

Biology Week

**Biology Week events guide for
members and volunteers**



Outreach and engagement grant scheme

Grants up to £500 available for activities and events in Biology Week 2019. Apply now!



Deadline to apply: 29 April 2019

www.rsb.org.uk/outreach-grants

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Introduction to Biology Week

This pack has been produced to help RSB members and volunteers who are looking for help in planning an event as part of Biology Week.

We're hoping this pack will help you in organising an event with help from a wider team of volunteers, a organisation or committee you are already involved with, or a team from your work or local community.

What is Biology Week?

Biology Week is an annual celebration of biology with events all over the UK and beyond for everyone, regardless of background in biology. The week is a great opportunity to share a passion for biology and the natural world.

The week celebrates the whole of biosciences and encompasses events and activities that appeal to all audiences.

Topics covered in the past have included citizen science projects, conservation, dinosaurs, drug development, mental health, biochemistry, physiology, fungi and more.



Why take part in Biology Week?

Biology Week is a great way to share your enthusiasm for biology with friends, family, your local community and beyond.

If you are affiliated with a volunteer organisation can run a public or outreach event or activity for Biology Week or contribute to an existing event featured on our online calendar:
www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweekcalendar

We can then help advertise your event, and provide branding and other communication tools if you want to reach out to a wider audience or get the local community involved too.

Through the week, we aim to share your passion for biology with as many people as possible. Your support will allow us to maximise the impact and coverage of events and activities to give people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to learn about the biosciences.

Previous biology week events

Around 100 events and activities take place during the week. In the past these have included:

- A debate on the implications of using DNA to predict cancer
- Nationwide polls to find the UK’s favourite species
- UK Fungus Day
- Bioscience Careers Day
- BioArt Attack competitions
- BioBakes competitions
- Workshops on food security and recycling
- Trips to museums, wildlife reserves and zoos

What’s on this year?

This year’s Biology Week calendar can be found on the Royal Society of Biology website:
www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweekcalendar

If you are running an event, let us know as soon as possible so we can share it with others on our Biology Week calendar!

Fill in our form with the event details online: www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweekcalendar

Contact your local branch

You should contact your local RSB branch who can help you run your event and make sure they’re aware of the work you are doing.

They are a great source of support and can let you know about any grants that are available to help towards the cost of your event.

They also have a lot of resources already available online to help with event planning, publicising and running, and can also put you in touch with others in the area who are interested in biology and may want to get involved too.

Get in contact with your local branch via email:

Beds, Essex and Herts	bedsessexherts@rsb.org.uk
Devon and Cornwall	devoncornwall@rsb.org.uk
East Anglia	eastanglia@rsb.org.uk
East Midlands	eastmidlands@rsb.org.uk
Kent, Surrey and Sussex	kentsurreysussex@rsb.org.uk
London	london@rsb.org.uk
North Western	northwest@rsb.org.uk
Northern	northern@rsb.org.uk
Thames Valley	thamesvalley@rsb.org.uk
Wessex	wessex@rsb.org.uk
West Midlands	westmidlands@rsb.org.uk
Western	western@rsb.org.uk
Yorkshire	yorkshire@rsb.org.uk
Scotland	scotland@rsb.org.uk
North Wales	northwales@rsb.org.uk
South Wales	northwales@rsb.org.uk
Northern Ireland	ni@rsb.org.uk
Australasia	australasia@rsb.org.uk
Hong Kong	hongkong@rsb.org.uk

Check out regional branch resources online: www.rsb.org.uk/regional-resources
Find out what events are already happening near you: www.rsb.org.uk/regional-events
Find out more about our branches: www.rsb.org.uk/regional-activity

Many of the RSB branches also have their own social media channels. You can find their facebook pages by searching on Facebook using the branch name, and a list of branch twitter accounts can be found here: twitter.com/RoyalSocBio/lists/rsb-regional-branches

Choosing your audience

As part of the RSB public engagement strategy, we use our understanding of science capital as a way to decide which events to attend next and what audiences to prioritise.

This then feeds back into our evaluation of events to determine if we were successful in reaching out and engaging with our intended audience.

What is science capital?

Science capital, a sociological concept derived from the idea of culture capital, is a shorthand descriptive for the collective understanding, exposure, experience and knowledge of science an individual may have .

