

Dr Helen Warren



Nominee Election Year – 2014

Nominee Title & Institution - Senior Lecturer, Queen Mary University of London

Nominee's Personal Statement –

I'm a Senior Lecturer at the William Harvey Research Institute, Queen Mary University of London for 11 years, working in the field of cardiovascular genetics. My research focuses on the genetic discovery for blood pressure, risk prediction for hypertension, and pharmacogenetics for the response to both antihypertensive drugs and statins. I'm the lead genetic analyst for ASCOT (Anglo-Scandinavian Cardiac Outcomes Trial) and BRIGHT (British Genetics of Hypertension study). I'm one of the senior leaders and steering committee members for the International Consortium of Blood Pressure, co-chair and analyst team leader for the Genomic Investigation of Statin Therapy Consortium, and project leader within the International Consortium for Antihypertensive Pharmacogenetics Studies.

I've been a BIHS member for 10 years and have attended ASMs regularly since 2014. In 2015 I volunteered to become one of the three Young Investigator (YI) representatives who co-founded the YI Network, which was launched in 2016. From 2016-2017 this meant that I was a co-opted member of the Executive committee, so I already have experience of contributing to the BIHS Executive and participating in committee meetings, and a clear understanding of what this role will entail. During my co-leadership of the BIHS YI network (now called the Early Career Researchers Specialist interest group), I organised the new YI symposiums at the ASM, proposed the idea of the YI Poster Storm sessions, which have remained a successful and enjoyable part of the ASM program, and initiated the BIHS mentoring scheme. Since 2017 I have been a member of the BIHS Research Working Party, now called the Collaborative Research Committee, and I am currently part of the recently formed steering committee for the BIHS Priority Setting project supported by the BHF. I contribute fully to each BIHS ASM through a wide variety of roles: an invited speaker at the YI symposium, poster judge, session chair, abstract reviewer and presenter.

Outside of the BIHS, I also have experience with committee roles from other professional societies. I was a co-founding committee member for the Royal Statistical Society's Young Statisticians Section from 2010-2014, I've been an elected Research Steering Committee Member for the international Cohorts for Heart and Aging Research in Genomic Epidemiology consortium since 2018 and I was invited to be a working party member for the International Common Disease Alliance Maps to Mechanisms working party in 2019.

I'm really excited with the prospect of joining the Executive Committee and increasing my involvement with the life of the BIHS once again. Now as a Senior Lecturer, at a mid-career stage, I feel I have lots to offer to the society, with a nice combination of experience in leadership together with fresh energy and enthusiasm to bring to the committee. During my 10 years of BIHS membership, I have really enjoyed getting to know all the BIHS members, and I look forward to being able to represent and support all of you. The ASM is always the highlight of my year, and the conference that I most regularly attend, above all others. As a non-clinical researcher in the field of Hypertension, I love the opportunity to network with others across different backgrounds and put my work within a clinical context. I am keen to bridge the gap between clinical and non-clinical members. Having previously launched the YI network, but now at a more senior career stage, I also pledge to support the Early Career representative to provide an additional voice on the Executive Committee, to ensure that early career members of the BIHS continue to be supported, in order to sustain the future of our Society. As a female, mid-career researcher in Hypertension, I look forward to bringing diversity of background, thought, and representation to the BIHS Executive Committee.

Nominated by – Prof Morris Brown

Supporting Statement –

I first came to know Helen as a regular attendee and presenter at BIHS ASMs, whilst I was still a Professor at Cambridge. Since my move to Queen Mary University of London, we have enjoyed several opportunities to work together on projects seeking translation of genetic findings in Hypertension. As Lecturer, and now Senior Lecturer, Helen has organised and co-chaired regular group meetings for Hypertension researchers at QMUL. Helen encourages and supports the research and development of early career researchers and clinical trainees within our Centre for Clinical Pharmacology and Precision Medicine at QMUL. She also organises successful events that increase interaction and engagement across the Centre. So I have every confidence that Helen will play a key role on the BIHS Executive for ensuring the support and inclusion of all members within our Society, and that she will apply her organisational skills for helping with the planning and delivery of future events and activities within the BIHS. As a previous President, I am absolutely delighted that Helen is standing for election to the BIHS Executive, and I fully support her nomination.

Supported by – Prof Sir Mark Caulfield

Supporting Statement –

Helen Warren is an internationally leading statistical geneticist, who has driven, or been pivotal in the discovery of the majority of the large number of genes for blood pressure. She has published many high impact papers in Nature Genetics. Her work describing the genetic architecture of blood pressure led to her non-clinical Lectureship at the William Harvey Research Institute, Queen Mary University of London, where she is now a Senior Lecturer. She has received multiple awards including a BHIS Young Investigator Award in 2016, the Early Career Award for the Cohorts for Heart and Aging Research in Genomic Epidemiology consortium in 2018, and the Young Investigator Postdoctoral Award for the International Genetic Epidemiology Society in 2015. Helen has been a highly committed BIHS member since 2014, evidenced by her successful stewardship as the co-lead and founder of the BHIS Young Investigator group which she launched in 2016. Within this Young Investigator leadership role Helen led organisation of activities such as the annual Young Investigator symposiums and Poster Storm sessions at each BIHS ASM, as well as representing our future talent's voice as a co-opted member on the Executive Committee. She continues to be a strong, positive voice for early career members at our Annual Business Meetings. Helen will be a highly effective member of the Executive. As both

VP for Health for QMUL's Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, and previous President of the BIHS, I strongly commend her to the Society.

Seconded by - Dr Vikas Kapil

Supporting Statement –

I have known Helen for ~11 years throughout her time at QMUL, where we are both members of academic staff at the William Harvey Research Institute, Queen Mary University of London. By both being researchers specialising in Hypertension, it has been great to always share our similar interests, and especially our common involvement in the activities of the BIHS. As a member of other BIHS working parties myself, I have been thrilled to see how much Helen has got involved with the Society over the years: first, the Young Investigator network committee; and then the Collaborative Research working party. Most recently, it has been a pleasure to work closely with Helen this year, whilst co-supervising a group of final year BSc students conducting their dissertation data analysis project on the topic of hypertension. Whilst the students investigated how blood pressure lowering medication use is taken into account within genetic analyses for the discovery of blood pressure genes, Helen demonstrated to me how well she is able to clearly communicate her advanced genetic research concepts and techniques to both clinicians like me, and to undergraduate students with little prior knowledge. Through this co-supervision with Helen, I have seen at first-hand her skills in communication, teamwork, project management and organisation, as well as her passion for hypertension research, and dedication to helping, supporting and nurturing others. Indeed, these will all be valuable qualities that she can contribute to the Society, and I have no hesitation in recommending Helen for this Executive committee role on the BIHS.