Complexity stalks the corridors of power

By Martine Barons – former Centre for Complexity Science PhD student

The novel feature of the 2014 SET for Britain poster competition for early career researchers was that mathematical sciences was included for the first time! Three abstracts from Warwick mathematical sciences were selected to present posters to MPs and academics at the House of Commons, including Martine Barons (a former Complexity PhD student) and Deirdre Hollingsworth (an academic in WIDER- one of the other partners of the new MathSys CDT).

Deirdre's poster described work on school-based control of Helminths (parasitic worms) that was also presented recently at a Complexity Forum. Martine presented her recent work on a new complex system – the human food system. The poster used the example of the sugar industry. In addition to MPs, academics, and the great and the good from the Mathematics community, Martine met representatives from Germains, a subsidiary of British Sugar, who were particularly interested in the application and its potential for commercial use.

There were 3 prizes within each scientific category, with the gold winner from each going forward to an overall prize for the ability to present science to non-specialists. The work presented was a mixture of pure and applied mathematics, and the gold winner was Dr David Platt of University of Bristol for Proving Goldbach's weak conjecture.

Martine says "this was a good opportunity to present work to policy makers and show them the cutting edge of research. I really would recommend participation next year."

Three abstracts from Mathematical Sciences at Warwick were chosen to present at the House of Commons. From left to right; Deirdre Hollingsworth (Mathematics and Life Sciences), Martine Barons (Statistics and formerly Centre for Complexity Science) and Rachel Sheldon (MOAC).