

Careers Forum – 16 January 2016

Dr Nicole Grimes, Lecturer in Musicology at Keele University. She studied historical musicology at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, and was awarded a PhD at TCD in 2008. Her research focuses on the intersection between nineteenth- and twentieth-century German music criticism, music analysis and music aesthetics and has been funded by the Irish Research Council (2009-2010), the German Academic Exchange Service (2007–2008), the Taylor Bequest (TCD, 2005). She was also awarded a Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship by the European Commission which she held concurrently at University College Dublin and University of California, Irvine from 2011–2014.

Prof. Julian Horton, Head of Music at Durham University. Julian has been Associate Professor and Head of School at University College Dublin, and has also taught at King's College, London. His research focuses on the analysis and reception of nineteenth-century instrumental music. He is editor and contributor to *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony* and his monograph *Bruckner's Symphonies: Analysis, Reception and Cultural Politics* is published by Cambridge University Press. In 2014, he was elected President of the Society for Music Analysis, and in 2015, he was elected to the Council of the Royal Musical Association.

Stephanie Ford, recipient of the John & Pat Hume scholarship at Maynooth University. Stephanie will be commencing her PhD this coming semester in the area of Irish music studies. She completed her BA and MA in Musicology at Maynooth. Since graduating with her MA in 2013, Stephanie has worked in the areas of recruitment and career guidance for CPL, Ireland's largest recruitment agency and as Recruitment Manager for charities. She is passionate about graduate careers and recruitment and also offers one to one interview training and CV preparation to clients in her spare time.

Dr Gwen Moore, since 2006 Lecturer in Music Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She holds a Bachelor in Music Education from Trinity College Dublin, a MA in Music Education from University of Limerick and a PhD in Music Education from the Institute of Education, University of London. She is Chair of the Society for Music Education in Ireland. Gwen's research interests include Unequal opportunity in music education; Music in post-primary education, at Leaving Cert Level, and in Higher Education; Assessment in Music Education; Ideology, musical value and musical knowledge.

Roy Stanley, music librarian at Trinity College, Dublin since 1990. His regular responsibilities include collection development, cataloguing of all printed music, library skills training, promotion, and reference assistance. Roy has been active in the International Association of Music Libraries (IAML) since 2001. He has served on the Executive Committee and various sub-committees since 2002, and is currently General Secretary of the IAML UK & Ireland branch. In Ireland he has been Chair of Music PAL, the cross-sectoral co-operative access scheme for music libraries set up by the Committee for Library Co-operation in Ireland (COLICO) in 2010.

(1) Career Paths

Anja: Perhaps I could ask **Nicole** first, what, to you, does a career in academia mean, how long does it take to be employable, and what should one expect from the job market?

Nicole:

A career in academia involves **three avenues: (i) Teaching; (ii) Research; (iii) Administration**. It is important to **gain competence in all three areas**. Compared to the job market in 2008, when Nicole was awarded her PhD and which coincided with a global economic crisis, the **job market is much healthier now in 2016**. Nicole encouraged all students **not to shy away from part-time jobs**, or other activities outside of university, particularly if these jobs prepare you for the multi-tasking that is required of an academic career. Such opportunities are important to acquire **time management skills** and to convince future employers of a diverse and broad pool of skills and qualifications. With regard to research fellowships, it is important to lay the groundwork early. For instance, if one considers a Marie Curie Fellowship, in addition to composing the research proposal, one should look for potential host universities well in advance of the application deadline: establish contacts, network, carve out a path early.

Anja: Julian, would you like to add anything, seeing that you have gone through different positions both at junior and now at senior levels?