There are eight broad dimensions to science capital that encompass the sum of an individual's exposure to and understanding of science:

- Scientific literacy: a person’s knowledge and understanding about science and how science works. This also includes their confidence in feeling that they know about science
- Science related attitudes, values and dispositions: the extent to which a person sees science as relevant to everyday life
- Knowledge about the transferability of science: understanding the utility and broad application of science qualifications, knowledge and skills for other professions not directly related to science
- Science media consumption: the extent to which a person, for example, watches science-related television, reads science related books, magazines and engages with science-related internet content
- Participation in science learning outside of education: how often a person participates in informal science learning contexts, such as science museums, science clubs, fairs, etc.
- Familial science skills, knowledge and qualifications: the extent to which a person's immediate company have science-related skills, qualifications, jobs, and interests
- Knowing people in science-related roles: the people in a person’s immediate company who work in science-related roles
- Talking about science in everyday life: how often a person talks about science with key people in their lives

How to measure science capital

Although there is no one metric that can be used to define science capital, research has shown that pupils from families with medium or high science capital are more likely to plan to study science post-16.

Longitudinal tracking showed that students with low science capital who do not express STEM

related aspirations at age 10 are unlikely to develop STEM aspirations by the age of 14.

With this in mind, prioritisation for outreach and engagement activities will be given to for events located where schools see a lower than average uptake of pupils choosing STEM subjects at GCSE and A Level.

You can read more about science capital online:
www.stem.org.uk/sites/default/files/pages/downloads/Science-Capital-Made-Clear.pdf

You can find our public engagement strategy online: www.rsb.org.uk/get-involved/biology-for-all



Event ideas

Often the hardest part of organising an event is coming up with an idea or activity that will simultaneously attract the desired audience and also engage them with the subject.

Do not be afraid to take a creative and innovative approach, as these are often very likely to generate new interest and attract a diverse and inclusive audience.

Below are some ideas for events you could run during Biology Week:

Biology Quiz

Running a biology quiz is a simple and effective means of engaging an audience with whatever biological topics you want to tackle, and the difficulty of the quiz can easily be tailored to your audience.

Quizzes are suitable for a classroom, pub, or any other place where people can be organised into separate teams. You do not need to adopt a standard quiz format either; instead you could try incorporating problem solving or simple experiments into the quiz to make it more stimulating and challenging.

Hands-on activities

Table-top engagement activities are suitable for all sizes of events, and can be relatively straightforward to conceptualise and execute. We have a number of activities online that are suitable for hands-on activities, and can be run without a lot of prior training:

www.rsb.org.uk/activity-kits



Our 21st Century BioChallenges Activity Kits also contains a number of experiments suited for school pupils of all ages. All of the experiments are easy to use and easy to resource as most of the equipment can be found around the classroom, home or local supermarket.

Science busking

This is the art of using simple science tricks to entertain and educate people and can be performed anywhere, from the corner of a street, in a school classroom, or at a science festival.

These are more likely to add to an event rather than serve as a standalone event, but can be fun to do in public locations with high footfall, such as on the high street or at train stations – just make sure you get permission to do so.

Theatre production

Theatre can be a powerful and effective means of engaging with a new audience. Although the time and effort involved is significant in such a project, it can have a high impact.

Joining forces with a local Dramatic Society is a great way to share resources and skills, and also tap into a wide audience.



Guided walks / visits

Organise a visit to a local area of scientific interest. This might be a local nature reserve or protected area, or could be a laboratory or research facility nearby.

Citizen science projects

Gather together volunteers to do some scientific research by taking part in a citizen science project. This can include collecting data about when and where different species can be found in a local park, or sifting through camera trap footage online.

Some opportunities you can take part in include:

- Britain Breathing – this citizen science project aims to engage the UK public to act as ‘citizen sensors’ to help scientists discover more about seasonal allergies such as hay fever or asthma. Find out more online: www.britainbreathing.org
- The National Bat Monitoring Programme – this project is looking to find out more about how bats are doing in the UK. Bat surveys involve counting bats and help the Bat Conservation Trust work out how bats are faring and identify changes in bat populations. You don’t need specialist skills or equipment to take part with surveys suitable for bat beginners as well as experts. Find out more online: www.bigbatmap.org

Run a Big Biology Day

There are numerous science festivals in the UK that occur throughout the year. These are a perfect opportunity to talk to and engage with large numbers of people in a very short period of time.



