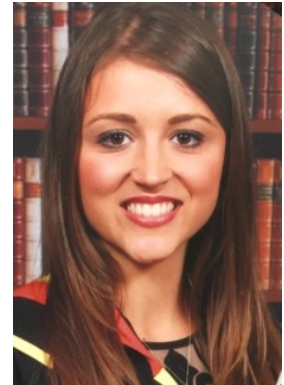


Please tell us about your background and the project you are starting

I graduated this year from the University of Glasgow with an Integrated Masters in Neuroscience, which involved a work placement year. I have always had an interest in neurodegeneration, and this ultimately led me to undertake my placement in the Murray Laboratory at the University of Edinburgh. This lab focuses on the mechanisms that make motor neurons vulnerable to degeneration, with a specific interest in a childhood motor neuron disease called Spinal Muscular Atrophy. After spending a year with this lab during my undergraduate, I decided that I wanted to stay in the field of motor neurone disease and study neurodegeneration. This led me to accept the challenge of a PhD, and to return to the Murray Lab in Edinburgh, to undertake a project investigating the role that mitochondria play in protecting neonatal axons from injury.



What advantages do you think you'll gain from having your PhD funded by The Anatomical Society?

This funding will support me throughout the duration of my PhD, allowing me to complete my studies. The Society provide support to attend and present at Anatomical Society conferences annually, where I will have the opportunity to meet and network with other researchers. The society also provides funding to attend an international conference, which will allow me to meet researchers, and present my work overseas. I feel this will benefit me in terms of future collaborations, and in developing my confidence in discussing and presenting my work to a range of audiences.

Did you know about The Anatomical Society and its funding opportunities for students before you started your PhD?

I had heard of the Anatomical Society, as my supervisor was a member, but I did not know that they could support me as a PhD student, nor how this funding could be made available.

What are you looking forward to when attending Anatomical Society meetings?

I am looking forward to being able to visit different cities, and to network with new researchers and meet other PhD students. I think this will provide an invaluable opportunity to present and discuss my work and improve how I communicate with other scientists from different backgrounds.

What do you hope to learn as part of your PhD?

I hope to learn how to effectively design experiments and become more confident in carrying these out independently. I also hope to learn and improve new technical skills from people of different scientific backgrounds.

What advice do you have for undergraduate members who are planning to do a PhD?

If you find a principal investigator who is doing work that you are interested in, do not be afraid to get in touch with them to express your interest and ask if they have any opportunities. Sometimes they may not have advertised a position, or your interest may encourage them to seek funding in order to accommodate a new student. I would also advise to meet with the PI to discuss the project and get a feel for the lab dynamics, to make sure that the position is right for you.