Julian:

Academia is a **constant act of juggling and multi-tasking**. It is important to keep record of all relevant avenues one has taken as **evidence of work experience**. Julian raised the issue of **geographical and discipline-specific differences**. For example, music theory is thriving in the USA, so the SMT (Society for Music Theory), relevant publishers and journals, as well as potential jobs are mostly based in the USA. Therefore, it is important to **look outside of one's own country for conferences, learned societies** etc. if one wants to place one's own work in context. For example, if one would like to work in the USA, one should try and get a paper accepted as a student at one of the AMS (American Musicological Society) or SMT conferences. Especially at an early career stage, it is important to **be familiar with all different facets** (historical musicology, analysis etc.) in order to be employable diversely. Julian also mentioned national differences as regards **certain mechanisms of assessment**. For example, the UK has introduced a Teaching Excellence Framework, which means more work and more pressure for lecturers, but also more structure.

Anja: I would now like to move on to other career paths, one of which is clearly teaching (outside the world of academia). **Gwen**, what are the steps and how long does it take to become a music teacher and what should one expect from the job market?

Gwen:

Music teaching is an obvious career path after a music degree as many students teach instrumental lessons or lead choirs in their spare time. Specialist music teachers are employed in many primary schools. However, **passion and love for teaching** are very important; as well as a good **network**. For post-primary music teaching, the **Teaching Council** (<http://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/>) has very specific guidelines as regards necessary credits, subjects, and courses one should take (e.g. UG course: 180 credits total, 80 of which should be in Music; Professional MA in Education, which is a full-time 2-year course). Gwen

reminded the audience that there is an increase of births of 14.4% per 1000 people in 2015, which means that there will be more schools and more teachers needed in future years. She also mentioned the great potential of **Music Generation** (<http://www.musicgeneration.ie/about/>), which currently employs music tutors all over Ireland.

Anja: Besides teaching (in different capacities), there are other options, for example museum/exhibition work, media/ music journalism, choir/ orchestra management, festival organisation, archival work, and music librarianship. Maybe **Roy** could say a few words about the current job market in Ireland, and about the path one would typically take in order to become a music librarian?

Roy:

One normally needs a **professional qualification: PG Diploma or MA in Library and Information Studies** (1-year course at UCD, Dublin Business School, Aberystwyth, Wales <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/dis/>). Roy also raised awareness to the **Library Association of Ireland** (<https://libraryassociation.ie/>) as well as the **International Association of Music Libraries** (IAML: <http://www.iaml.info/>), both of which provide useful links and information in relation to library careers. Besides the degree, one needs **work experience**: There are currently very little opportunities for students to gain work experience because of funding difficulties. Academic and Public libraries will most likely not be able to provide opportunities for career changers, but one could try smaller conservatory libraries, orchestra/ choir libraries, broadcasting libraries, or specialist archives.

Anja: Finally, I am really glad to have **Stephanie** here with us today, who completed her MA just a few years ago and who would have thought about what to do next very recently. Stephanie, you are now doing a PhD, but you took on a job as a professional recruiter right after your MA – how did you end up there, and what were your alternatives?

Stephanie:

After my MA, I would have liked to work within the areas of Arts Admin, but the job market was very tight (but it is much healthier now than when I graduated in 2013). Therefore, I looked for alternative career paths in which I was able to apply my **transferable skills** which I acquired as a musicology student.

(ii) Skills and Qualifications

Anja: Stephanie, you have mentioned a few very important points here already, which go beyond the area of musicology. Can you perhaps say a little bit more about key qualities and skills – besides the actual degree, which you, as a recruiter, would look for most, no matter what sort of job we are looking at?

Stephanie:

For recruiters outside of the university, the actual degree doesn't really matter. It is important that the applicant can demonstrate **transferable skills**. Music students typically stick out for their **ability to work under pressure** and to **deal with stressful situations**, especially if their degree included a **performative element or presentations in front of an audience**. Music students are typically considered to have **strong communication and time management skills, to be confident, and to be good team workers**. Stephanie advised students who are

not sure what they would like to do after their degrees to think about the **environment** in which they would like to work (big company vs. smaller set ups, work with people vs. individual work etc.).

Anja: Roy, can you perhaps say a little bit more about internships and other relevant work experience, and how about the JobBridge scheme, which is aimed at unemployed people (rather than students), which refers to advertised jobs only, and which is unpaid and organised through the Social Welfare Office?

