

Women in Science 2023

International Day of Women and Girls in Science Day is February 11th 2023. This Day will mark full and equal access and participation of females in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Fields. QuantuMDx will mark this by showcasing a number of female employees within these roles across different areas of the business. We would like you to answer the following questions regarding your career to date which give insight into your particular career path into a science related role – many thanks.

Q1. What is your current role in QuantuMDx and what was your career path into this role? (Include Qualifications).

I am the Global Medical Scientific Liaison within the Commercial Team at QuantumDx. I started my career in science with a Biological Sciences Honours Degree from Leicester University. When I left college, I couldn't decide which branch of biology was my favourite, so I kept my options broad with biological sciences; however, during my degree, I soon decided that microbiology was my favourite subject. After graduation, I wanted to gain experience in different laboratories and my first steps on the career ladder were short term contracts working as a Medical Technical Officer (MTO) in the quality control department of an NHS hospital, and in an influenza reference laboratory. From there I joined the Clinical Scientist training scheme and after four years of training became registered as a Clinical Scientist in microbiology. In this role, I completed a MSc. and a PhD and gained lots of varied experience in the NHS and public health. After almost 20 years (!), I moved away from the public sector to find out what working life was like outside of the NHS. Since then, I have worked as a Clinical Affairs Officer for an organisation that promotes the good use of antibiotics, as a Scientific Lead for a UK distributor of medical devices, and now I work for QuantuMDx, who develop their own diagnostic technology. I see every job role that I have taken as an important stepping stone to where I am today.

Q2. Can you explain what a typical day would look like, what your role entails and what you enjoy about your current role?

There is no typical day working at QuantuMDx, which is exactly why I like the role! Things are never routine or boring and there is always a new challenge to overcome, often at very short notice! My role is one of an investigator: I investigate what information is available in terms of evidence to support the development or marketing of a diagnostic assay; I liaise with different stakeholders to find out how QuantuMDx products can satisfy a clinical need, and I provide clinical and scientific advice to the team developing the Q-POC and associated assays. I enjoy finding and critically appraising information and

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presenting this in a succinct way so that others can make informed decisions in their specialist roles. Another enjoyable aspect of my role is communicating to non-specialists about different infectious disease subjects (why not check out the QuantuMDx blog posts [here](#)).

Q3. Why do you think Women are under-represented in STEM disciplines?

It hasn't been my experience that women are under-represented in STEM disciplines, but this may be because I have worked within healthcare and for organisations that value diversity in their workforce.

We need to be mindful to strive for a balanced approach, as under-representation occurs for others. For instance, consider the support that is provided to 'stay-at-home' Dads or males who enter the nursing or caring profession.

Q4. What do you enjoy about working in Science and what are your long term career goals?

I especially like to talk to people about microbiology and help them understand why single-celled organisms matter! If I can demystify an aspect of microbiology, such as how to pronounce a bacterial name or the difference between a virus and a bacterium, so that someone else understands about their health better, then I'm happy. My long-term career goal is to fulfil each role that I have to the best of my ability and to keep learning.

Q5. What advice would you give to a female considering a career in science and where would you seek out careers advice, who would you ask?

First and foremost, find a subject that you enjoy and are passionate about; life is too short to work in a job that doesn't inspire you to get out of bed in a morning! Explore different roles and find out what aspects you find most interesting and work to your strengths. Explore different organisations and identify those that you would be proud to work for. Don't be afraid to move jobs to further your experience and skills. Connect with others working in your field; one of my favourite jobs came about because I emailed the CEO with my CV to ask about how I might work for their organisation. Finally, believe in yourself and you will achieve anything that you put your mind to.