

ROYAL SOCIETY OF BIOLOGY BIOSCIENCE CAREERS DAY 2025

FAYE WATSON
PUBLIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTANT





A SERIES OF HAPPENSTANCES

FAYE WATSON

PUBLIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTANT



**Where do you
want to be in 5 years?**



**Put it in the
bin.**



**What if I told you
it doesn't matter?**

And here's why...

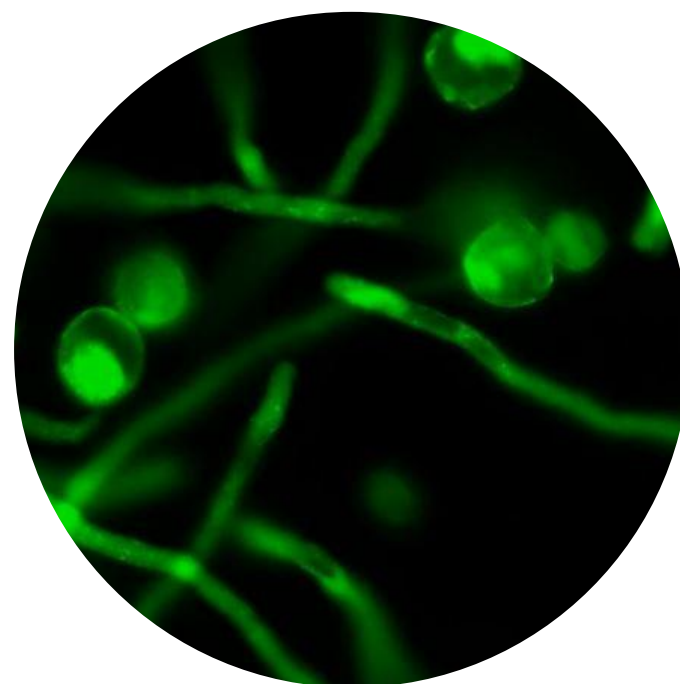


Chapter One

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

University
Cardiff University





2016

2013

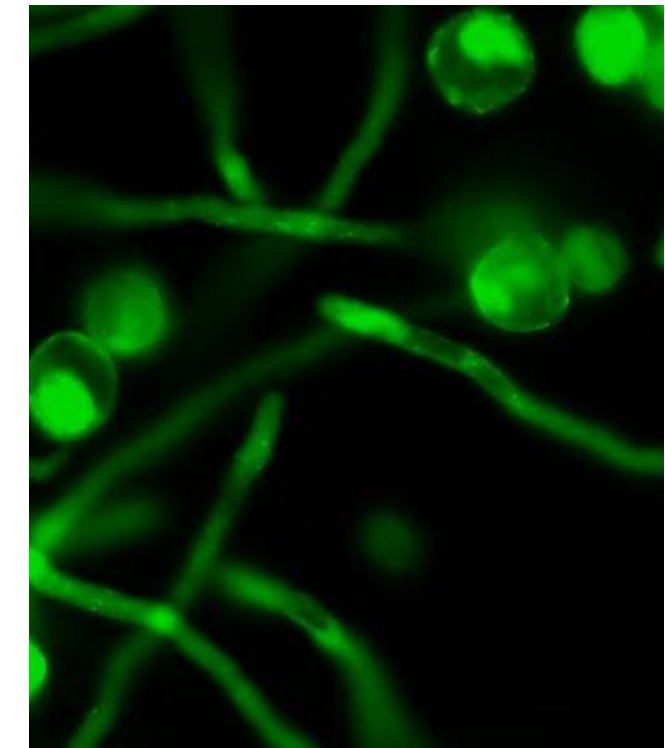
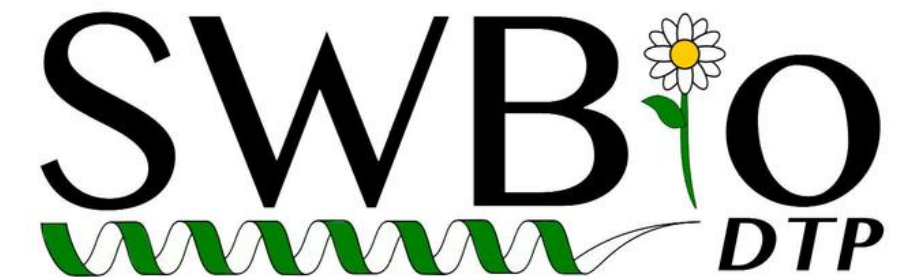
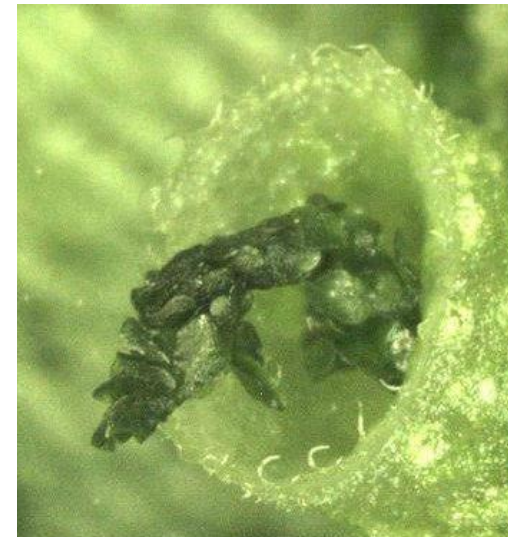
2017