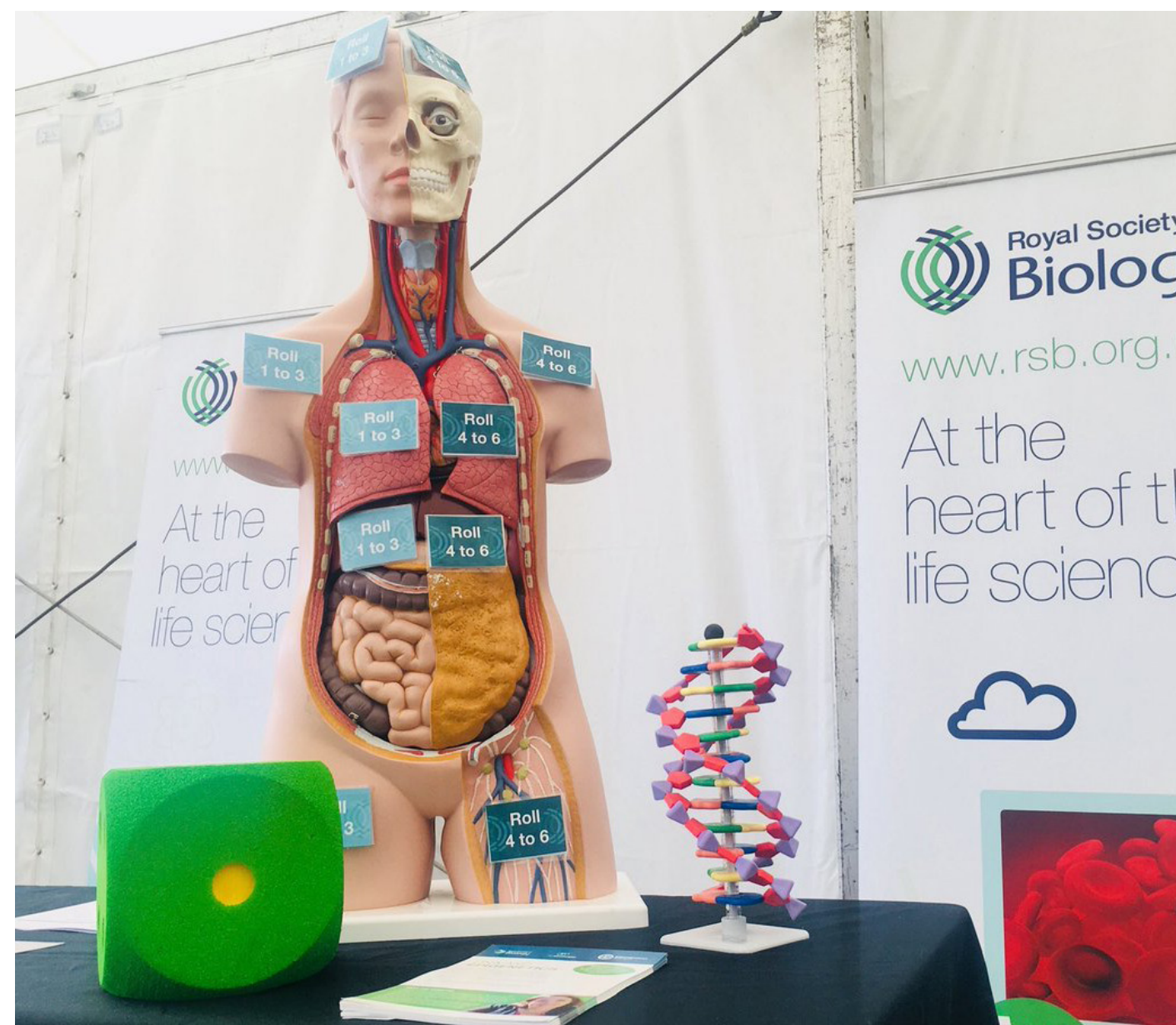
It needn't be on a large scale, and could just involve a handful of exhibitors.

Local schools, professional biology related organisations, STEM ambassadors, natural history societies / community groups might all be suitable exhibitors.

