

## Industry & Employer Newsletter

**17 November 2015**

*Welcome to the industry newsletter – which is designed to help identify and highlight the ways that those working in science industry can most effectively engage with the Royal Society of Biology (RSB).*

This month's newsletter features a range of updates from all areas of the Society as well as information about the latest training courses and upcoming events that may be of interest.

Find out how you can get involved with our exciting new Access to HE project in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry, which is designed to enable FE college students to achieve the Registered Science Technician (RSciTech) award. You are also invited to engage with our education policy work around biology curriculum development.

The Society's [Employer Advisory Group](#) (EAG) is growing and the next teleconference will be in December. If you would like to find out more about the Employer Advisory Group, or would like to become a member of the group, please [contact](#) the group's secretariat Emma Kelson.

Please feel free to circulate this newsletter freely within your networks, and let us know if there is anything else that you would like to see or if you would like to contribute to it. If you have any suggestions or comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch with [Emma Kelson](#).

**Dr Aileen Allsop**

**Chair of the Employer Advisory Group (EAG)**

### Science Minister meets with RSB to discuss spending review

Last week the Minister for Universities and Science, Jo Johnson MP, met with the President and the chief executive of the Royal Society of Biology, Professor Dame Jean Thomas Hon FRSB and Dr Mark Downs CSci FRSB.

At the meeting, which also included leading representatives from the Institute of Physics, Council for Mathematics, the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Royal Society of Chemistry, Mr Johnson was very supportive of collaboration across the scientific disciplines and the value of unified engagement with Government.

The Minister made clear his view that it is a challenging funding environment and there has been speculation that the innovation grant system may switch to a loans based one.

Dr Downs said: "The science budget has been steadily eroded by inflation since being frozen in cash terms in 2010. Although baseline funding is critically important, this comes at a time when the UK's scientific reputation is at stake, with its level of investment being overtaken by countries who recognise the importance of greater levels of investment in funding research and development as a percentage of GDP."

UK investment in publicly funded research fell to less than 0.5% of GDP in 2012 which puts our investment at the bottom of the G8 countries, and total research spend stands around 1.7%. German science spend increased by

70% between 2000 - 2013 and is now approaching 3% of GDP.

The Minister was supportive of the dual support system for universities but made clear that the mechanism of delivery may change.

Following this fruitful meeting the RSB plans to meet with Mr Johnson again shortly after the CSR announcement, by which time the publication of the Nurse review is also expected.

## Access to Higher Education Diploma (Science) - Employer Involvement

The Royal Society of Biology (RSB) with the generous support of the Gatsby Foundation has collaborated with the Royal Society of Chemistry to support local FE colleges running an Access to HE Diploma (Science) course. Colleges signed up to the scheme this year are recognised by the RSB and Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) in providing these mature students (aged 19 ) with the opportunity to achieve the Registered Science Technician award (RSciTech). The registers are held by the Science Council and information regarding professional registration can be found at their [website](#).

To achieve RSciTech status students must demonstrate: professionalism in working with employers, transferrable and scientific skills and development of academic and professional skills in a work environment. Students taking part must carry out projects that are employer-led to demonstrate that their research is current and relevant to industry. This is where we hope you can help!

We are looking for local employers to support the project by offering a project brief. This could be simply submitting a piece of work or project to be undertaken in the college's laboratory facilities, or inviting the student to carry out research in your workplace or a combination of the two.

### The benefits to employers of involvement are:

- opportunities for progressing research or exploring ideas
- assistance with data collection and analysis to support existing or additional research promotion
- engagement with the local community
- networking opportunities and engagement with Royal Societies and the Science Council staff development

### Examples of projects include:

- Batch/bulk analysis
- Environmental monitoring
- Method/process validation or development
- Quality testing
- Sample analysis; preparation investigation/development

To give you an idea about the level of project work, the following link provides the criteria students must demonstrate to pass the Access to HE Diploma: [Practical Scientific Project](#).

If this is something of interest please do not hesitate to [contact](#) Emily Ross (Registration in FE (Access) Scheme Coordinator). A list of frequently asked questions is accessible [here](#).

## Professional Registers update

### New Standards for Chartered Scientist (CSci)

The Science Council is launching [new standards](#) for Chartered Scientist (CSci). These signify an exciting development to professional standards that will help support the career progression of scientists. The new

standards will come into effect via the Royal Society of Biology's online system at the beginning of 2016.

The cut-off date for applying under the current standards will be **22 November 2015**.

