



**BIOCHEMICAL
SOCIETY**



**PORTLAND
PRESS**

BIOCHEMICAL SOCIETY AND PORTLAND PRESS STRATEGY 2016–2018



The **Biochemical Society** and its wholly-owned subsidiary, **Portland Press**, work to support innovation and the advancement of science through the circulation of knowledge and the sharing of scientific research across the community for the benefit of scientists and science.

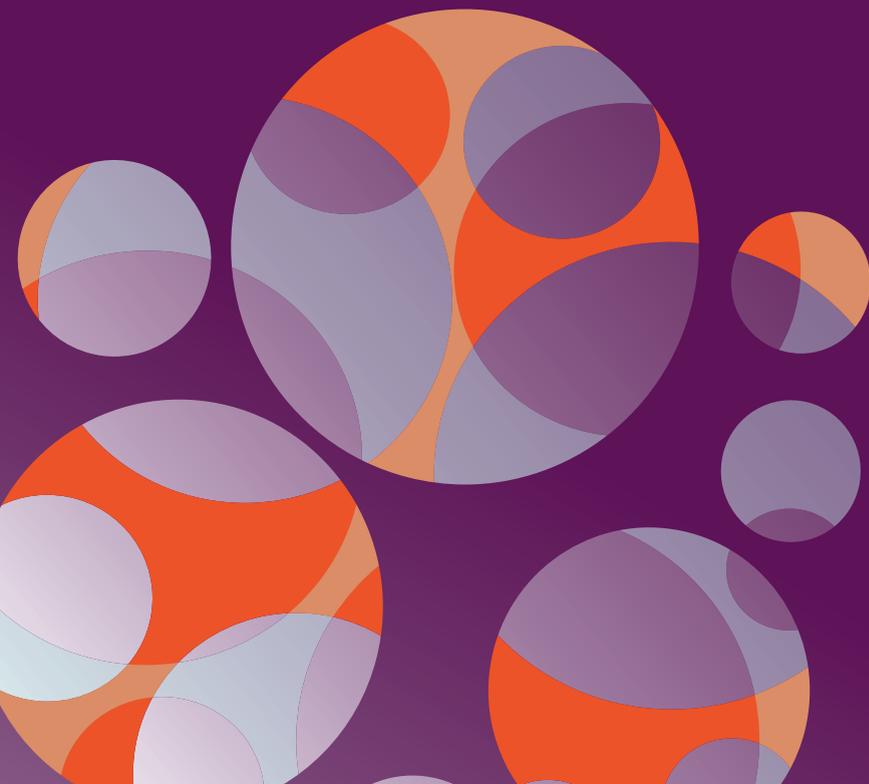
DEVELOPING OUR STRATEGY

Trustees of the Biochemical Society met with the Senior Management Team on 26 November 2015 to review progress in the Five Year Strategy agreed in November 2013, to refocus and restate retained objectives in line with the current sector environment, and to identify potential new objectives to better serve our membership, sector and community at large.

The **Biochemical Society** promotes the future of molecular biosciences; facilitating the sharing of expertise, supporting the advancement of biochemistry and molecular biology, and raising awareness of their importance in addressing societal grand challenges.

We achieve our mission by:

- Bringing together molecular bioscientists; fostering connections and providing a platform for collaboration and networking across our membership and the wider community to ensure a strong future for molecular biosciences in both academia and industry;
- Supporting the next generation of biochemists; promoting the opportunities offered by biochemistry and molecular biology through education and training from age 15 upwards;
- Promoting and sharing knowledge; enabling the circulation of scientific information through meetings, publications and public engagement to support innovation, inform decision-making and advance biochemistry and molecular biology;
- Promoting the importance of our discipline; highlighting the role of molecular biosciences in interdisciplinary and translational research, while supporting the fundamental research that underpins applied studies.



Portland Press

is the knowledge hub for life sciences.

As a publisher wholly-owned by the Biochemical Society, we are embedded in the global scientific community and are dedicated to promoting and sharing scientific research, providing sustainable support for the advancement of science.