For more information on how to run your own mini-festival, check out our Big Biology Day page on our website: www.rsb.org.uk/big-biology-day

Take part in our social media campaign

The RSB runs a social media campaign called #iamabiologist on Twitter on the Friday of Biology Week. Get a picture of yourself in action as a biologist, or your lab or research group and share with the hashtag #iamabiologist and tag @RoyalSocBio account and we'll share our favourites.



Developing your own hands-on activity

If you want to create a custom activity to do as part of an outreach and engagement event, it is important to decide on the following first:

- The biosciences topic you wish to base your activity on
- Who your target audience is
- What is the scientific literacy of your target audience
- The budget you have to develop an activity

Any bioscience topic is suitable for an outreach and engagement activity, although those that are relevant and easy to show how they affect the everyday lives of an audience may work better than topics that are more abstract.

When you have clear answers to the above, you can then move onto developing the activity. It is best to think of an activity that does the following:

- Requires engagement with the audience member
- Is a process with a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Accurately reflects the principles of the topic you wish to convey
- Is suitable to replicate a large number of times in a short space of time
- Can engage as many people at one time as possible
- Requires minimal resetting after someone has engaged in the activity
- Is possible to set up and transport within the limits of the volunteers you have on hand and the event you are attending
- Is possible to execute within your budget
- Can be executed without specific training for volunteers if possible
- Has minimum wastage or uses minimum amounts of single-use materials, especially if they are not recyclable

When you have your activity idea, a test-run of how it will work is also useful. Invest in a small amount of the materials you will need and get yourselves, friends and family to give the activity a go.

Once you are happy with the practicalities of your activity, put together a brief to accompany the activity that covers the following:

- A clear list of instructions on how the activity works
- The materials needed and how to use them
- The science behind the activity, with clear references to reputable sources
- Common pitfalls and how to fix or avoid them
- Common questions audience members may have and how to answer them

- A risk assessment for the activity and also the event if the location is not a controlled environment
- How to tailor explanations for different audience ages or levels of scientific literacy if appropriate
- How to pack up and store the activity correctly for future use

Once you have tested your activity a couple of times with different audiences, you can refine the brief above and improve the delivery of the activity with feedback from audience members and those running the activity.

For more activity ideas, the RSB has made a number of activities and their briefs available on the website: www.rsb.org.uk/activity-kits

Choosing an event venue

Finding an appropriate venue for an event can sometimes be a challenge, and room and facility hire can be very costly. It is always worth shopping around for venues, making use of contacts you might have or approaching potential new venues. The following are good starting points:

Village halls and community centres

These have the benefit of offering very cheap hire rates and also serve as a natural hub for the local community. They often have more than enough space and basic facilities available as well.

Find details of your nearest village hall or community centre online: www.hallshire.com

Local science centres or museums

These are often able to provide an event for free or at a discounted rate. The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement has advice online on working with museums and science centres:

www.publicengagement.ac.uk

Find your nearest centre on the UK Association for Science and Discovery Centre's online map:

www.sciencecentres.org.uk/centres

Local parks or communal green space

If the weather permits, take your event outside, where you can engage with the local community too. Contact the local authority for more information on organising an event in a local park or other public space.

Schools / sixth form colleges

Local schools or sixth form colleges often have suitable facilities for events and are worth approaching to hire a space for an evening or weekend event. If your audience is school children or young people, these venues may also be made available to you for free.

Somewhere completely different!

Anywhere with high footfall will ensure you have a large potential audience, so think about setting up a science busking point or carrying out demonstrations in shopping centres, train stations, the high street or outside of sporting events.

Working with volunteers

For larger events, you may find that you need some help either preparing your activity or running your event.

Many engagement and outreach events rely on volunteers to contribute their time and effort, but forward planning and good volunteer management is essential for the success of your event.

Deciding on how many volunteers you need

Prepare a list of tasks or activities you will need help with, and then delegate tasks accordingly.

Make sure you factor in enough volunteers to allow everyone time for a break or to eat lunch, and also that no-one is left on their own.

