

Prof Philip Blower

King's College London

Talk title: UK research and funding in molecular imaging: the glass is at least half full - time for user engagement



Since 2006 Phil Blower has been at King's College London as Chair in Imaging Chemistry in the Division of Imaging Sciences and Biomedical Engineering. His research interests are best summarised as "molecular imaging" mainly using inorganic chemistry tools linked to bioconjugate chemistry. A key theme has been development of simple, accessible radiolabelling processes. In the 1990s he pioneered the chemistry of rhenium and copper radionuclides for radionuclide therapy and PET. Most recently he has begun to focus on use of PET to study metallomics and in vivo cell tracking. As Head of the Imaging Chemistry and Biology Dept (ICAB), he has overseen its growth from one (in 2006) to ten academic groups, covering radiopharmaceutical chemistry and biology for PET, SPECT and radionuclide therapy, applying organic and inorganic chemistry from all parts of the periodic table to nuclear medicine. He has published >190 peer-reviewed papers and supervised >33 successful PhD students. He now leads an EPSRC Programme Grant, spanning ICAB and colleagues from Imperial College and University of Southampton, bringing these radiochemistry activities together (£6.4m, 2019-2024). He played a leading role in setting up the new Chemistry Dept and its undergraduate programme at King's in 2012 and served as its first interim Head. He instigated the King's MSc in Radiopharmaceutics and PET Radiochemistry and has been its Programme Director continuously since 2005. He has served on various peer review panels for international grant awarding bodies and journals and as Editor in Chief of Nuclear Medicine Communications. His path to this point followed a BA in Natural Sciences (Cambridge) and DPhil in Chemistry (Sussex), and postdoctoral experience in inorganic chemistry at Indiana University and Oxford University. His first academic post was a joint NHS/academic appointment (1987) at Kent and Canterbury Hospital (Radiopharmacy) and the University of Kent (Biosciences).