We achieve our mission by:

-  Sharing quality life science research across the community for the benefit of scientists and science;
-  Advancing the impact of life sciences in science and society, sharing knowledge to advance the molecular biosciences;
-  Being in business for scientific benefit, growing our support for the scientific community and providing sustainable support for the advancement of science;
-  Building engagement with our diverse audiences growing the profile and influence of the Biochemical Society and Portland Press.

Key action points summarizing the outcomes of these discussions can be found on the Society's website at www.biochemistry.org/strategy

BRINGING **TOGETHER** MOLECULAR BIOSCIENTISTS

Collaboration

Inter-society collaboration is key to the success of the Biochemical Society in ensuring a strong future for the molecular biosciences, and through this, the broader life sciences.

We will continue to engage in strategic collaborative projects with sister societies including addressing specific policy issues as part of cross-learned society collectives. These include the Drug Discovery Pathways Group and the Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance. We will also maintain our commitment to the Policy Lunchbox series in partnership with the British Ecological Society, Microbiology Society, Royal Society of Biology and Society for Experimental Biology.

The **Drug Discovery Pathways Group (DDPG)** seeks to establish a single representative voice on key issues and works to develop solutions to meet the needs of the wider medicines research community. It comprises four core organizations, the Biochemical Society, British Pharmacological Society, Royal Society of Biology and Royal Society of Chemistry, while a broader group of approximately 20 learned societies and professional bodies are also involved in specific activities.

Our membership and wider community

Reviewing our membership offering to ensure appropriate support for our members at all stages of their careers will be a focus for 2016-2018. We aim

The **Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance (LeSPAR)** is a partnership of seven learned societies; the Biochemical Society, British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy, British Pharmacological Society, Microbiology Society, Royal Society of Biology, Royal Society of Chemistry and Society for Applied Microbiology. LeSPAR aims to provide a unified voice and mobilize the UK's collective research community in order to enhance understanding and knowledge sharing between academia, industry, and clinicians. The group is focused on taking action, championing best practice and raising awareness of the global challenge of antimicrobial resistance.



to continue increasing the number of full members including growing our international membership and membership amongst those working in non-academic settings.

Increasing the number of members from the industrial, biotechnology and academic drug discovery sectors, providing a platform for collaboration, facilitating innovation and supporting links between academia and industry is an important aspect of our current strategy. The Biochemical Society Industry Strategy aims to increase the representation of those working in industry within the structure and governance of the Biochemical Society including Committees, Boards and Advisory Panels, as well as to increase the number of members from an industry background. In turn, this will ensure that the needs and interests of those working in biochemical and related industries are met in line with the overall Biochemical Society's objective of advancing the molecular and cellular biosciences, both as an academic discipline and to promote its impact on areas of science including biotechnology, agriculture and medicine.

To increase engagement with postgraduates and undergraduate students, a Student Ambassadors scheme has been developed and will be rolled out from September 2016.

In addition to considering our membership offering, our member communications are also being updated and new membership fulfilment and communications systems being developed, to enable more targeted and useful information to be shared.

International activities

Developing international links and networks supporting scientists to share their work on a global scale is

central to the Society's aim to advance knowledge in molecular bioscience and connect the community. In addition to growing international membership, our journals' readers and authors are spread across Europe, Asia-Pacific and the Americas. Priorities will be agreed in the context of the current landscape for life sciences internationally and geographical areas of strength for the molecular biosciences.

Diversity and equal opportunity

The Biochemical Society is committed to fostering diversity and equal opportunity for entry and progression in our discipline. From 2016, the Society's gender equality work has been expanded to have a wider equality and diversity focus.

The **Daphne Jackson Trust** offers flexible paid fellowships with mentoring and retraining that help women and men return to research after a career break of two or more years.

In2Science is a non-profit organization which gives students from low income backgrounds the opportunity to work alongside scientists and receive the advice and information they need to progress to university and STEM careers.

We fund a Daphne Jackson Fellowship, Stay-Connected bursaries and support In2Science placements for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Our Diversity in Science grants scheme also continues to grow in popularity, with the number of grants awarded increasing from three to eight, in 2015.



SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF BIOCHEMISTS

Education and training

Building on market research carried out in 2015, we will expand the Society's training provision into a blended learning offering, using a range of different approaches appropriate to the audience and subject matter, including developing an online training portal. Having a broad-based, biochemistry-specific training programme incorporating both face-to-face and online training will help to develop our reputation as a high quality training provider and lead to better engagement and outcomes for our members and others. It will also allow us to broaden our reach across the UK and internationally, as well as to support new audiences such as technicians.

As part of our work to promote understanding of biochemistry and provide information for students, working with UEA and FutureLearn, we are developing a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) which provides an introduction to biochemistry for 15–19 year olds. This free online course outlines the history of the field and its contemporary significance in the life sciences.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the FutureLearn website. The URL in the address bar is <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/biochemistry>. The page features a navigation bar with 'Courses', 'Programs', and 'About' links, along with 'Sign In' and 'Register' buttons. The main content area is a promotional banner for a 'FREE ONLINE COURSE' titled 'Biochemistry: the Molecules of Life'. The banner includes a molecular structure graphic and the text: 'Explore the impact of biochemistry on bioenergy and health, discovering why graduates are in demand with the Biochemical Society.' A pink button labeled 'Join now - just started' is visible. Below the banner, there is a video player showing a street scene and the logos for 'UEA University of East Angles' and 'BIOCHEMICAL SOCIETY'.

High quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is vital in inspiring and informing teachers and educators so that they may do the same for their students. Since teachers and educators will typically work with hundreds of young people over their career, the impact of effective CPD can potentially be huge. Increasing our work in this area aligns well both with the Society's new award for Teaching Excellence and the forthcoming Teaching Excellence Framework.

Careers support and information for students and early career researchers

Maintaining our careers support and information for students, we will continue to attend careers events including Nature Jobs and the Life Sciences Careers Conference (with the Royal Society of Biology), the Big Biology Giveaway and to engage our Local Ambassadors and Industry Advisory Panel members in giving careers talks. We will develop further resources such as our *Biochemists in Industry* booklet, promoting the opportunities offered by biochemistry and molecular biology.



Teacher placement schemes

We will continue to work with the National STEM Learning Centre and other partners such as BP, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and the Institution of Engineering and Technology to develop the STEM Insight Schemes (Insight into Industry and Insight into University) and support schools and colleges in responding to the forthcoming Government Careers Strategy.



Insight into University: Maria Saeed, Lecturer in Science at Blackburn College spent a week at the University of Liverpool in February 2016.

Higher Education Educators

In addition to working with FEBS to support their 2017 workshop for HE educators, we will also look to develop our own biochemistry-specific training events and online resources for HE educators, for example looking at novel teaching methodologies and the use of technology to engage students.

PROMOTING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Conferences and events

Biochemical Society conferences bring together molecular bioscientists with the aim of sharing expertise and knowledge to support the advancement of science. Our annual programme of meetings and events includes:

- ❁ **Focused Meetings:** two to three day meetings focusing on a topic in the field of molecular bioscience;
- ❁ **Hot Topic Events:** one-day events designed to promote the exchange of new ideas surrounding emerging scientific topics;
- ❁ **Harden Conferences:** fully-residential meetings bringing together early career researchers with experts in the field;
- ❁ **Workshops:** bringing together scientists from different disciplines to exchange ideas, collaborate and network;
- ❁ **Training Events:** aimed at graduate level and above which allow participants to gain hands-on experience in key areas of molecular bioscience.

We will evaluate the positioning of our Society conferences, in particular Harden Conferences and Hot Topic Meetings, to ensure they offer greatest value to the community and greatest contribution to the advancement of science.

Three Theme Panels focused respectively on Basic Bioscience, Clinical and Translational Research, and Training, consider event proposals within their field of expertise and highlight to the Meetings Board and Education, Training and Public Engagement Committee, areas of science that should be included in our conferences and training programme. These Panels were restructured in 2015 and processes and operational procedures associated with our scientific meetings will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to work effectively for the Society, the membership and the broader molecular bioscience community.

Over the period of the strategy, we will aim to grow the number and breadth of meeting proposals received. In particular, we will seek to encourage proposals from the membership at large, Theme Panels, the communities of the Society's journals and other scientific bodies.

