently published research or any other topic related to medical research, including research skills and methods.
- **SPARKS Magazine.** Student-edited SPARKS e-Magazines will be relaunched under new editorship and published termly to all medical students, highlighting a selection of recent medical research advances and useful links to research resources, comprising a headline, short synopsis and e-link for each item. The magazine will publish suitable articles describing research undertaken by current medical students and will expect submission of accepted abstracts and reports from student delegates to external conferences. The magazine will also collect and promote details of medical student research conferences in other schools, particularly those funded by the INSPIRE programme.
- **Leicester University Medical Research Society (LUMRS) 'LINK' Scheme.** The LINK scheme is a well-established student-led activity that matches medical students seeking new or further experience of research to principal investigators (clinical and non-clinical) within the University of Leicester and local NHS Trusts. The scheme is complementary to the School's Intercalated BSc and MSc programmes, specifically for those students wishing to gain research experience without formal course intercalation, those wishing to explore embryonic research ideas and graduate medical students wishing to extend their research experience. A range of research experiences will be offered, from short shadowing placements, focused short research projects, to externally funded vacation scholarships and longer-term relationships within our research laboratories and clinical teams. Research undertaken will be outside of normal course commitments and in the students' own time. The main outcomes from placements will be the development of practical research skills and of critical appraisal relating to research.
- **Research Poster Competition and Symposium.** To encourage development of research presentation skills, a poster presentation competition, independent of other conference activities will be organised. Whilst the majority of posters will be the student's own work, these can include a reportage of a recent research

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publication or media coverage. Posters will be displayed in the public areas of the School and all students will be invited to nominate the best three posters in their judgement. The best 10 posters so scored will be invited to make a 3-minute presentation at a LUMRS 'Research Poster Symposium' event.

- 8th and 9th Annual National Student Research Conference (NMSRC). The flagship INSPIRE activity over the past six years has been a highly successful annual medical student research conference in partnership with Nottingham and Norwich Medical Schools that rotates between. In 2020 and 2021, the collaborative conference series will be organized and hosted by student INSPIRE teams from Nottingham and Norwich Medical Schools, respectively. The conferences will be open to all UK medical students, with or without research experience, on a first come first served basis. Primarily, the conferences provide a forum for medical students to develop presentation skills by dissemination of research findings from their research involvement; orally, in plenary and breakout sessions, and by poster. Conference contributions will receive feedback from academic judges. The conference also aims to improve transferrable research skills in breakout sessions and to grow networks for research active medical students keen to foster medical research careers.
- Research Conference bursaries. The Medical School provides limited support of 20 bursaries to some presenting students on a first come first served basis but demand is always higher than budget. Through the INSPIRE scheme, we wish to provide a further 10 bursaries to maximise the opportunity to attend and present. Funding will be provided to students with accepted oral or poster presentations and will be limited to one bursary per student. In addition, we will sponsor one student to attend annual conferences of either the National Student Association of Medical Research (NSAMR) or the International Student Congress of (bio)Medical Sciences (ISCOMS) to develop national and international peer networking of our INSPIRE participants.
- Academic Foundation Programme Mock Interviews. Using alumni and current AFP doctors, mock interviews for students applying for AFP training places have been organised by LUMRS and overseen by an academic staff member over several years. Mock interviews will be held in the early autumn for all students wishing to receive preparatory guidance. We will build on a successful event hosted this year by a current Leicester graduate foundation doctor to promote the Academic Foundation Programme (AFP). This event will be held in the summer prior to AFP applications to provide information on the programme and advice that may help with the preparation of applications and the interview.

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- Shared East Midlands Consortium events. As many clinical academics also work with or in industry (biotech, pharma, and medical devices), Leicester, Nottingham and Norwich Medical Schools have agreed to co-arrange two visits per year to research institutes and commercial research laboratories to achieve critical mass of the visiting groups. These collaborative visit days will expose students to a broader range of clinical academic careers and working environments and enable cross-pollination of research ideas between venues, students and supervisors from the three medical schools. Travel will be arranged independently by each school. Support will also be provided to student to attend the Nottingham Medical School 'Art of Medical Research Exhibition' in October 2021.

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