To help build networks across research communities, we arranged a meeting over lunch between a JOURNAL EDITOR and EARLY CAREER RESEARCHER (ECR) working on similar topics.

NAME
Dr Euan Doidge
ROLE
Teaching Fellow
RESEARCH AREA
Chemistry

NAME
Professor George Jackson
ROLE
Editor and Chairman
JOURNAL
Molecular Physics
RESEARCH AREA
Chemical Engineering

What did you talk about?
Over lunch, we discussed how to balance teaching and research as a Teaching Fellow, our roles at Imperial College, and life in London. Euan only moved here six months ago, and his prior knowledge of London geography was the Monopoly board!

What do you think each other’s biggest challenges are?
ECRs face several key challenges:
1. Access to funding: applying for grants early in your career can be hard, as you haven’t built a reputation for yourself yet.
2. Balancing teaching and research: with so many commitments, it can be difficult for ECRs to find the time to stay up-to-date with the latest research in the field.
3. Working collaboratively: through interactions with collaborators, ECRs can develop new skills.

For editors, it’s managing the peer review process, including ensuring referees respond in a timely and effective manner. It’s also a challenge for editors to know how to encourage young authors to publish in relevant journals, even if this means publishing in journals with a lower Impact Factor to start with.

What surprised you about each other?
George became a journal editor at the age of 31!
Euan remains active in research despite his role as a Teaching Fellow, so he can get his students engaged and interested in what’s new in the field. Perhaps this will even influence what his students are interested in working on themselves.

What’s your top tip for journal editors looking to engage ECRs in their journal?
Invite ECRs to join the editorial board, and set up prizes for young authors based on their publications within five years of their PhD.

What’s your top tip for ECRs looking to get published in the right journal to maximise their research impact?
Get in touch with the most relevant journals to your area of work. Ask if you can put together a special issue, dedicated to and guest edited by ECRs.

Find out more about academic mentoring and connecting with your community on Editor Resources.