



# RDS London NEWSLETTER

February 2010  
Issue 2

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## Research Design Service London - Enabling Better Research

**Research Design Service (RDS) London has been supporting researchers preparing proposals for submission to peer-reviewed funding for over six months now, and the impact of their support and guidance is starting to show.**

RDS London has worked with researchers at varying stages of their proposal, from helping develop an idea into a proposal to helping almost complete proposals with small details that make all the difference.

Having given advice and guidance to over 250 research proposals it has been a very busy start for RDS London, but has the quality of support matched the quantity? We have been speaking to some users of the service to find out.

Dr. Gita Ramdharry, Senior Lecturer in Physiotherapy from the Faculty of Health and Social Care Sciences, St George's University of London/Kingston University, came to RDS London in May 2009 for help with her application for the new NIHR Clinical Lectureship for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals.

Seeking guidance on design and analysis of the proposed studies Dr. Ramdharry met with one of RDS London's statisticians who helped her with both aspects and was also able to answer queries about health economics: *"The RDS advisors were extremely helpful and I was never made to feel I was asking a stupid question. I felt very reassured that I was heading in the right direction with my proposed research"*.

In November 2009 Dr. Ramdharry found out she had been successful with her application and starts her lectureship on a part time basis on the 1st March 2010. She praised RDS London for their support: *"The service exceeded my expectation... I have invited them to come to my institution to speak about the service so more of my colleagues can benefit from the excellent advice"*.

Jared Smith, Psychology Research Fellow from Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust, needed help with a range of issues relevant to his application for RfPB funding and first made contact with RDS London in June 2009, who have provided ongoing support until the recent submission of his application.

We asked him how RDS London had helped him and his application: *"The advice provided was very useful, particularly because it centred on developing the study protocol and application so as to best fit the remit of the RfPB competition"*.

*"The time spent and attention given by advisors critiquing a number of drafts of our application was considerably more than I expected. Similarly, the advice provided was both highly specific to the application and pitched at an appropriate level rather than just general or basic recommendations as one might have anticipated - In short, all advisors were extremely helpful! I would have no hesitation in recommending RDS London to both academic and clinical colleagues"*.

Dr Peter Lovell, Programme Manager for RDS London, reflects: *"It has been a very positive start for us, it's great to see our guidance paying off and researchers receiving funding - that's what we're here for after all! Feedback has been very encouraging we're delighted to be able to make a difference to the research community of London"*.

If you think RDS London can help you then visit [www.rdslondon.co.uk](http://www.rdslondon.co.uk) or call 020 7848 6782.



## Welcome from the Programme Manager



I'd like to begin by wishing you all a Happy New Year and hope that 2010 is a prosperous one.

We have been delighted to have supported so many of your funding applications since our official launch in July 2009. We appreciate your feedback on our service which suggests that the advice and guidance from our teams of experts has been invaluable.

We are already seeing the positive results even at this early stage and proposals that we have supported are now getting funded, such as Gita's success described on the front page of this newsletter.

We now have all of our teams across London fully functioning and ready to help you, so please do get in touch with any enquiries that you have. Their details are at the bottom of this page.

We would also like to welcome Carol Porteous, our new Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) lead, to the team. Carol's role is pivotal to our service as many research programmes are making PPI a condition of funding.

Since our launch last summer we have continued to make it easier for the London research community to access our service, including our popular drop-in sessions held across the capital in November and the Research Design Clinics that we have begun to trial. Although we have found these events useful, we are always happy to hear suggestions on how we can better support you, so do let us know if you have ideas or comments.

2010 promises to be a busy one for RDS London. Keep an eye on our website which is proving to be an excellent resource for researchers. It's constantly being updated with our latest news, events and more online resources.

We look forward to working with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'P Lovell'.

**Dr Peter Lovell**  
Programme Manager  
Research Design Service London

## RDS London Annual Conference

RDS London is pleased to announce that our first Annual Conference will take place on **Tuesday 6th July 2010** in London (exact times / venues TBC).

A year on from our official launch at London's City Hall, this will be an opportunity to find out how we have developed in the last 12 months, what impact we have made so far and how we plan to take our service forward.

Full details will be circulated over the next few months so please put this in your diary if you would like to attend.



## Your Local RDS London Team

**RDS London North**  
University College London  
Administrator: Faye Owen  
020 7670 4872 | ucl@rdslondon.co.uk

**RDS London East**  
Queen Mary University of London  
Administrator: Jan Whalley  
020 7882 2498 | qmul@rdslondon.co.uk

**RDS London South**  
King's College London  
Administrator: Kate Hockett  
020 7848 6782 | kcl@rdslondon.co.uk

**RDS London West**  
Imperial College London  
Administrator: Richard Kells  
020 7594 3856 | ic@rdslondon.co.uk

## Profile

In each RDS London Newsletter we will be profiling someone involved in RDS London, from the staff to the researchers using the service.



**Name:** Dr Yannis Pappas

**Job Title:** Qualitative Methods Consultant

**Company:** Imperial College London

### Briefly describe your role:

My main role is to provide RDS clients with advice on qualitative research design. This entails reviewing several fascinating research ideas and meeting with researchers to discuss ways in which they can improve their proposals for a grant. I am also a proud supervisor of one Quantitative Methods Advisor with RDS London.

### What is a typical day at work like for you?

It is quite hard to define a typical day at work with RDS London because of the variety of requests for advice we are presented on a daily basis. This makes my work rather challenging as there are no templates that can be used in this work. Practically, my time is divided between reviewing proposals, drafting advice documents, communicating and meeting with researchers from London.