Where to find your volunteers

Finding people to volunteer isn't always easy. Consider contacting:

- Local universities to ask for students who may be interested in gaining science outreach and engagement experience
- The STEM Ambassadors scheme – their volunteers all have completed DBS checks and training. Find out more on their website: www.stem.org.uk
- Your members! Many will be pleased that their learned society or affiliated organisation is able to offer such opportunities and can bring different levels of expertise for the engagement



Advertising your volunteer opportunity

Depending on what communication channels you can utilise to advertise your volunteering opportunity, make sure your advert covers the following:

- The event name, date, time and venue of the planned event
- The type of event and expected audience demographic and size
- Any accessibility issues the event does or may present
- Contact details to request further details and how potential volunteers can sign up including a named organiser point of contact and their details
- A deadline to sign up to volunteer by

Managing your volunteers

Once they have expressed their interest, it is important to keep them informed and up to date with information and to be open so they can ask any questions they may have, and also to put them at ease if they have any concerns.

- Let all your potential volunteers know whether or not you are able to accept them as a volunteer.
- Set a time line of when you will send them further details
- As soon as possible, provide volunteers with an exhaustive list covering you expect them to provide, including crucial paperwork they may have to arrange
- Ensure they are clear on what paperwork they should make time to read and/or sign off and when this needs to be returned by
- Make it clear to volunteers the best way to contact you about questions they may have

Volunteer briefing document

This should be sent out to all volunteers by email in advance, allowing enough time to be read and allow them to ask any questions they may have. This should document include:

- Key information about the event including date, time of arrival, location of arrival and time the event is expected to end
- Contact details for a named event organiser who will be the volunteers' point of contact on the day
- More information about type of event and the type of tasks they will be expected to do
- A thorough guide to the science behind the event, including a guide to helping volunteers engage with different ages or levels of science understanding
- Some potential questions the audience may follow up with following the activity, and prepared answers
- What to do and who to contact if they find themselves in challenging situations
- What may already be provided by yourselves and/ or the venue, such as vouchers for food,

cold or hot drinks, protective clothing if needed, other specialist equipment

- Any essentials they should provide themselves, such as their own food, drink, sun cream etc
- What clothing is appropriate to wear
- Key information about the venue, including fire exits and evacuation points, local transport connections and labelled facilities
- How they can claim expenses following the event if applicable
- Risk assessment of the activity and health and safety guidelines
- Clarity on what they can claim expenses for, and how to claim such costs

Volunteer agreement forms

It is important you have on record the expectations and behaviour to which the volunteers have agreed. This should include any repercussions to expect if they deviate from the agreed during their time volunteering.

The volunteer form should include:

- Expected behaviour and a code of conduct
- Rules on taking photos (must be complicit with any photography policy put in place by the venue and/or event)
- Rules on interacting with those under the age of 18
- Clarity on what they can claim expenses for, and how to claim such costs

Volunteer DBS forms

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are government checks overseen by the Disclosure and Barring Service. They work to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

The DBS disclosure team carries out criminal record checks that result in DBS certificates being issued to an individual if they are clear of any sort of convictions, cautions etc.

Organisations have their own policy on if DBS checks are mandatory and how often they need to be done. It is also up to them to decide whether they will allow someone to work or volunteer for them depending on what is disclosed on the certificate.

Although it is not mandatory that your volunteers undergo DBS checks, some venues or larger events will require volunteers to have one under their own policy and you must adhere to this.

Volunteers that have signed up to the STEM Ambassador scheme will already have undergone a DBS check and received a DBS certificate, and those who wish to acquire a DBS certificate can sign up to the STEM Ambassador scheme, which will aid in completing their application. DBS checks for volunteers are free.

Find out more about DBS checks online: www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-checks

Supporting your volunteers on the day

It is also important that the volunteers enjoy themselves, and that they remain safe and comfortable. For those who are managing the volunteers on the day, ensure that:

- You introduce yourself to your volunteers on the day, and make an opportunity for them to introduce themselves to each other
- You schedule time to talk through the volunteer briefing to ensure even if they have not read it before, they understand it fully before the activity commences
- You ensure they are aware where to find you throughout the day and how to make contact
- You give your volunteers regular, scheduled breaks
- You let them know in advance when to take such breaks, and how long for
- You point out to them where essential facilities are, including toilets, fire exits and first aid points
- You provide them, if possible, with refreshments or ample opportunities to source their own refreshments
- You reiterate what time they are expected to volunteer until and what they should do once they have finished for the day
- Volunteers know what equipment they should return if applicable, and what they can keep
- Volunteers know who to inform when they go on a break, wish to leave, or feel unwell
- Volunteers are aware of what costs they can claim as expenses, and how to reclaim such costs



After the event

Don't forget to thank you volunteers for their support. Do this on the day itself and by email following the event. Depending on the nature of the event or activity you organise some of your volunteers might want to ask you to write them a testimonial or reference for them based on the time they spent volunteering with you.