Roy: The current situation in Ireland is very **difficult** for people who seek internships, because public libraries and academic libraries are often unable to take on unpaid interns (Trade Union etc.). Some larger libraries (including the National Library of Ireland) tend to take on interns on the basis of a **JobBridge placement**. It is important to **network** and talk to people in order to seek out options.

Comment from the floor: It is worth its while to apply for internships even if one does not have all the required qualifications as some employers are flexible and might still invite you to a job interview.

Anja: I think most of those skills (and traits) are important in all possible areas, especially as all areas seems to be very competitive. Is there anything specifically important for a teaching career, **Gwen**? For example, how important are good **references and recommendations**, for instance as a result of private teaching?

Gwen: There is a saying ‘We don’t buy the product, we buy the person’, i.e. **self-promotion** is an important aspect of teaching as well as being able to articulate what attributes make one a good teacher. One needs to have very good **interpersonal skills**, as well as a certain degree of **dynamism and flexibility**. It is also important to keep up with **recent teaching approaches**, to **keep up with certain tendencies and fashions**. As a music teacher in schools, it is important to remember that one might be the only music teacher in the school, so – besides the teaching qualities, one also needs to be able to **manage and administer events**. One might even be the only music teacher in several schools at the same time, so it is important **not to aim for too much** and overload oneself with too ambitious work.

Anja: Let’s move back to academia, let me maybe ask **Nicole** – besides degrees, and a great personality, what else have you found helpful on your own academic journey so far? You organised two major conferences, you have a great publication record – how important do you think is the aspect of networking, and the involvement with review boards, conferences etc., in short, activities for which one doesn’t get paid?

Nicole: Let me put a slightly differently spin on your question: Rather than stressing that one does not get paid for these activities, I would instead emphasise that they are important areas in which to gain experience in order to secure a job. All of these areas are an integral part of the profession. I would divide my advice into six sub-categories:

- (i) **Publishing:** start early – once you’ve started to present your research at conferences, try to publish as much as you can. Start with graduate journals, e.g. the **The Musicology Review** (<http://www.ucd.ie/music/newsevents/newstitle,227026.en.html>), **British Postgraduate Musicology** (<http://britishpostgraduatemusicology.org/>), **Current Musicology** (Columbia, <http://currentmusicology.columbia.edu/>). Also, writing

- reviews is a good way to gain experience in publishing. Be proactive in contacting Review Editors of scholarly journals.
- (ii) **Languages:** a standard requirement in any US graduate programme in musicology and/or music theory is that the candidates have some competence in two foreign languages. During the first two years of course work, students build much stronger competence in at least one of these. This is important for PG members to recognize for two reasons: should you wish to apply for jobs in the US, you will be competing with those who have strong language skills (in addition to their academic qualifications in music); also, it is an international job market, so that graduates with strong language skills from the US, for instance, are also actively applying for jobs on this side of the Atlantic. Keep up-to-date on and improve your language skills, regardless of whether your research involves working with sources in a language different to your native language. (Good places to seek language courses are, for example, the Alliance Francaise, and the Goethe Institute etc.)
 - (iii) **Keep up with recent publications:** regularly read recent editions of journals in your area, and outside of your comfort zone. If you then have contact with authors and/ or Departments, it is impressive to show that you are abreast of recent developments and publications in the discipline.
 - (iv) **Online footprint:** It is important to have an online footprint, a record of the work and research that you are carrying out. If you do not have a university profile page, create your own online presence either through www.academia.edu, or design your own blog or website. Further, if you are considering applying for a job in the UK, the notion of IMPACT is becoming increasingly important. Having such a blog or website provides you with an opportunity to disseminate your research to a wider readership/audience.
 - (v) **Plan:** At all times, have a five-year plan. This applies whether you are at an early or an advanced stage of your career. Don't rest on a grant or on current work when you have it; you should constantly be on the look-out for future possibilities while you are busy. (Recognize that there will never be a time when you are not busy.)
 - (vi) **Conference, other projects:** It is hugely important to network and to make yourself known – organise conferences or smaller events; offer to review books, do whatever you can to participate within your own profession.

