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Industry & Employer Newsletter

29 July 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.

This month's newsletter features a range of news items and events that may be of interest, as well as an exciting spotlight on [SynbiCITE](#), a pioneering Innovation and Knowledge Centre (IKC) dedicated to promoting the adoption and use of synthetic biology by industry.

Following the announcement in May that we have been given permission to become the Royal Society of Biology, a full rebrand is now underway. The new logo has now been released and associated changes have been made to our [website](#) and social media sites. For all members and Fellows, please update your post-nominals accordingly: AMRSB, MRSB and FRSB.

The Society's recently created [Employer Advisory Group](#) (EAG) is continuing to grow. 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 [Rachel Lambert-Forsyth](#) the Society's Director of Training & Education.

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)

Royal Society of Biology news

Royal Society of Biology response to the Dowling Review

The Report of the Dowling Review of business and university research collaborations has recently been published and calls, among other things, for simpler schemes to facilitate collaboration. The report can be accessed on the Royal Society of Biology [website](#).

The Royal Society of Biology contributed to the consultation, drawing upon input from members, our contribution is available [here](#).

Natural Capital Initiative 2015

The Natural Capital Initiative is a UK-based partnership between the Royal Society of Biology, British Ecological Society, Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the James Hutton Institute.

The concept of valuation and stewardship of natural capital in planning and development is gaining traction within business. More and more companies realise that maintaining, restoring and improving natural assets will yield substantial economic benefits. A recent report by the [Natural Capital Initiative](#) (NCI) urges businesses to act now to improve the state of natural capital along their value chains in order to secure their long term viability. The report summarises the main findings of NCI's second major 'Valuing our Life Support Systems' event and addresses key messages to business leaders, policymakers and planners and researchers.

[Download](#) the full report: Natural Capital Initiative 2015: Valuing our Life Support Systems 2014. Summit Summary Report. All outputs of the event, including speaker presentations and videos, are available on the [summit webpages](#) on the NCI website.

UK Plant Sci 2015 videos now online

Videos of the talks from the UK Plant Sciences Federation (UKPSF) annual conference are now available to [watch online](#). The UKPSF is grateful to the Journal of Experimental Botany for sponsoring the production of the videos.

Spotlight on... SynbiCITE

[SynbiCITE](#) is the UK's synthetic biology innovation and knowledge centre. Located at Imperial College London, SynbiCITE is a national resource for its university and industrial partners working in synthetic biology. The centre funded by the RCUK and its partners was created in 2013 to facilitate the industrial translation of synthetic biology research.

SynbiCITE's mission is to channel ideas from the lab into the marketplace, while generating a critical mass of entrepreneurial and commercial activity around synthetic biology, with the goal of creating start-ups, growing SMEs and developing this new industry in the UK.

To meet this challenge SynbiCITE provides a range of innovation programmes supporting early stage translational research with access to facilities, funding and business development through a number of educational courses. These have been specifically designed to give scientists working with synthetic biology the skills and tools to help them commercialise their ideas.

This education starts with the would-be entrepreneurs inducted into the Lean LaunchPad for Synthetic Biology. This programme creates the entrepreneurial experience of an early-stage start-up, while teaching customer discovery and development. The goal of the programme is the generation of a scalable business model which can provide the foundation of a viable business. Successful participants graduate into a 3-day MBA course, which is used to help develop entrepreneurship beyond the Lean LaunchPad and the generation of a business plan.

SynbiCITE is working with the Royal Society of Biology to supplement these entrepreneurship programmes with complementary courses on [Project Management](#) and [Persuasive Scientific Report Writing](#). These practical courses supply the essential planning tools and communication skills needed to successfully complete and document projects while creating a company.

SynbiCITE is running a Lean LaunchPad for Synthetic Biology in September and an Educators Programme in November: for those interested in having a Lean LaunchPad at their own institution. More information on the Lean LaunchPad Programmes can be found on the SynbiCITE [website](#).

Dr Stephen Chambers

CEO at SynbiCITE, Imperial College London

SynbiCITE is a supporting member organisation of the Royal Society of Biology. Please [contact us](#) if you would like further information on organisational membership.

Training Survey - opportunities for scientists and technicians

The Royal Society of Biology is keen to develop more tailored training opportunities for scientists and technicians. This [survey](#) will only take a few minutes to complete and we would be very grateful for your feedback.