Ensure you give your volunteers an opportunity to give you feedback on the event, the experience, and their management, so you can improve next time if necessary. Developing and printing off a volunteer feedback form allows you to collect this information on the day.

Accessibility and Inclusion

To ensure that as many people as possible can get involved in Biology Week, it is important that the events organised are accessible and inclusive.

Considering the accessibility of your venue

Here are a few things to consider when choosing a venue for your event (although this is by no means exhaustive):

- Does the venue have an accessible entrance or is the entrance step-free? If not, do the steps have handrails and ramps?
- If there are stairs inside the venue, is there a lift?
- Are there accessible toilets in the venue, and facilities that are family friendly?
- Is there disabled parking at the venue? Is this located close to the entrance of the venue?
- Are there appropriate evacuation methods in place for disabled attendees?
- Is catering provided? Ensure that dietary and cultural requirements are catered to.
- Some environments may be overwhelming and stressful for those with autism or other developmental or learning disabilities, so make sure environments are suitable if you know those who will be attending may be affected by these issues.

Resource production

If you are producing resources for your event, also consider:

- If audio-visual materials are used, do they contain subtitles or is there a transcript available?
- Is the font easy to read? Sans serif fonts are easier for people with dyslexia to read, and a minimum of 12 point font should be used if you are producing literature around your event.

Visibility and representation

Representation is also important, so consider:

- If you are inviting external speakers, do they represent the diversity of the community? Consider characteristics including age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and ability.
- In imagery used, a suitable representation of the community is presented

Event cost

Be sure to consider the cost of the event as high costs can exclude those who have little disposable income. If you need to cover costs but don't want tickets to be expensive, consider seeking sponsorship or funding from other organisations to work with you in partnership.

Potential collaborations and partnerships

Collaborative projects enable the sharing of ideas, resources, efforts and funds.

When organising an event, establishing partnerships early on will increase the chances of your event being a success. It is important however, to agree at the start of the process what is expected from the various parties involved.

It might be possible to seek collaborations with the following:

Your workplace or organisation

If you work for a organisation that is affiliated with biology, co-workers may be interested in helping out with your event or aiding with the running or planning of the event too. There may also be a possibility for your organisation to help with resources; they may be able to supply materials needed or even sponsor the event and help cover costs.

Local schools

School and universities can be potential collaborators. The Society has contacts at a number of universities around the country who we can contact to see if they would be happy to collaborate with you. Local authorities will often have a means of contacting local schools in the area to promote an event or to send out a request for collaboration too.



STEM Learning

STEM Learning is an educational charity in the UK that seeks to encourage participation at school and college into science and engineering-related subjects and work. Their STEM Ambassadors connect with schools to engage and inspire potential young scientists.

If you want to run an event that you think would benefit from the involvement of STEM Ambassadors, then contact the relevant regional coordinator online:

www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassador-hub-contacts

Natural History Societies and Wildlife Trusts

The UK has an extensive network of natural history organisations, within which an impressive array of specialist skills and knowledge exists. Natural history groups are a source of potential speakers for events and may be able to lead guided walks and visits to sites of interests.

The Natural History Museum has a database of many UK nature groups online:

www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/nature-groups-near-you

Local businesses

Commercial organisations in the area may be able to offer skills, resources, advice, or sponsorship for an event if it is relevant and beneficial for them to do so. Those with a link to the life sciences are the most obvious option; however, other organisations may also consider supporting your event if it meets their corporate social responsibility aims.

Local community groups

If you are looking to put on an event open to the local community, then it would be worth seeking to collaborate with other local community groups. Local authority websites should have details of groups and organisations that exist in your area.

These can include community centres, religious groups, Scouting or Girl Guide patrols, residential homes, foster housing or nurseries and playgroups.

Funding your event

There are a number of ways to ensure you can afford to run your event, with many grants and schemes available that offer financial support.

RSB Outreach and Engagement grant scheme

The RSB Outreach and Engagement grant scheme is available to any member that wishes to run a Biology Week event. Grants are available up to £500, and the grants go towards a large range of activities and events.

