

SCIENCE

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LARA DUNGAN: FROM PARTICIPANT TO MEDIATOR AND AWARD WINNING IMMUNOLOGIST

Lara Dungan's love of science was reignited when she visited INFECTIOUS in 2009, inspiring her to pursue a PhD in immunology and go on to win awards for her research.



Lara on the Science Gallery stage at music festival Electric Picnic for live radio event, Futureproof Live.

WHO?

Dr Lara Dungan has a PhD in immunology from Trinity College Dublin, and is currently an Intern at St.Vincent's Hospital, Presenter for The Eco-Eye series and Newstalk's 106-108 'FutureProof' .

WHAT?

Lara Dungan discovered an interest in Immunology at Science Gallery show INFECTIOUS. Having since worked as a Science Gallery Mediator and chosen to pursue a PhD in the area, her research into autoimmune diseases has won international prizes.

Lara's research, which aims to shed light on the underlying causes of autoimmune diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis(MS), has won her both the 'Bright Sparks in Immunology' award and the 'Young Scientist of the Year' award at British Society of Immunology. In late 2011, she won the 'International Cytokine Society Outstanding Scholar'. Lara has presented two radio programmes for Newstalk 106108FM, 'Science is Everywhere', and 'Futureproof', and is currently practicing medicine at St. Vincent's Hospital.

WHAT

THEY SAID?

'I believe Science Gallery gives the gift of accessibility to a world where so many would otherwise feel alienated, and it lights a spark in people that can last a lifetime. For me, Science Gallery brought me to the edge of the cliff and handed me the parachute, all that remained for me to do was take the leap.'

'I didn't really know what I wanted to do, and I came to work at Science Gallery as a Mediator, and it just sparked off the love of science again and made me remember why I had done it in the first place. I think what's nice about the Science Gallery is that it can inspire people—very often, as a Mediator, you see people walk in and maybe they wouldn't be interested, maybe they wouldn't understand, and they leave with this genuine feeling of inspiration, really feel like what you've told them is important, and something they'll remember for the rest of their lives.'

- Lara Dungan

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS AND IMPACTS?

- ▶ Inspiring academic choice
- ▶ Communication skill development
- ▶ Career advancement



Lara Dungan, comedian Neil Delamere, rocket scientist David McKeown and Simon Watt hosting a Level-Up Human podcast at Science Gallery Dublin

LINKS

Read about Lara's achievements in immunology:

http://www.tcd.ie/Communications/news/news.php?headerID=1677&vs_date=201111

Find out about **INFECTIOUS**, the exhibition that inspired Lara to study immunology:

<https://dublin.sciencegallery.com/infectious>

Watch a Futureproof live show at music festival Electric Picnic in 2012, featuring Lara:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIJ3E2NI1pY>

Sources: Science Gallery Dublin records

Compiled by: Jessica Stanley, Science Gallery Dublin in 2015

Activity date: 2009