

SCISOC SPOTLIGHT

BY THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

Dr. Emma Cahill

DEPARTMENT OF
PHYSIOLOGY,
DEVELOPMENT AND
NEUROSCIENCE,
SCHOOL OF
BIOLOGICAL
SCIENCES



RESEARCH FOCUS:

NEUROSCIENCE

In my research, I address the **brain mechanisms** underlying experience of **drugs of abuse, appetitive rewards and also memories of fear**. More recently, I have become interested in the **relationship of fear and anxiety**, and how the two maybe supported by **neurochemically** and **anatomically** distinct mechanisms.

WHY RESEARCH?

I really enjoyed my first experience of working in a lab as an undergraduate Natural Sciences student. It opened my eyes about how actually 'doing'; the science was way more interesting and engaging rather than just being told about it in lectures. I had thought I wanted to be a science teacher, because I loved learning about things, but then at University I saw that lecturers were getting to teach about things they were specifically interested in and about things that changed a lot as research develops, and to people who (mostly!) actually want to listen and learn, so I thought I wanted to do that instead.



"So you need to become an opportunist, develop a thick skin for rejection, learn how to motivate yourself and keep a level head and a balanced life."

ONE PIECE OF ADVICE...

Be flexible and realistic. Don't go into research for respect nor money, or because you don't know what to do next. It is an extremely competitive line of work, all through the career path of a researcher. Never get put off by anything other people do or say (including my advice here!), you can only give it your best so just get on with it and don't worry. Explore what interests you; read often and don't be afraid to ask questions - you'll get used to feeling awkward the sooner you start doing it. As long as you are driven by curiosity, I think you will find it's worth the effort and a very rewarding career.