You can apply for funding for your Biology Week event or activity from January onwards:

www.rsb.org.uk/outreach-grants

Public engagement grants and bursaries

There are other public engagement grant schemes ran by organisations including the RSB. Some grants have annual deadlines, whilst others offer money on a rolling basis.

A list of public engagement grants on offer is regularly updated online:

www.rsb.org.uk/public-engagement-grants

Sponsorship

Some businesses and companies are often willing to sponsor an event. Depending on their size and budgets they may be willing to cover some of the costs, help with resources, or both, potentially in return for often logos on communications, banners or more.

When obtaining sponsorship, consider:

- What sort of sponsors you would like to be associated with and if there is criteria that would make a sponsor an inappropriate choice
- Whether you will offer exclusive sponsorship; some sponsors may prefer and will provide more funds for an exclusive partnership but bear in mind if this is appropriate
- What you can provide in return for sponsorship, such as logos or artwork on banners, posters, email footers, a speaker slot etc

Consider putting a sponsorship package together, detailing different levels of funding companies could offer you in return for different benefits. Offering packages means a company can then clearly what they'll receive in return for their sponsorship.

if you are able to secure sponsorship, draw up a contract that details the exact agreement, to ensure there are no misaligned expectations on either side.

Event checklist

The following list includes a number of key considerations to take into account when organising and delivering a successful event:

Why are you holding the event?

- What audience do you want to reach with your event?
- What do you consider to be a successful event, and how are you going to measure if the event is a success?

Who is involved in organising and delivering the event?

- How are you going to delegate tasks needed to be done to those running the event?
- Are there any other useful partners or collaborators you can or should approach?

What resources will be required?

- Are these resources available and where are they coming from?
- What are the costs of the resources, and can they be reused or returned after the event?
- If funding is required, where can this be secured from?
- Are you going to seek funding for your event? Will this pose any conflicts of interest?
- Do you require specific technical or practical equipment?

Who is your target audience(s)?

- Are you hoping to see a range of people at your event, or a more specific group of people?
- Why are you keen to engage with this specific audience?
- How will you market your event to ensure you reach this audience?

When should you hold the event?

- Will it clash with any other similar events or any popular national events?
- Will it be easy for those who work or need to secure childcare to attend?

Where should you hold the event?

- What locations are easily accessible by your target audience?
- How big does the space need to be?
- Will it require an entry fee for attendees?
- Do you have a budget to pay for a venue?
-

How will you reach your audience?

- What communication channels does your target audience favour?
- Are you collaborating with anyone who can help with the communication of the event?
- Is your audience online? Can they get involved with some or part of the event through digital channels?

Safety, security and back-up plans

- Do you need to complete a risk assessment for your event? Your student union or department should be able to help you with this.
- Do you have relevant insurance for your event if it is required?
- Will you need DBS checks for those involved?
- If the event involves working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, have you taken all the reasonable steps needed to ensure their safety?
- Will you be taking photos or video on the day? If children are involved, are the necessary notices and permissions in place to take their photos?
- Do you have a contingency plan in place if the weather isn't ideal or if other external circumstances makes holding the event difficult?



Publicising your event

We hope to have as many people as possible involved in Biology Week, and we are able to help advertise your events where possible.

Adding your event to the Biology Week calendar

You can let us know if you are running an event by completing a form online:

www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweekcalendar

Contacting local press

Getting local news interested in your event is a great way of ensuring more people find out about your event and documenting it for others to read and enjoy.

Before issuing a press invite or press release, do get in touch with the RSB press and communications manager (contact details at the end of this publication) for more advice, guidance, and final sign off.

Press invites

If you're running an event that you think press will be interested in attending on the day, consider drafting a press invite to send to local newspapers, radio stations and television channels ahead of time.



A press invite outlines what the event is and also what coverage opportunities are available. Make sure to include:

- when and where the event is
- any notable attendees or speakers
- any notable content attendees or speakers may say
- what photography and filming opportunities are available (depending on permissions)
- how to get in contact with the organisers if they want to attend

Press releases

If you don't get any interest from journalists wanting to attend on the day, don't worry, you can always issue a press release following the event with media suitable for outlets to use.

This is very similar to a press invite, but make sure to include:

- Photos from the event with clear indication of whom credit should be given to
- A Dropbox or WeTransfer link for video content that you may have shot or have available
- Mention that high res versions are available on request

Check out www.media.info for newsdesk emails and other regional press contacts.