Undergraduate:
BSc Biology

Master of Research:
Biosciences

PhD: Plant
Reproduction



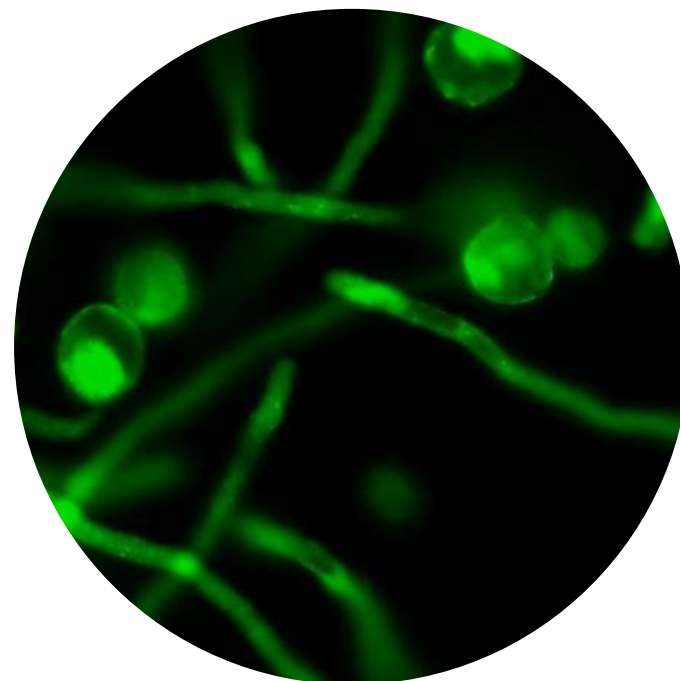


Chapter Two



Internship (PIPS) National Botanic Garden of Wales





2016

2019

2013

2017





What did I do next?

- A) Swap PhD supervisor
- B) Quit my PhD
- C) Go part time on my PhD

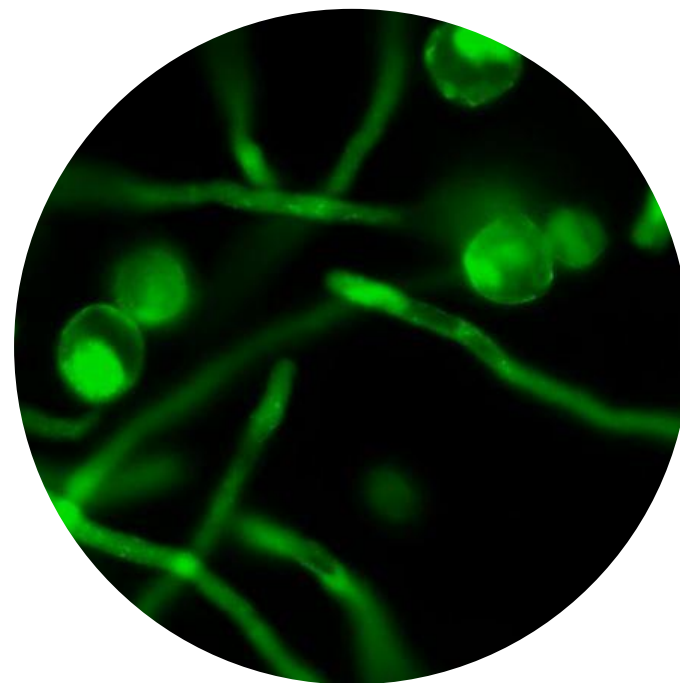


FUNemployment (aka panicking)





2016



2019



2013



2017



2019



Chapter Four



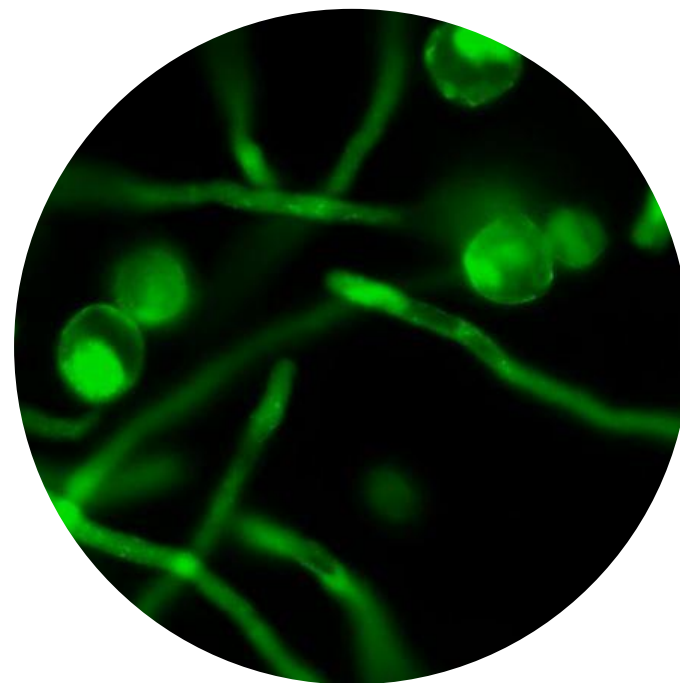
**Public Engagement
Assistant --> Officer**

