Vice-Principal Public Engagement and Student Enterprise's Report to Senate

Festival of Communities

This weekend (20th and 21st May 2017) the second annual QMUL Festival of Communities took place. The event was a huge success, with over 3,000 people attending over two days, including 39 stalls and activities based on QMUL research and teaching, plus a range of activities organised and delivered by our community partners. Coordinated by the Centre for Public Engagement (CPE), the festival aims were to:

- Increase the skills of QMUL staff and students in public engagement
- Increase the awareness and benefits of public engagement across QMUL
- Increase connections and build networks between QMUL staff, students and the local community
- Improve community cohesion and the feeling of connectedness between QMUL staff, students and local residents
- Improve community cohesion between communities surround QMUL campuses
- Increase awareness and knowledge of QMUL amongst local residents
- Increase social capital among local residents through QMUL research

The festival set out to achieve these aims by providing opportunities, support, and funding for QMUL staff and students to undertake engagement activities based on QMUL research and teaching with public groups and individuals who live or work in and around Tower Hamlets. The festival also sought to include local residents and community organisations in the planning and design of the festival, and to include representatives from these organisations at the event. The activities supported as part of the festival were designed to facilitate conversations between our community partners and QMUL staff and students. The festival was held over two days, with the first day held at Stepney Green Park and the second day held on QMUL's Mile End campus, in the hope that this format would encourage local residents to visit the campus.

Community Celebration Awards

As part of the Festival of Communities the CPE coordinated QMUL's first Community Celebration Awards, which took place on 17th May. The awards ceremony attracted an audience of over 80 people from across our local community and QMUL, and took place in the newly refurbished Queens' Building foyer. The awards recognised the impacts QMUL staff, students and community partners are having on the social wellbeing of local communities and wider society and recognise how local, national and international communities shape QMUL's work.

2017 Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards

Two QMUL graduates have made it through to the semi-finals of the 2017 Santander Universities Entrepreneurship Awards.
Ross Ward, Medical Engineering 2016 graduate, made it through to the final 10 in the 'pre-revenue' category for his business Motus Innovations, which is building a stroke rehabilitation device that is intended to help patients to provide their own therapy in their homes following strokes.

Ariel Kamara, 2014 Design Engineering graduate, won a place in the final 10 in the 'post-revenue' category for his business 'Kam Alive', a raw chocolate company he set up with his sister that creates confectionary that is wheat-free, dairy-free and sugar-free.