A press and communications pack can also be downloaded from our website, which includes:

- Sample press releases
- Sample press invites
- Sample social media posts (e.g. for Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Taking photos or filming video

When taking photos in public spaces, you do not need to obtain permission of those present to take the photos. Also, as the person taking the photo, you are the copyright holder, so can do with the photo what you please, such as share on social media.

If you are running your event in a publicly accessible space, it is advised you put up signs informing those taking part in your event or activity may be photographed, and that they should flag with someone involved with the event if they are not comfortable with this.

Photography and filming of those under the 18

A child does not have the legal capacity to consent to being filmed or photographed and a parent or guardian must therefore do so on their behalf.

Schools, leisure centres and places where children and adults gather usually have their own photography restrictions so contact the venue to find out whether photography is allowed. You should obtain permission from the venue or event host if you can take photos, and adhere to the policies they have in place for taking photos of those visiting,

If you are running your own event, you should ask guests to explicitly opt in to having their photo taken or being filmed, either as they sign up for the event, as they arrive, or immediately before their photo is taken.

This should list what the photo may be used for, how it will be kept secure when stored and how people can contact you if they wish for their photo to be deleted.

We can draft you a consent form for adults to sign if you wish to take a photo of their child. We can also help develop photography consent forms that attendees can agree to as they sign up to an event.

For more information on taking photos of children, consult the NSPCC website:

www.nspcc.org.uk

Social media channels

You can use social media tools not only to capture the action on the day, but also to allow for those attending and those who can't to interact with the event too.

Making content to advertise your event and sharing it online is also a great way to reach a wider audience. Check out our logo and branding page on our website for guidance on how to use the Biology Week logo: www.rsb.org.uk/biology-week-branding

- Twitter is a great way to advertise your event, and also document the event as it develops. If you are running a debate or lecture, you can use twitter to take questions from those in the audience or those following at home. Make sure to use the hashtag #BiologyWeek in all of your posts.
- Facebook is also a great way to advertise your event. You can contact admins of pages who provide news and updates suitable for your audience and they can plug your event, or you can share your event among friends and contacts more directly.
- Instagram is great if you have some amazing photos from your event, and you can also provide updates from the event as it unfolds using the Instagram stories feature. Again be sure to use the #BiologyWeek hashtag.

Video recording

Producing video content is great; video content typically performs better on social media channels and is a great way to capture more dynamically the event itself. You can either live-stream your event from a mobile device onto Facebook and Twitter, or record, edit and release footage at a later date.

Live-streaming is a great way of increasing accessibility to your event and bringing it to a wider audience. It is particularly suitable for lectures or debates, where you don't need multiple camera shots to capture the event in its entirety. Two of the easiest ways to stream an event is via periscope on Twitter, or as a Facebook live video.

Advertising your event through RSB channels

We will advertise your event through our own channels, including:

- The online Biology Week events calendar
- Monthly e-newsletters which go out to our members and member organisations
- Social media platforms where possible
- On our website news pages and blog

Contact us

You can find more resources on how to run events in Biology Week online:

More about Biology Week	www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweek
The Biology Week calendar	www.rsb.org.uk/biologyweekcalendar
Guidance on how to run a Biology Week event	www.rsb.org.uk/organise-an-event
Biology Week logos and branding	www.rsb.org.uk/biology-week-branding
Press and communications help	www.rsb.org.uk/biology-week-comms

You can also contact the RSB on our social media channels if you need help promoting or sharing your content:

Twitter	@RoyalSocBio
Instagram	@RoyalSocBio
Facebook page	facebook.com/RoyalSocBio

Many of the RSB branches also have their own social media channels. You can find their facebook pages by searching on Facebook using the branch name, and a list of branch twitter accounts can be found here: twitter.com/RoyalSocBio/lists/rsb-regional-branches

For further information on Biology Week or advice on running an event please contact:

Philippa Skett AMRSB
Press & Communications Manager
Philippa.skett@rsb.org.uk

We can offer advice and guidance from our public engagement team via email, over the phone, or in person if you are in London.

Outreach and engagement awards

Recognising those who are outstanding in enthusing and engaging the public

Prizes up to £1,500 available for new and established researchers



Closing date for nominations:
28 June 2019

rsb.org.uk/outreach-awards

Notes

Notes



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