**UCL Wellcome Centre
for Human Neuroimaging**





2016



2019



2019

2013



2017

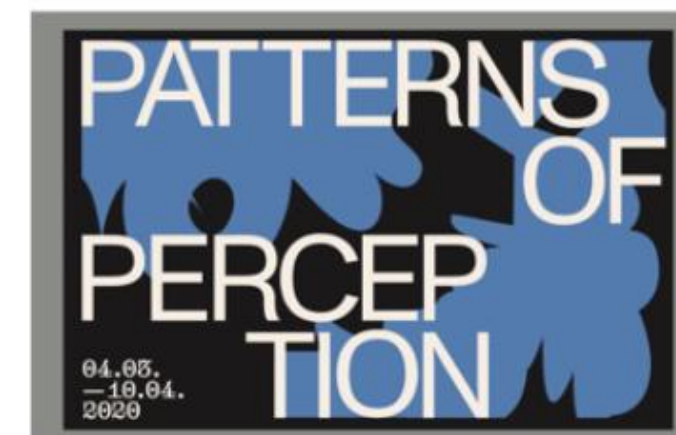


2019





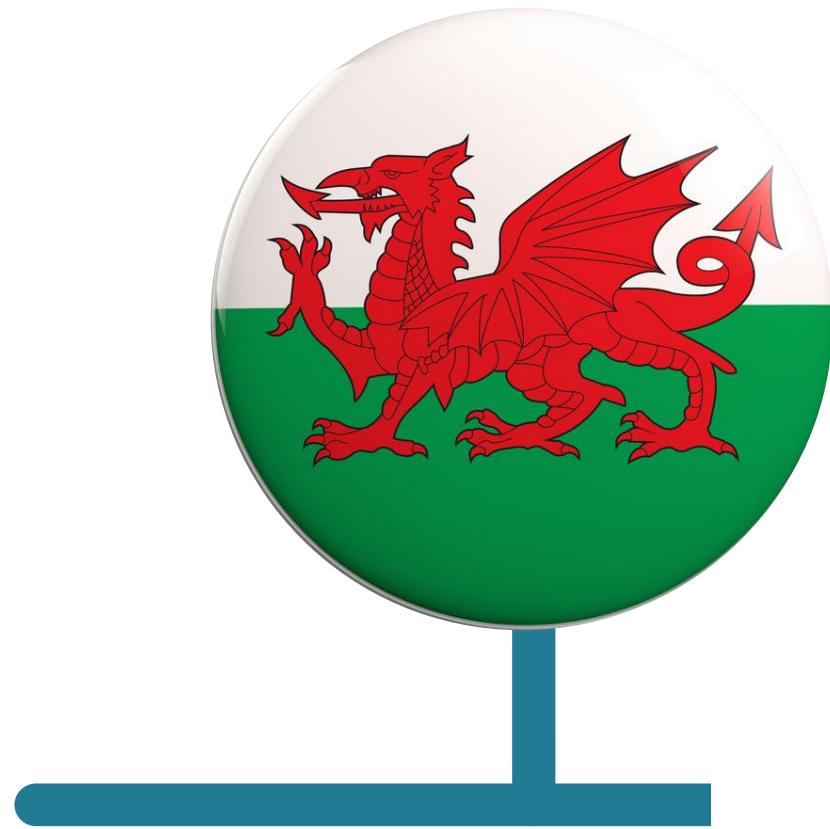
UCL WORLD STROKE DAY FORUM

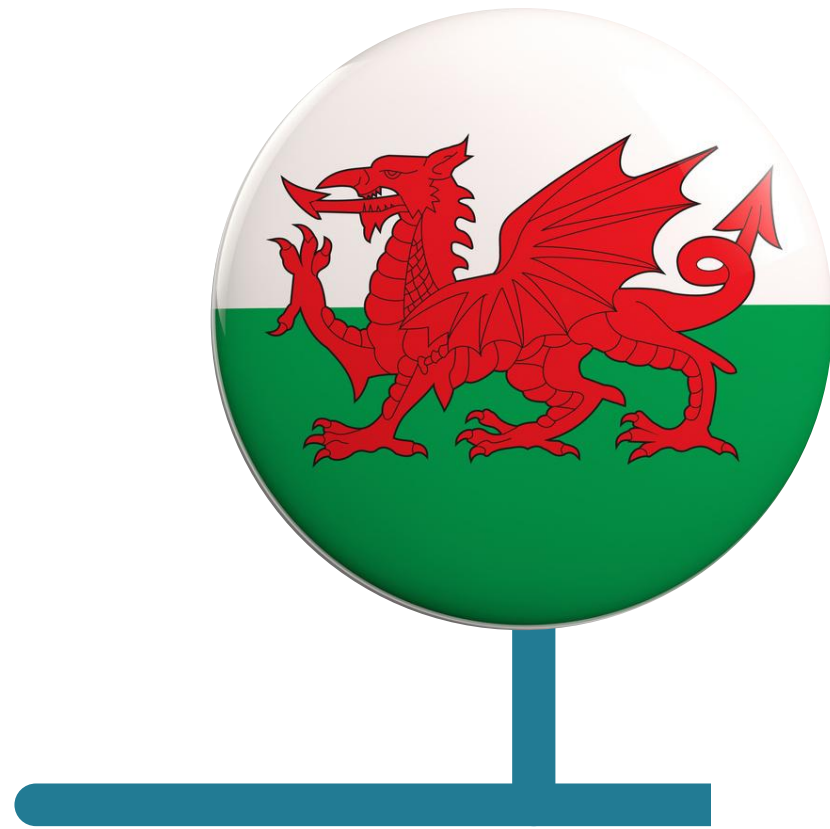


What did I do next?

- A) Sell my house
- B) Buy a one-way ticket to Sri Lanka
- C) Move to Scotland
- D) All of the above