#### Qualified Person (QP) Assessor Training Day

The Royal Society of Biology is hosting in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society the Joint Professional Bodies [Qualified Person](#) (QP) Assessor Training Day this month. As part of support for the pharma and biotech industry the day provides training and a discussion platform for QP assessors. It is an opportunity to discuss the QP issues and the interview process in collaboration between the professional bodies.

#### Biology Week Parliamentary Reception 2015

This year's Biology Week Parliamentary Reception marked the annual celebration and recognition for biosciences in the UK. The event was also an opportunity for successful applicants to the Professional Registers to receive their awards. Five employees from the water supply company, Affinity Water, were congratulated for their successful application efforts and were awarded registered status by Mark Downs, Chief Executive of the RSB.

## Education update

#### Careers support for schools

The RSB careers committee is running a session at the Association for Science Education annual conference at Birmingham University on Thursday 7 January 2016 from 13:00-14:00. The aim is to show teachers the range of bioscience careers that are available so that they can support their students, with a number of short talks (10 minutes maximum) from people working in different areas of the biosciences who have undertaken academic pathways and vocational pathways to their careers.

If you would like to take part in this (be a speaker), or are interested in hearing more, please contact [Sarah Cox](#), the RSB schools and education policy manager.

#### Curriculum development

You are invited to engage with the work of the [Biology Curriculum Committee](#) in developing the biology curriculum for students aged 3-19. The committee has posed questions on the [TalkBiology forum](#) and is awaiting your responses. Please register and [log in](#) to post on the TalkBiology site.

## Accreditation update

#### Degree Accreditation Awards Ceremony 2016

The awards ceremony will be held at the Houses of Parliament on the evening of 14 April to celebrate the bioscience degree programmes that have been awarded Advanced Accredited or Accredited status over the last year. In addition the awards ceremony will be showcasing the top graduates from each higher education institution with Accredited or Advanced Accredited programmes.

The ceremony will provide a unique opportunity to network with leaders and decision makers from industry, academia and government and connect with students and graduates attaining the highest percentage in their accredited bioscience degrees. To find out more about the Degree Accreditation Awards Ceremony and the sponsorship packages available please [contact](#) the accreditation team.

## Policy update

#### SET for BRITAIN 2016

SET for BRITAIN is a poster competition and exhibition which has been held in Parliament since 1997. Its aim is to give members of both Houses of Parliament an insight into the outstanding research work being taken in British universities by early-career researchers.

Applications are invited from early-stage and early-career research scientists, engineers, technologists and mathematicians who wish to exhibit posters. The deadline for applications is Monday 21 December 2015.

Full details of the competition and how to apply can be found on the SET for BRITAIN [website](#).

## Training update

*The RSB offers a wide range of training opportunities to help you develop professionally and acquire new skills.*

Individual members and organisational members of the Royal Society of Biology are entitled to substantial discounts on training.

### **Commercial Awareness for Life Scientists - 3rd February 2016**

**Who is it for?** Scientists working in industry and post-docs/PhD students considering a career in industry.

**What does it involve?** Learn about current and future trends in life sciences and what companies need to do to be profitable, be successful and serve their customers well.

For more information please see the [website](#).

For the full list of training courses now open for booking, please see the [website](#).

RSB training courses are also delivered in-house for organisations. If you would like to find out more about this, please [contact](#) our training officer.

### **Forthcoming training events**

**10 December**

[Microscopy art](#)

**12 February**

[Drug discovery](#)

**10 March**

[Exhibition design](#)

**17 March**

[Webinar: Introduction to social media](#)

## External news and opportunities

### **UKTI Japan Webinar: Japanese Legislation for Accelerating Drug Development**

The UK Trade & Investment Japan Life Sciences Team is organising a webinar on new legislations introduced by Japan's Health Ministry, which aim to support fast track opportunities for orphan and innovative drugs in Japan's pharmaceuticals market.

This event is open for all UK companies; please feel free to share this invitation with your UK based contacts who may be interested.

For more information and to register, please see the [website](#).

### **UK Measurement Strategy - Survey**

The National Physical Laboratory (NPL) is working with LGC and the other UK measurement institutes to establish a UK Measurement Strategy for our parent government department (BIS).

To test some initial thoughts as to key components of the strategy, a survey has been launched which can be accessed via the [LGC website](#) or [directly](#).

It would be good to get input to it from the chemical and biological communities, either via yourselves or your individual members.

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