

CEO Viewpoint



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Unsurprisingly, the result of the EU referendum has been a major subject of discussion within scientific circles since June. It will undoubtedly have a considerable impact upon the molecular bioscience community and the wider science sector. The Biochemical Society is keen to ensure that the UK molecular bioscience community maintains its high international profile and that its open approach to trans-national collaborative opportunities remains clear. Therefore, we are working together with the Royal Society of Biology (RSB), Campaign for Science and Engineering (CaSE) and other learned societies to ensure that the science agenda is represented in the forthcoming EU exit negotiations. Over the next few months, we will be gathering evidence to inform our policy activities. If you have any case studies of ways in which your institution or colleagues have been affected by this issue, please do email us on at policy@biochemistry.org.

You may have read in previous issues about the Society's Governance Review that Society members were asked to vote on at the Annual General Meeting in July. The changes proposed by the Governance Review were accepted by the membership and we hope will:

- Create clear, transparent and responsive governance structures, policies and procedures
- Readjust the Trustee body to ensure more proportional representation of the breadth of our membership, and enable enhanced focus on strategic matters
- Create an agile Executive Management Team to ensure continued momentum on the implementation of our strategy
- Encourage inter-functional and inter-Society collaboration, in particular with the Biochemical Society Strategy for the Molecular Biosciences (Three Year Strategy)¹

With these, and other approved changes, we hope to deliver a Society with governance systems to enable us to move more seamlessly into the future. The changes related to the review, including the changes to our constitution will be implemented over a period of six to eight months. Full details will shortly be available on the Society website 'About Us' page.

We have now appointed a new Head of Conferences and Events, Lorraine Reese. Lorraine joined us at the beginning of October from the International Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynaecology where she worked as the Events Manager. She will work closely with Honorary Meetings Secretary, Sheila Graham, the Theme Panels, the Conferences Committee and myself to

ensure that the Society continues to deliver high quality scientific meetings. She will also to work closely with other departments to ensure that opportunities for collaboration are identified with our journals and training activities.

I am delighted to welcome the Editors-in-Chief for our two new journals. Colin Kleanthous, Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Oxford, UK, (and the first Chair of the Biochemical Society I worked with when I became CEO) is now Editor-in-Chief of *Emerging Topics in Life Sciences* and Aileen Sullivan, Professor of Neuroscience at University College Cork (UCC), Ireland, is the Editor-in-Chief of *Neuronal Signaling*.

Next month we will be attending Neuroscience 2016 where we will showcase *Neuronal Signaling* ahead of its launch in early 2017. The conference will be the 46th Society for Neuroscience annual meeting and will take place November 12–16 at the San Diego Convention Center.

October also sees the fifth UK and international Biology Week (8–16 October), an annual celebration of the biosciences organized by the Royal Society of Biology (RSB). One of the highlights of the week promises to be a Biochemical Society panel discussion at the Royal Institution (Ri) in London in partnership with the RSB and Cancer Research UK. The event, chaired by the science writer and broadcaster Vivienne Parry OBE, will explore the efficacy and impact of DNA testing for cancer susceptibility. Last year's debate at the Ri was a sell-out, attracting over 440 attendees, so we are hoping for another successful event. Other Biochemical Society events taking place in Biology Week include the Bioscience Careers Festival (in partnership with RSB), Big Biology Day (in partnership with the British Pharmacological Society) and a Policy Lates event on antimicrobial resistance in partnership with other UK members of the European Federation of Biotechnology and Learned Society Partnership on Antimicrobial Resistance (LeSPAR).

Coming up next month, we have the 2nd Synthetic Biology UK conference. SynBio UK will take place from 14–16 November 2016 in Edinburgh and aims to showcase UK Synthetic Biology research and to create a focal point for the community. Further information on the conference is available here: <http://bit.ly/2csOU2r>. Following last year's success, topics covered at this meeting will be published in *Biochemical Society Transactions*. You can read review articles showcasing the exciting synthetic biology research presented at SynBio UK 2015 in Issues 44(3) and 44(4) of the journal. In addition, make sure you do not miss the next issue of *Essays in Biochemistry* on Synthetic Biology guest edited by Vitor Pinheiro, University College London (UCL), which will be published in late November. ■

1. Biochemical Society and Portland Press Strategy 2016–2018: <https://www.biochemistry.org/AboutUs>