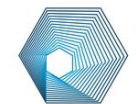
Chapter Five



Medical
Research
Council



University
of Glasgow



CVR
Centre for
Virus Research

Engagement & Communications Coordinator

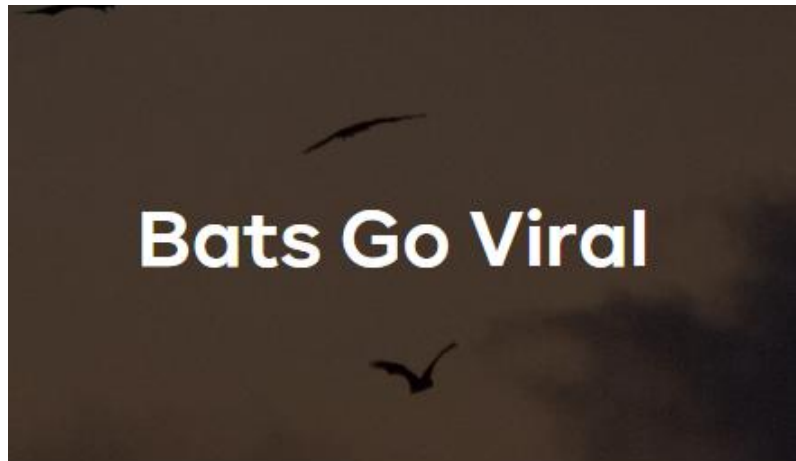
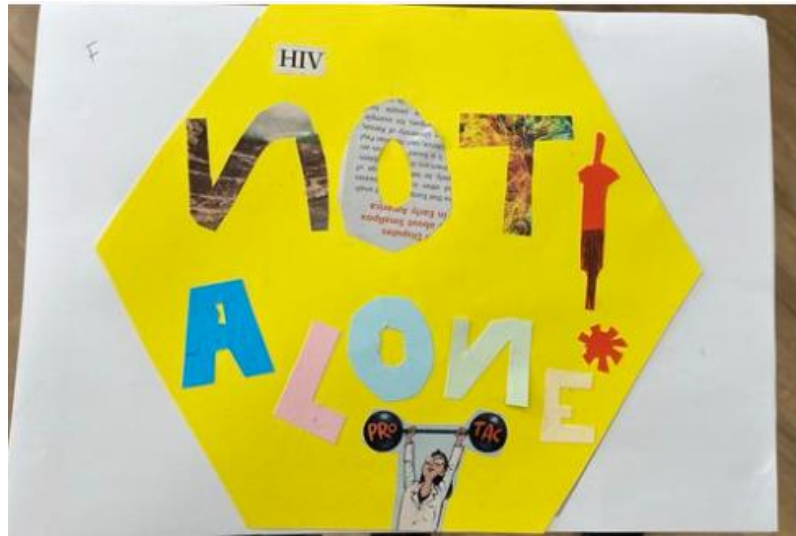
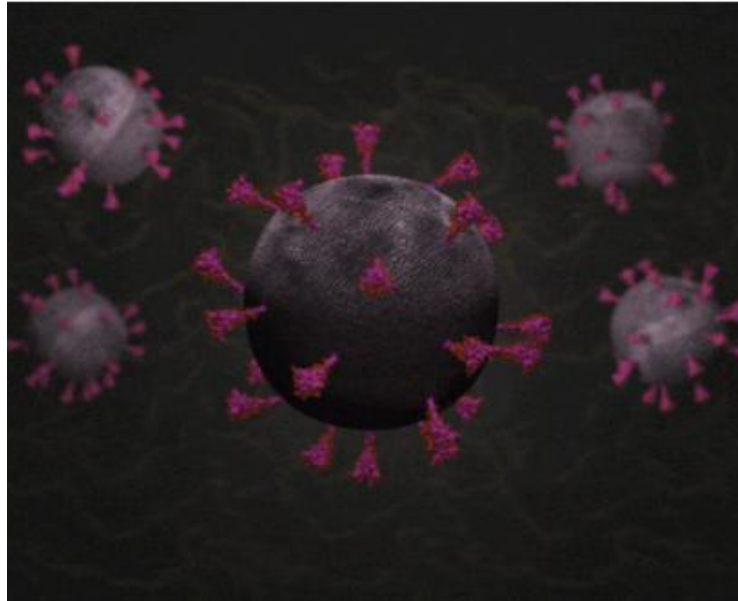
MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research





