

*Prof. Dr. Ian Cross, Professor and Director of the Centre for Music & Science, Faculty of Music at the University of Cambridge*

Presentation Title: Music and communication

Abstract:

This talk will start from the idea that the sciences have tended to investigate music as though it were an autonomous aesthetic domain. It will tackle the conceptualisation of music that emerges from the nineteenth century and that, though problematised throughout the intervening century within the humanities and social sciences, is still pervasive within science. It adopts an alternative perspective that derives from ethnomusicological and sociological research. It suggests that music is better understood as an interactive, communicative medium, and shows how this reconceptualization helps resolve several paradoxes for conventional scientific approaches to music. It presents evidence that indicates that music and speech share cognitive and neural resources to the extent that they are best thought of as two overlapping and culturally reconfigurable manifestations of an underlying human communicative repertoire.