### What is the most enjoyable part of what you do?

Quite a few proposals push the boundaries of my knowledge, as researchers never fail to present me with ideas that require a remarkably sophisticated design. I very much enjoy working towards identifying the best way to create a viable research plan and meeting researchers from all disciplines to exchange ideas on their projects.

### What are the people you work with like?

Not only am I fortunate enough to work along with internationally acclaimed scholars like Professor Majeed, Professor Seale and others, but also to be part of a team of enthused individuals with a genuine vision to contribute to the improvement of healthcare service and patient care.

### What advice would you give to anyone thinking about using the service?

To just do it! We are a nice bunch of people who are keen to help you.

### When you're not at work what do you do to relax?

I am a passionate footballer. I also enjoy playing every sport that is played with a ball and/or a racket. As time goes by though, I am starting to explore ways that allow me to unwind without consuming huge amounts of energy. From an extensive repertoire of recent trials, I would choose painting, walking along the Thames and enjoying a cigar whilst reading books about classic cars, especially Italian ones.

## New home for BRC

**The NIHR comprehensive Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) celebrated the opening of its physical home on the 16th floor of Guy's Tower in December.**

The Centre will also be home to the Trust's research and development department, Biomedical Research Centre support staff, Joint Clinical Trials Office and the London (South) Comprehensive Local Research Network's core team.

And not to be left behind, RDS London will also be based on the 16th floor of Guy's Tower as of the end of February.

We aim to be there once a week at a fixed time so you can always find us, in the heart of the action.

Check our website for further information [www.rdslondon.co.uk](http://www.rdslondon.co.uk)

## Workshops and Conferences

Wednesday 10 March 2010, 10:00 - 17:00

**Introduction to R (Dr Bernard North)**

Book online at:

[www3.imperial.ac.uk/stathelp/courses](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/stathelp/courses)

Thursday 11 & Friday 12 March 2010,  
10:00 - 17:00

**Statistical Microarray Analysis Using R & Bioconductor (Dr Bernard North)**

Book online at:

[www3.imperial.ac.uk/stathelp/courses](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/stathelp/courses)

Friday 19 March 2010, 9:30 - 16:30

**Introduction to Research Regulations**

Book online at: [www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training](http://www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training)

Friday 19 March 2010, 9:30 - 13:00

**GCP Refresher**

Book online at: [www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training](http://www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training)

Friday 19 March 2010, 14:00 - 15:00

**Research Governance Framework**

Book online at: [www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training](http://www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/research/training)

For further details and more workshops and conferences in London please visit our website [www.rdslondon.co.uk](http://www.rdslondon.co.uk)

## Funding Deadlines

**NIHR Central Commissioning Facility (CCF) Funding Deadlines**

**Research for Patient Benefit**

Registration of intention 09 Apr 2010

Submission 21 May 2010

**Programme Grants for Applied Research**

Stage 2 (comp 7) submission 22 Mar 2010

Stage 1 (comp 8) submission 22 Mar 2010

**Programme Development Grants**

Submission 22 Mar 2010

**NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC) Funding Deadlines**

**HTA Clinical Evaluation and Trials**

Submission 13 Apr 2010

## Tips for Getting an RfPB Grant

### One Applicant's Suggestions

Firstly, be sure to familiarise yourself with the application form early in the process. Don't focus on trying to write a conventional, scientific protocol for your study with the intention of later transferring it to the form. The application form has a number of sections, such as "relevance to the RfPB programme" and "delivery across the NHS," which probably would not be the focus of a conventional scientific protocol, but to which you need to devote time to developing a good response if your application is to be successful. Therefore, start drafting your proposal under the application form subheadings as soon as possible.

Make sure that your aims and scientific summary sections are clear. These are what are going to orientate both the Committee and the reviewers to the nature of your project, so it pays to spend time revising and polishing these sections. Then, when writing the "research plans and methodology" section, demonstrate how each part of your proposed work will serve to enable you to achieve your aims. It's also useful to think about user involvement at an early stage of your project, so that you can specify how you'll be involving service users at each stage of your research plan (where applicable), rather than just making a general statement about planning to involve users at all stages of the project.

## Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, my name is Carol Porteous and I am the User Involvement Officer for RDS London, I will have met many of you over the past few months since I started and hopefully will get to meet many more of you over the coming months.

Since I started I have been very busy helping people with PPI in their proposals and at the various drop-in sessions in November.

We have also produced a basic PPI leaflet to help give an overview of PPI and get people thinking about how they can incorporate it meaningfully into their research.

For those of you who find Lay Summary writing a tedious and onerous task we have produced some Tips for Writing a Lay Summary that may help and this is available on our website.

Watch out for the launch of our Enabling Involvement Fund on the 1st of April 2010. A fund that aims to help researchers initiate and develop PPI. More information on this and other PPI news will be in our next Newsletter and on the RDS London website so keep checking back.



If you need any more information on PPI or have any questions please contact me:

**Carol Porteous 020 7848 6763**  
**carol.porteous@rdslondon.co.uk**

## Emergency Scientific and Medical Services

Emergency Scientific and Medical Services (eSMS) is a 24 hour telephone information service for healthcare professionals providing information on behalf of the clinical research industry to support patient safety, including:

- emergency unblinding for clinical trials
- medical response for clinical trials
- clinical advice for the management of adverse events
- medical information for marketed products and IMPs

For more information visit:  
**www.medtox.co.uk**



## Competition!

Here's your chance to **win £50 John Lewis vouchers!**

Simply answer the question below and it could be your lucky day!

**Q: Which month this year will RDS London host their 1st Annual Conference?**

Email your answer to **info@rdslondon.co.uk** with **COMPETITION** as the subject.

Closing date Friday 30 April 2010, the winner will be contacted by Friday 7 May 2010.

Good luck!

## Contact Details

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