2020

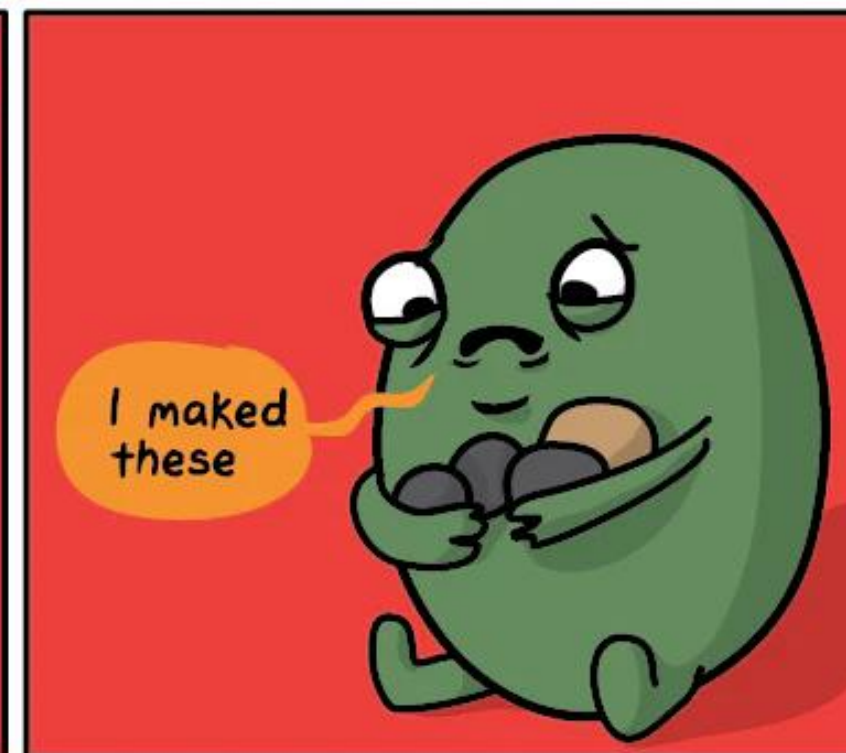
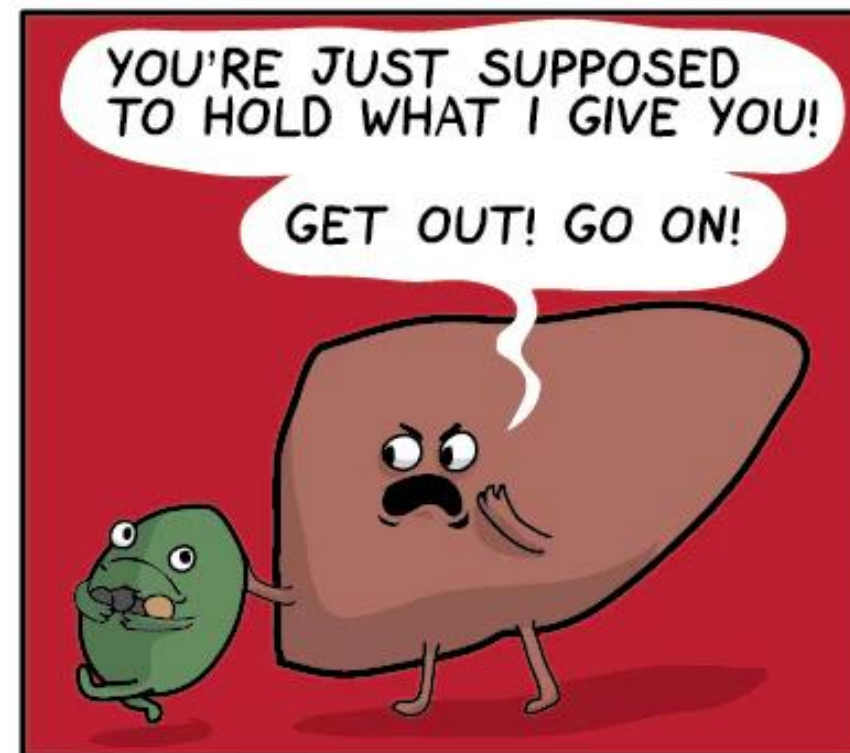
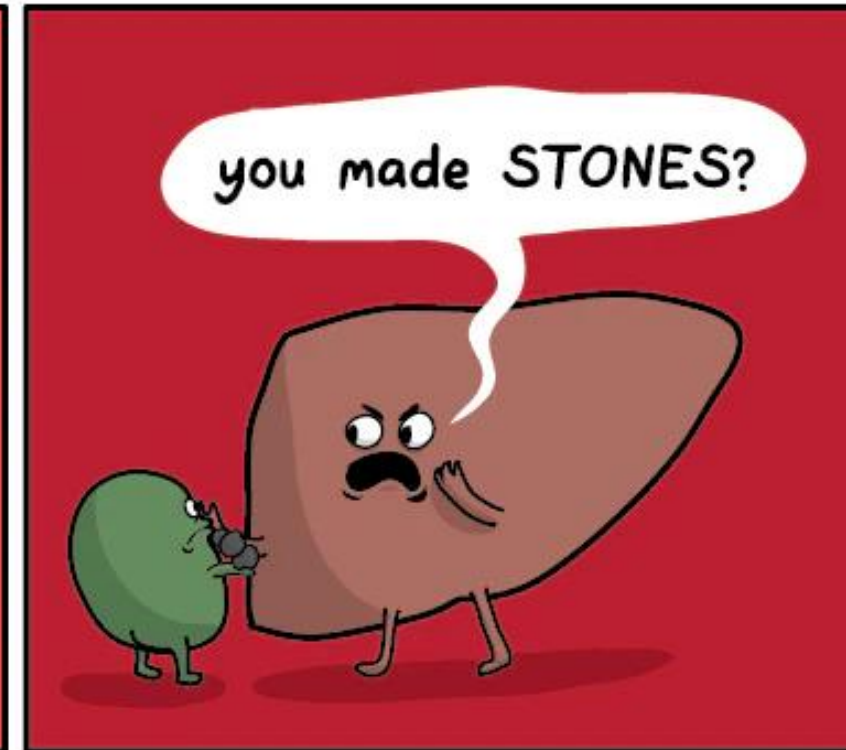
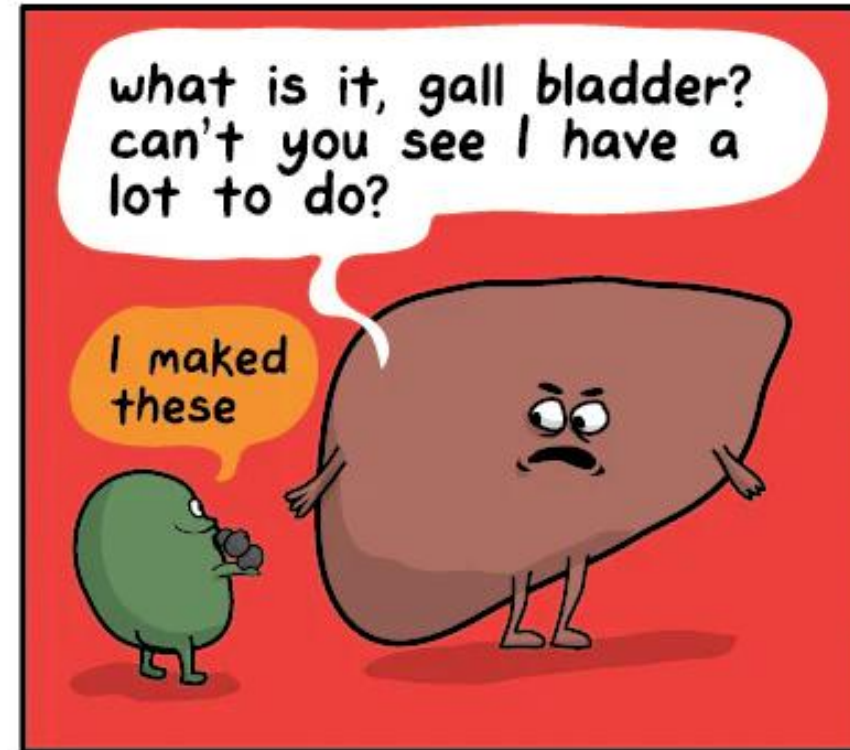




Which organ did I have removed?

