

Annual Report of the Fisher Memorial Trust for 2024

Introduction

The Fisher Memorial Trust (FMT) was set up to promote interest in the life and work of the great statistician, evolutionary biologist and geneticist, Sir Ronald Aylmer Fisher (1890-1962) and to maintain his scientific legacy by encouraging discussion of the scientific fields in which he was active. The Trust does this by organising regular Fisher Memorial Lectures and making donations to support the attendance of young scientists at conferences and on study visits on subjects in which R.A. Fisher was active.

Information about the Trust can also be found on its website.

The situation in 2024

The 41st Fisher Memorial Lecture was given by Professor William Fisher Rosenberger, Distinguished University Professor at George Mason University, on 1st March 2024 at the CRUK Cambridge Institute, Li K Shing Centre, as part of a meeting organised jointly with the MRC-BSU and IBS-BIR on clinical trials and restricted randomisation. Professor Rosenberger's lecture was titled "From Fisher to CARA: The Evolution of Randomization and Randomization-Based Inference", and he gave a masterclass, not only on the subject of randomization in clinical trials but also on how to deliver a lecture that is not only penetrating in its analysis but also accessible in content, form and delivery.

Towards the end of the year plans were put in place for the 42nd Fisher Memorial Lecture to be given by Professor Charles Rotimi, Director of the National Institute for Human Genome Research, NIH, USA, as part of the 58th Population Genetics Meeting at the University of Sheffield in January 2025.

Two articles by the 40th Fisher Memorial Lecturer, Professor Kanti Mardia, relating to the subject of his lecture entitled *Fisher's Pioneering work on Discriminant Analysis and its Impact on AI* and *Fisher's Legacy of Directional Statistics and Beyond Statistics to Manifolds* were published during the year.

An interview with former Fisher Memorial Trust member and 18th Fisher Memorial Lecturer, Professor Anthony Edwards, from late in 2023 is now available on the Gonville and Caius website ([link](#)). Anthony was Fisher's last undergraduate student at Cambridge.

Activities

Other

The Trust continued to explore how it could expand its interactions with the International Biometric Society, British and Irish Region (IBS-BIR) through the engagement of the FMT representatives of that organisation joining IBS-BIR committee meetings.

Bursaries and other financial support

A bursary of £250 was provided to the IBS-BIR to support student attendance at the International Biometric Conference in Atlanta Georgia, USA in December 2024.

A travel bursary of £500 was awarded to Lukas Pin, a PhD student at the MRC-BSU in Cambridge, to support a study visit to work with Professor Rosenberger at George Mason University in the USA in autumn 2024, organised as a result of Professor Rosenberger’s Fisher Memorial Lecture earlier that year. A report of this visit is available at [\(link\)](#).

The provision of this travel bursary prompted the development of ideas to offer a regular travel bursary during 2025.

Trustee News

There were no changes to the trustees during 2024

Trustees for 2024

Biometric Society (IBS-BIR)	Prof Rosemary Bailey	
Biometric Society (IBS-BIR)	Dr Heather Battey	
Biometric Society (IBS-BIR)	Mr Andrew Mead	Secretary
Genetics Society	Prof Brian Charlesworth, FRS	Chair
Genetics Society	Prof Ian Tomlinson, FRS	
Royal Society	Sir Walter Bodmer, FRS	
Royal Statistical Society	Prof Christina Yap	
Royal Statistical Society	Professor Stephen Senn	Treasurer

Financial

Total income during the year was £6,235.29 and total expenditure was £5,973.60. Total assets at 31 December 2024 were £231,031.72.

Further details are given in the annual financial statement.