Anja: Julian, how do you, as a senior lecturer, juggle your own research besides teaching and admin responsibilities?

Julian:

There is a formula for this question, as well as to the question 'how long is a piece of string': $L(\text{string}) = 2R$ ($R = 1/2 L$). Academia is a **vocation, not just a career**, and it takes a great deal of time. But there are certain structures in place in the different Departments, which enable scholars to make time for their own research. The official division of time in 50:50 (research : teaching/ admin) doesn't always apply. But for example, the position 'Head of Department' normally rotates every three years, and after this three-year period one is allowed one year for research to make up for the lack of research before.

(iii) Learned Societies

Anja: I think we have gathered a huge amount of important aspects here – and I wonder: What is the role of the university and what is the role of such learned societies as the SMI,

SMEI, SMA, or RMA in acquiring those skills and qualifications, in finding jobs and internships, and in finding one's own path, helping with orientation?

Gwen: Learned societies are very important; sometimes **interests will overlap** and it can be useful to be a member in more than one society.

Julian: Learned societies are incredibly important, because they **represent your discipline**, they **help you** (funding, circulars etc.), but they also **defend your interests**.

Nicole: Societies are really important, because they are a vital nucleus of activity for your discipline, and they **put you in touch with the right people**. It is important strategically to join certain societies as a means of situating oneself within the discipline. Societies provide really **important opportunities** for students to pursue particular aspects of their career path, for instance by providing opportunities to organize study days and conferences. The RMA 'Musicology and Philosophy Study Day' is a great example of how something that started out as an exploratory study day under the auspices of the RMA has now turned into a biennial conference that is well established within the musicological calendar. This is a great achievement for the people who first took the initiative to organize this.

Anja: Is there a general rule as to how many societies to join? Is it a good thing or a bad thing to join many societies? In terms of geographic orientation? And in terms of discipline-specific orientation?

Nicole: Be **strategic**; it is perfectly normal in any academic field to have overlapping areas of interest and, as such, it is a good thing to join more than one society. It is also important to situate yourself in relation to societies in different parts of the world. In addition to membership of the Society for Musicology in Ireland, therefore go for the Society for Music Theory and the American Musicological Society if you want to place yourself in the USA, go for the Royal Musical Association and the Society for Music Analysis if you wish to have a presence on this side of the Atlantic; also consider societies in other related disciplines (e.g. the German Studies Association, etc.). That said, it is important to consider membership **fees** as societies can be expensive to join. Check whether your department will reimburse you for such expenses. Perhaps, as a general rule, **three societies** is a good number. **Analyse your own research** and see where it fits best.

Anja: Roy, can you maybe say a few words about the role of IAML?

Roy:

IAML provides **information about useful events and workshops**. For example, one of the **workshops** available is called 'Music for the Terrified', which is aimed at librarians who might not have a musical/ musicological background. There is an **annual study weekend** organised by IAML each year; it takes place in Manchester this year (1–3 April 2016), and the **Music Libraries Trust** (<http://musiclibrariestrust.squarespace.com/>) provides bursaries. The deadline for bursary applications is 19 February 2016; the deadline to register for the event is 11 March 2016.

Suggestions from the floor:

Being involved in societies, especially in Councils, is not just **great for the CV**, but also enables one to **know who is who**.

Being part of a society also means that one gets **regular circulars and reminders**, as well as all the other attractive membership benefits.

How about **recruitment agencies**? Are they of any help for students, too, or any for employers? **Stephanie:** Although recruitment agencies aren't essentially learned societies, it is still important to remind oneself that job seekers can make contact with such agencies and leave their own CVs and double-check with recruiters whether they have received their application. Self-initiative is an important aspect and is acknowledged by recruiters; recruitment agencies work both ways: as a help for employers, and as a help for job seekers. Sometimes picking up the phone and double-checking with recruiters will get you a job interview.