- A) Gallbladder**
- B) Appendix**
- C) Spleen**





theAwkwardYeti.com



Public Engagement with Research Manager

**College of Medicine and
Veterinary Medicine,
University of Edinburgh**

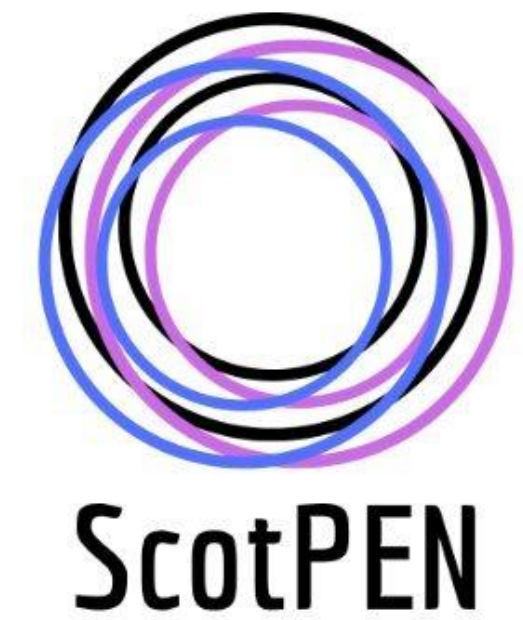
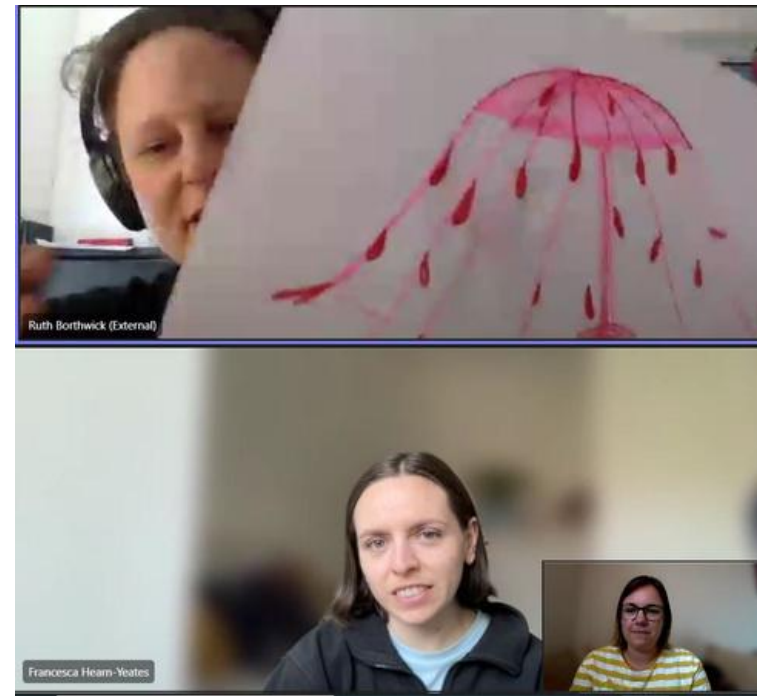




2022

2020





What country
did I spend 2.5 months in?