The Society supports scientists and science technicians in obtaining external recognition for their competencies and experience. Under license from the Science Council, the Royal Society of Biology is able to offer [professional recognition](#) of skills, knowledge and expertise, including Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Today it is increasingly important to be recognised by improved competence and CPD provides a structured approach to learning. It can involve any relevant learning activity, whether formal and structured or informal and self-directed.

For questions or further advice on applying please [contact](#) our professional registers officer.

Photography Competition 2015

Are you a budding photographer? This year we are seeking entries to our amateur photography competition that capture conflict and survival within the natural world. This may be aggressive encounters between animals in their natural habitat, a plant's struggle for resources or thriving bacteria in cell culture. Under 18s can win £500 and over 18's can win £1000.

Get your conflict and survival themed entries in by 31st August 2015. Find out more [online](#) or [contact us](#).

Science policy

Science should not be seen as vocational, says Walport

The Government's Chief Scientific Adviser Sir Mark Walport has called for a change in the way science is taught and the way scientific careers are perceived.

Addressing a meeting of the Society's Member Organisations in London, Sir Mark said it was critical that education institutes have a better understanding of the opportunities available to scientists in industry and the wider world, and said more data should be available on how science students move through their careers.

"When my daughter went to study chemistry people said 'oh, so you want to be a chemist'. If she had gone to study history nobody would have thought she wants to be a historian. Science is a training and education for life. Only when we recognise that will we find scientists in more walks of life, including politics."

Sir Mark encouraged scientists to 'get out there' and inspire students about scientific careers by speaking in schools.

The full article can be found on the Royal Society of Biology [website](#).

Life Sciences Careers Conference - Autumn 2015

The Life Sciences Careers Conference (LSCC) is aimed primarily at undergraduates and recent graduates, but postgraduates are welcome to attend. It includes presentations by top speakers and employers covering a wide range of biology-related subjects and careers. This years' event is currently being developed.

If your organisation is interested in delivering a presentation or workshop at this event, which attracts hundreds of students, please [contact](#) our education policy officer Daniel Rowson, who can provide you with further information.

Training

The Royal Society of Biology's training programme supports biologists who want to gain the skills to accelerate their career development.

There are a number of exciting new training opportunities, with several courses being developed to address industry skills gaps.

Courses coming up include expert witness report writing, project management and a networking event for those wanting to take the next step in their career. The popular workshop, '[Managing a Team in a Laboratory Environment](#)' returns on 25 September 2015. This is aimed at postdoctoral researchers in industry and academia.

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

For the list of courses that have taken place so far, please see the [website](#). If you would like to subscribe to the Society's monthly training and personal development newsletter, please [contact](#) our training officer.

Forthcoming training events

14 September

[Expert report writing](#)

25 September

[Managing a team in a laboratory](#)

12 October

[Project management](#)

External news and opportunities

Introduction to the News Media workshop

The Science Media Centre is running a specialist Introduction to the News Media event for nutrition scientists on Thursday 17 September, at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. This **free** event is suitable for researchers who are experts in areas such as diet, nutrition, metabolism, obesity and food science. For more information, please see the event [website](#).

A conference to showcase UK synthetic biology research and to create a focal point for the community

Sponsored by the Royal Society of Biology and others, the SynBio UK conference is being organised by the Biochemical Society to showcase UK Synthetic Biology research and to create a focal point for the community. Additional aims are to embrace the diversity of synthetic biology and to foster its growth and its engagement with society. For more information please see the [website](#).

S-Lab Conference

From deep ocean to space via four continents: 2015 S-Lab Conference highlights global best practice in laboratory design, operation and management. The Supporting World Class Science Conference will be held at the University of Leeds on September 16-17. A keynote entitled 'Is Science Facilities Management Rocket Science?' by Kim Toufexis of NASA will cover topics such as the impact of changing science requirements on lab design, and successful project management. For further information please see the event [website](#).

Researcher Mobility in Drug Discovery workshop

This event is organised by the [Drug Discovery Pathways Group](#) and will take place on 7-8 December 2015 at Chicheley Hall, Milton Keynes. As with the inaugural event held in 2013, the primary focus of the workshop will be to bring together life sciences researchers engaged in exchange fellowship schemes to help expand networks and broaden knowledge. Drug discovery researchers at all career stages who are collaborating across industry/academia interfaces and/or across discipline boundaries are also encouraged to apply. For further information please see the event [website](#).

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