In addition to the meetings organized by the Society, we provide sponsorship for a number of external meetings each year. Our goal for the next three years will be to explore opportunities to develop these collaborations where appropriate and integrate these meetings more fully into the Society's conference programme.

To further develop the reach and reputation of the Society's scientific meetings, the online publication of abstracts from the Society's conferences will be repositioned to bring greater usability and discoverability. Publishing the abstracts on a linked, archived and searchable platform will enable us to bring the research presented at our conferences to new audiences.

Opposite: Poster session at Signalling 2015: Cellular Functions of Phosphoinositides and Inositol Phosphates, 1–4 September 2015, Robinson College, Cambridge, UK



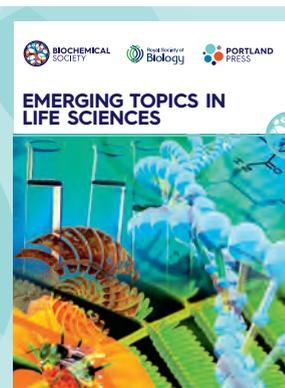
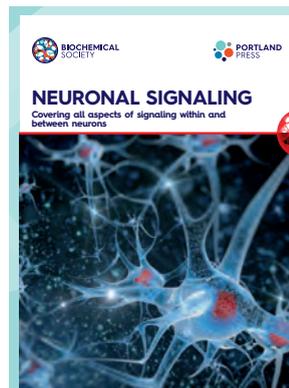
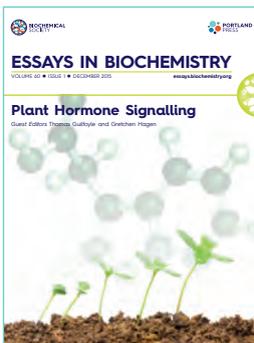
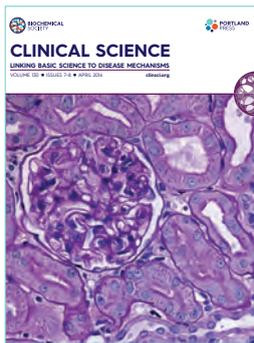
Publishing

Supporting life science researchers and facilitating the sharing of quality international life science research is a central facet of the Society's mission.

Through our publications, we continue to work towards our goal of providing a home for the submission of every quality life science research article, promoting the importance of interdisciplinary and translational research while continuing to support the fundamental science that underpins applied studies.

We will work to ensure that, as the knowledge hub for life sciences, Portland Press publishing continues to facilitate innovation through opening up science and enabling the circulation of knowledge, placing our community at the heart of all of our publishing activities.

2017 will see the launch of the Society's first new journals since 1981. We are particularly excited that one of the new titles, *Emerging Topics in Life Sciences* is jointly owned with the Royal Society of Biology. The Biochemical Society is a Member Organization of the Royal Society of Biology and is one of its key supporters. We are pleased to have this opportunity to further our collaboration, support the research community and highlight exciting life science research.



Neuronal Signaling is a new online-only, fully Open Access journal publishing research and reviews on all aspects of signaling within and between neurons.

Emerging Topics in Life Sciences: Co-owned by the Biochemical Society and the Royal Society of Biology, *Emerging Topics in Life Sciences* features reviews highlighting emerging areas across the life sciences, with each issue focusing on a different new or growing field.

Reflecting the increasingly multi-disciplinary nature of modern biological and biomedical science we will continue to take a collaborative approach to facilitating the sharing of knowledge through working with sister societies and organizations. Exploring possibilities for joint virtual themed issues to promote journal articles and holding collaborative scientific and networking events, will enable us to reach our ambitious targets for promoting and sharing scientific research, increase our connection with the international life science community and provide sustainable support for the advancement of science.