- A) South Africa
- B) Peru
- C) Botswana



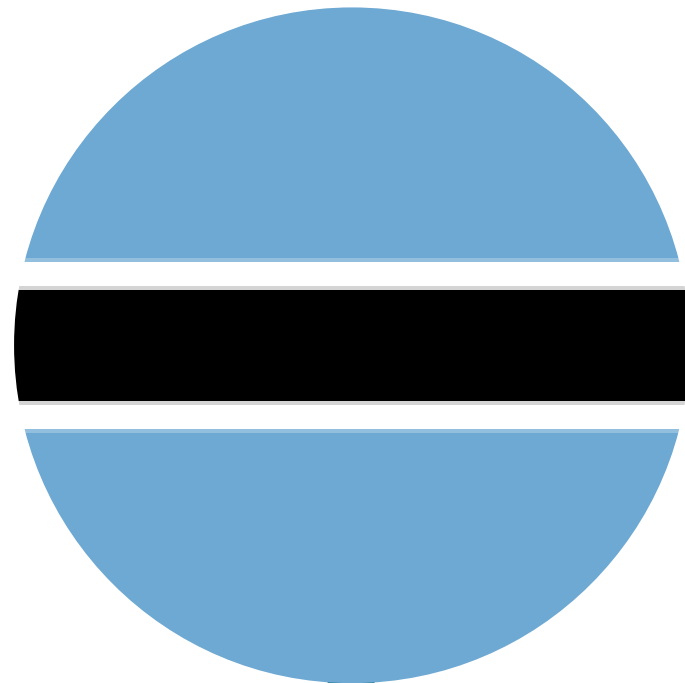
Chapter Seven

the
CHURCHILL
fellowship

Churchill Fellowship

Building resilient communities affected by blood-borne viruses



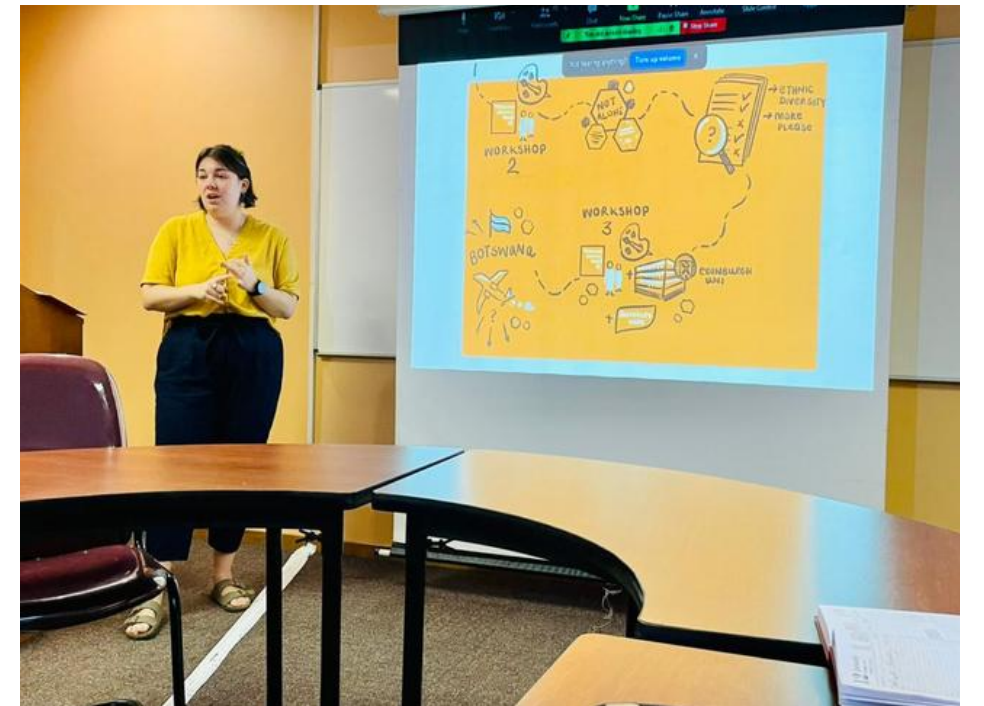


2022

2024

2020







**Waverley
care**



Chapter Eight



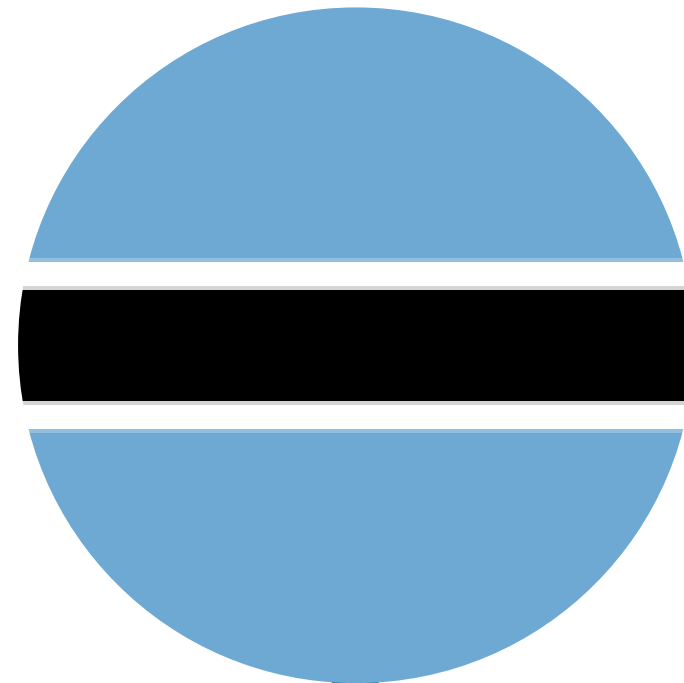
Public & Community Engagement Specialist

**EMPOWER
Dementia Network+**





2022



2024

2020



2024





Chapter Nine



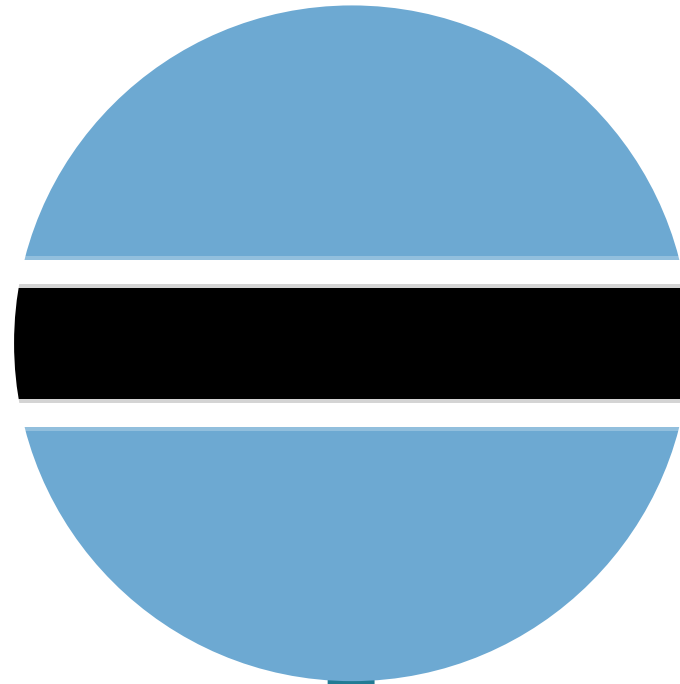
Public & Community Engagement Consultant

