

## **Dr Jennifer A Stark - PhD Neuroscience 2006**

I graduated in 2007 with a PhD in Neuroscience. During that time I saw the university of Manchester expand the biomedical sciences with 2 new buildings, and merge with UMIST. Now, 10 years later, I am returning to Manchester with a wealth of experience as an alumna having worked as a Visiting Fellow at the NIH in Baltimore, and a research scientist at the University of Maryland. Motivated to change careers after witnessing continuous funding cuts to science research, and by a desire to communicate information to a wider audience, I completed a Professional Master's in Information Visualization at the Maryland Institute College of Art, and taught myself to code. Since then I participated in civic hackathons, lead coding workshops, and completed a research scientist position in the Computational Journalism Lab at the University of Maryland. From March I will be continuing to communicate ideas and information in the context of data journalism and visualization with my own business in Manchester.

Through my different roles, I have learned the importance of mentorship, networks and other support structures. I have worked to improve policies and practices in the workplace on behalf of myself and others, and acted as an intermediary between students and professors.

I want to use my experiences living and working abroad and changing careers to contribute to the Manchester Alumni Association's continued support and work with alumni around the world.