Anja: Are societies considered important by recruiters?

Stephanie: To the recruiter the type of society you have joined does not necessarily matter, what matters is how you can show you contributed to a society you joined and were interested in, and what you got out of the experience (for example extra or new skills, good networking opportunities, public speaking experience).

(iv) Academic Funding

Anja: Finally, let us turn to our final big area: academic funding. Nicole has successfully secured a number of very competitive grants both long-term and short-term. Can you say a little bit about academic funding? Is there any good website/ mailing lists which would list all the relevant funding?

Nicole and Julian:

No, there aren't really any websites or mailing lists that are comprehensive in this area; one has to do their own digging, their own research in order to find funding sources. The mailing list of the **AMS (AMS Announce)** is quite useful for funding opportunities that are specific to certain institutes or universities in the US, the **JISCmail list 'Musicology-All'** serves a similar role for funding in the UK and Ireland.

Nicole's own website provides some ideas (<http://nicolegrimes.org/funding-bodies/>). Some important funding institutions are: Irish Research Council (<http://www.research.ie/>), Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK (<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/>), British Academy (<http://www.britac.ac.uk/>), European Commission and Marie Curie Fellowships (http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_en.htm), National Endowment for Arts and Humanities, USA (<https://www.neh.gov/>), European Research Council (<https://erc.europa.eu/>), Austrian Exchange Service (<https://www.oead.at/>), German Academic Exchange Service (<https://www.daad.de/de/>), Leverhulme Trust (<https://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/>). It's good to also be aware of funding institutions that target a particular demographic, for instance gender-based funding institutions such as the American Association of University Women (<http://www.aauw.org>), and institution-specific funding mechanisms such as the Junior Research Fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge.

Floor:

How does the **Marie Curie Fellowship** work? Who picks the **host institution**?

Nicole: The Fellow chooses the host institution. This is something that has to be done *well in advance of applying for the fellowship*. In applying for a Marie Curie Fellowship, you should have a strong project and research proposal. But it is also vitally important that you find an institution that will be a good fit for your project. This involves considering the suitability of mentors (their qualifications and record in the profession will also be assessed in your application) and, moving out in concentric circles, also taking into consideration the experience you can gain within that department, within that faculty, and in the university at large.

Those applying for a Marie Curie Fellowship should bear in mind that, unlike many fellowships that are principally concerned with research, the Marie Curie scheme is about developing a career path. In applying, therefore, you should consider which career path you wish to take and actively build the steps required to get there into the application. If, for instance, you would like to be a curator at a museum, include an aspect that allows you to work in a museum into your career plan. If you wish to be a lecturer, include teaching opportunities in your career plan. The Marie Curie scheme also affords you the opportunity to pursue professional development along with developing a significant research project. Take advantage of this: think of your application as a jigsaw puzzle that allows you to assemble all of the pieces—academic, professional, vocational. Build as much into the three years as you can to set you up well for stepping straight into a job.

How about **family and academia**? Is it possible?

Julian and Gwen: Yes, but it's not easy! Gwen: One has to be determined to put work aside and prioritise family after a certain time of the day.

Anja: We are approaching the end of this careers forum, but before I close this really interesting panel, may I ask all of our five speakers for one **final statement**, maybe a **line of encouragement**?

Nicole: Be dynamic, be energetic, and be pro-active!

Julian: Love your discipline and you will love academia!

Stephanie: Be persistent!

Gwen: Be authentic and know the people who are on your interview panel! It is your right to know in advance!

Roy: Keep up-to-date in relation to funding and work placement offers; never give up!

Anja:

I would like to **thank our five speakers** again so much for their time and for sharing with us their experience. Furthermore, I would like to **thank once more Trinity College, Prof. Jane Alden, Richard Duckworth, and the conference organisers, Lynsey Callaghan, Cormac Bennett, and Elis Czerniak**. I wish to **thank the SMI** for supporting this initiative, and I want to **thank all attendees** so much for their interest and for their contributions from the floor.