collaborACTION





2022



2024



2020

2024

2025





Chapter Ten

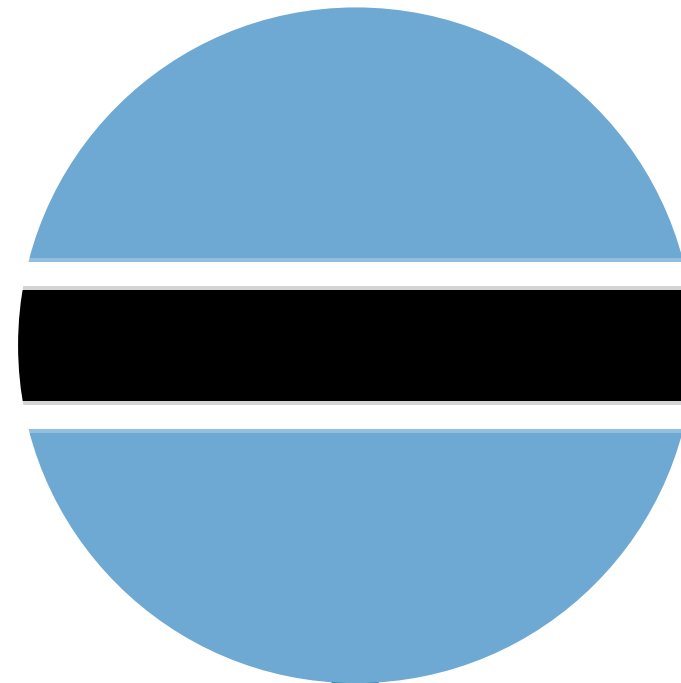


**Who
knows?**





2022



2024



2020



2024

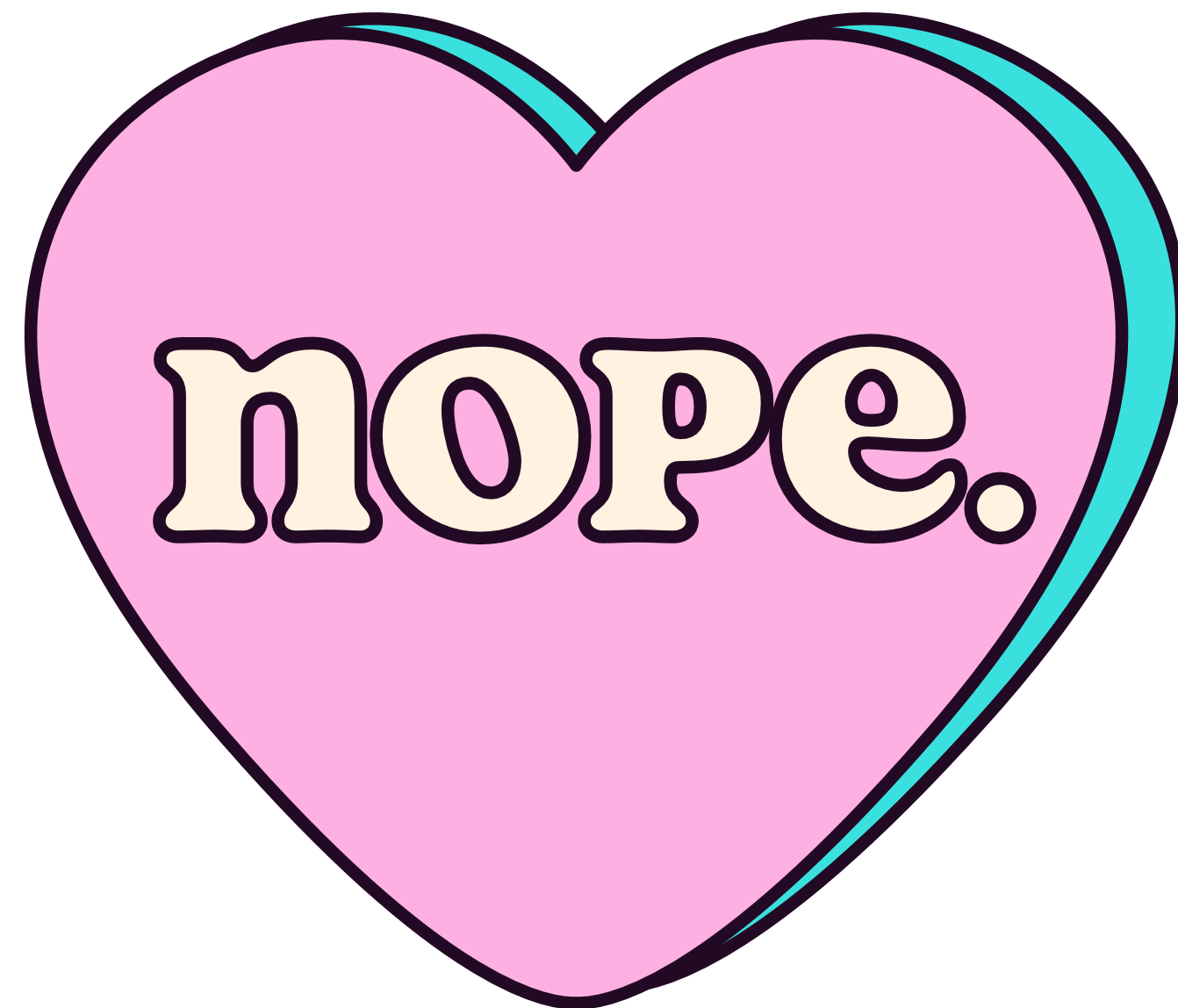


2025



**Am I where I thought I'd be
5 years ago?**





Heres what helped:

- Building a network (if you think someone is cool, email them!)
- Finding a mentor(s) (hi)
- Signing-up to days like this one
- Joining the PSCI-COM mailing list



Remember... it's okay to change your mind!



Salaries:

- UCL Wellcome Centre for Human Neuroimaging: 2019 ~£27k (hourly rate 0 hours contract)
- MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research: 2020 ~£35k (Uni of Glasgow Grade 7)
- Uni of Edinburgh: 2022 ~£45k (1 year contract) (Uni of Edinburgh Grade 8.2 – I negotiated this up from 8.0 because I was commuting and leaving a permanent role)
- Uni of Edinburgh: 2023 ~ £48k (negotiated for more pay when offered permanent role – final salary before I left was £52k)
- First year of freelance predicted salary: 2025 ~£65k





THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING

hello@fayewatson.co.uk | [@fwatson.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@fwatson) | collaborACTION.co.uk