Public Engagement

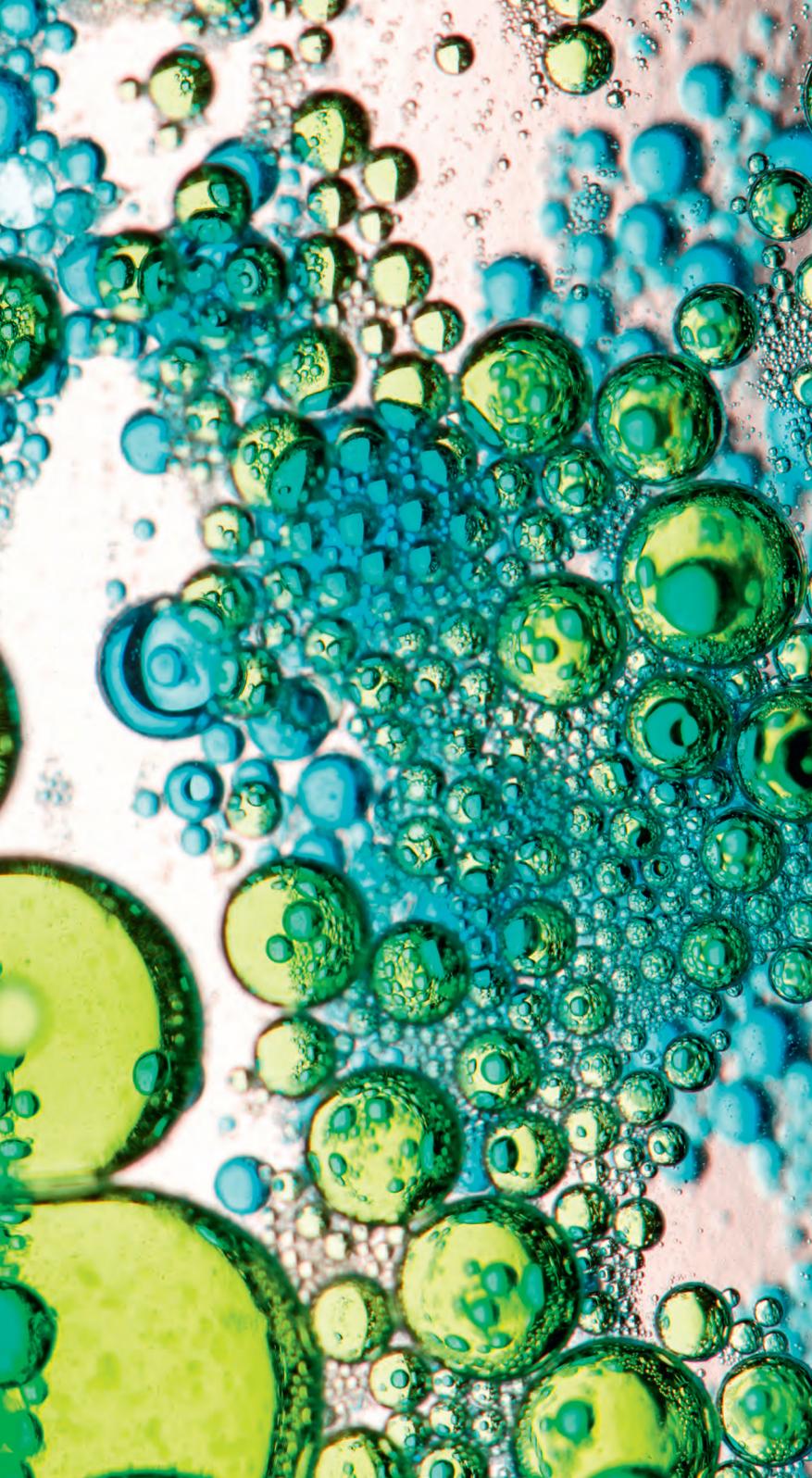
The Society's new public engagement programme has already proved to be popular, with events such as 'Synthetic life: how far could it go, how far should it go?' held at the Royal Institution, in partnership with the Royal Society of Biology as part of Biology Week 2015, which attracted an audience of 440 people. Live debates are a valuable way both to engage the public with key issues and to increase our visibility and we will expand this programme over the coming years. Supporting our members to deliver public engagement activities will also help to broaden our reach across and beyond the UK.



Medicine Makers, The Big Bang Fair 11-14 March, 2015



The Hungry Games at Big Biology Day, 17 October 2015, Hills Road School, Cambridge.



PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR DISCIPLINE AND THROUGH THIS, THE BROADER LIFE SCIENCES

Biochemical Society Strategy for the Molecular Biosciences

In late 2015 it was agreed that the Society would develop an integrated strategy to underpin its scientifically-focussed activities. The Biochemical Society Strategy for Molecular Biosciences will contribute to ensuring that we are meeting the needs of the breadth of the molecular bioscience community as well as ensuring that we exploit synergies across our activities, particularly in publishing, education and training, and scientific meetings. We also anticipate that the strategy will highlight opportunities for potential further collaboration with other societies and organizations.

Policy

We will continue to channel expertise from the biochemistry and molecular bioscience community into the policy work of the Royal Society of Biology. We gain considerable benefit from carrying out the majority of our science and education policy influencing activity through Royal Society of Biology as a unifying voice for the biosciences and will look to maintain this approach moving forward.

To increase engagement with our policy activities, we will be developing our policy communications to members. We will aim to include a policy speaker and networking reception at one of the Society's training events each year to support early career researchers in engaging with policy issues and facilitate links between academia and industry, as well as continuing to develop Policy Lates events in partnership with the Royal Society of Biology, while promoting the work of external policy organizations such as the Campaign for Science and Engineering.

As our policy and public engagement activities are often focused on similar topics, such as antimicrobial resistance, we are looking at ways to increase integration between these two areas in order to broaden the impact of our work.



Voice of the Future, 2016. Major Tim Peake, answering questions from Nicola Blackwood MP and Jo Johnson MP. He was also the first ever witness to speak in front of Parliament from space

Supporting the life sciences

Royal Society of Biology

The Royal Society of Biology is a single unified voice for biology; advising Government and influencing policy; advancing education and professional development; and engaging and encouraging public interest in the life sciences.

We will continue our support of the Royal Society of Biology, funding it with 1% of our turnover together with a potential additional 1.5% for specific Royal Society of Biology-led projects.

We will also continue to facilitate collaborative working through employment sponsorship in the policy and education departments. This allows us to participate more effectively in issues affecting all of the life sciences and ensure the Royal Society of Biology champions issues related to biochemistry and our membership.

We will encourage the Royal Society of Biology to develop a vision for future collaborative activity including options for shared services, federation and full integration by 2024.

Charles Darwin House Partnership

The Charles Darwin House Partnership is a joint venture with an aim of creating a London centre for biosciences. Current partners are the Biochemical Society, British Ecological Society, Microbiology Society, Royal Society of Biology and Society for Experimental Biology. We look forward to working with our partners on further developing the centre over the coming years.



ENSURE SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

In 2013, the Trustees of the Society agreed to designate up to £2m of reserves as a business development fund to finance the realignment and implementation of processes, systems and structures for the ongoing support and financial stability of the Group and its business activities. The financial impact resulting from this investment in terms of cost savings and revenue streams is already beginning to feed through within the financial statements while the systems and processes now in place are scalable, can grow and adapt as our activities grow and are 'future-proofed' more effectively than was previously the case.

The review of IT infrastructure and resource across the organization will be completed and, following the recent considerable realignment of business processes and structures including the closure of Portland Customer Services, an external organization has been commissioned to undertake a comprehensive review of the Finance and Accounting function.

The Society's reserves policy is also under review, to ensure that the policy is fit-for-purpose and appropriate to the organization's current activities.



OUR MISSION

The Biochemical Society exists for the advancement of the molecular and cellular biosciences, both as an academic discipline and to promote its impact on areas of science including biotechnology, agriculture, and medicine. Biochemistry helps to play a key role in tackling global issues such as improving lifelong health, treatment of disease, biotechnology and food security. We achieve our mission through our publications and journals, scientific meetings, educational activities, policy work, awards and grants to scientists and students. The Biochemical Society is the largest UK discipline-based learned society in the biosciences with 7000 members.





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Registered Company No. 892796

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VAT No. GB 523 2392 69

Registered Charity No. 253894

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Registered Company No. 2453983

Vat No. GB 523 2392 69

United Kingdom

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