

## StudentShapers Recruitment: Calling all DoLS First-Gen/Widening Participation/Working-Class students

Exploring experiences and improving support for first-gen/WP/working-class students in the Department of Life Sciences

**Bursary:** £50-£55/week part time during summer term and £325 full time (4 weeks) during summer vacation.

### Who should apply:

We are looking for 3 undergraduates to engage with this project over the summer term and part of the summer vacation. If you are a Home/UK student in the Department of Life Sciences who identifies as working-class, first-generation or widening participation, we would love to hear from you.

The project would ideally involve students across all different year groups (Y1/2/3) in the department, and across our two major degree streams (Biological Sciences and Biochemistry) and therefore students in any year or DoLS degree stream are eligible to apply.

We are looking for motivated students who can work as part of a team and have an interest in improving the university experience for working-class, first-generation and widening participation students.

**Campus/Location:** South Kensington based but project will largely run online and therefore can be fully remote.

### Project details:

This project seeks to explore the experiences of undergraduates from a working-class, first-generation or widening participation background in the Department of Life Sciences. We hope to identify any specific barriers they face in their university life, either academic or pastoral. Imperial's Learning and Teaching Strategy highlights the importance of an inclusive learning environment with equal opportunities for students to succeed and this forms the basis for this project. To capture information and experiences from across working-class, first-generation or widening participation students in the department, staff and student partners will work together to generate and disseminate a questionnaire to UGs in the Department. Following this, we envisage developing and conducting student-facilitated focus groups exploring actionable suggestions that the department can implement.

# STUDENTSHAPERS

Following collection of this information, analysis and student's suggestions, student partners will engage in the project full time in the summer vacation to contribute to project outcomes that may include:

- Actionable suggestions e.g. curriculum-based resources that student partners can develop
- Broader level department recommendations
- Wider impact implications/educational research

Student partners would ideally engage with this project part-time during Summer term for seven weeks, followed by full-time work during Summer break for four weeks with dates flexible depending on student availability and exams. Data collection through a questionnaire and focus groups will largely take place through part time engagement over the course of the Summer term (beginning after the exam period for Yr1/2 students) with data analysis and development of resources and outputs taking place in the Summer break.

During this project, students will work as part of a team and take responsibility for elements of the project, gaining professional skills including independence, project management and organisation. Student partners will receive training and gain experience in Educational research and elements of curriculum design. Students will gain a better understanding of the first-gen/widening participation/working-class student cohort and wider Higher Education context of this topic. They will have chance to shape the department support for current and future students in the department, as well as acting as role models for other first-gen/widening participation/working-class students.

## How to apply:

To apply for this project, please email Dr Catherine Mansfield: [c.mansfield@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:c.mansfield@imperial.ac.uk) with an expression of interest of 300-500 words outlining why you wish to be a student partner on this project and ideas that you could bring to the project. Applications will be reviewed and you may be invited for a short informal interview.

**Deadline:** 29<sup>th</sup> March 12 noon (GMT)

**Contact details:** Dr Catherine Mansfield: [c.mansfield@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:c.mansfield@imperial.ac.uk)