

## Science Policy Newsletter – a weekly round-up of policy headlines and stories

11 July 2019

### News

#### Royal Society of Biology news

##### [Students and teachers celebrate success at this year's Education Awards Ceremony](#)

More than one hundred pupils travelled from across the UK to attend this year's Education Awards Ceremony, held at the IET London: Savoy Place, on 28th June.

##### [RSB School Biology Teacher of the Year 2019 announced](#)

Gemma Singleton, science lead at The Beacon School, is the 2019 recipient of the Royal Society of Biology's School Biology Teacher of the Year Award.

##### [RSB marches in this year's Pride in London parade](#)

Staff and members of the Royal Society of Biology took to the streets as part of this year's Pride in London parade, in support of the LGBT community; the first time the Society has taken part in this event.

#### Opportunities not to be missed..

##### [RSB Policy Internships](#)

The RSB has two internship positions available for current PhD students who are funded by [AHRC](#), [BBSRC](#), [EPSRC](#), [ESRC](#), [MRC](#), and [NERC](#). Successful applicants will spend three months working at the RSB in Central London in 2020. Start and end dates can be negotiated as appropriate.

**Closes: 12 August 2019**

#### Royal Society of Biology blog

##### [Lifting the curtain – in celebration of LGBTQ scientists' visibility](#)

Who inspired you to find who you are or who you could be?

## Health and biomedicine

### [Early cancer detection and survival to be prioritised by NHS](#)

Monitoring one-year survival will be central to measuring progress in transforming cancer care, the Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, announced today.

### [Smoking 'damages eyes as well as lungs'](#)

### [Change at every level needed to crack drug resistance](#)

### [Almost a third of Scots are now obese – and at risk of more cancers than smokers](#)

### [Health boards get £1.7m to cut child obesity](#)

## Agriculture and fisheries

### [Greater biodiversity means new, improved food culture](#)

The introduction of intensive farming has increased productivity but has also led to crop standardisation and a dangerous loss of biodiversity. EU-funded research is looking at ways to reverse this process and ensure future food quality and sustainability.

### [The scourge of antibiotics in animal feed](#)

Antibiotics are routinely added to animal feed in poor nations, fuelling superbugs. But new solutions are emerging, writes Aisling Irwin.

### [Farm lab adds 'high tech sheep shed'](#)

The new Robert Orr Small Ruminant Facility will bolster research into the sustainability of livestock

## Forestry

### [Planting billions of trees is 'most effective climate change solution', researchers say](#)

As they grow and mature, trees could absorb and store 205 billion tonnes of carbon, study suggests

## Environment and ecology

### [Mussels stressed by underwater noise from ships](#)

### [Hundreds of sharks and rays tangled in plastic waste, research shows](#)

True figure expected to be much higher, scientists warn

### [Asian hornet identified in south Hampshire](#)

Beekeepers asked to remain vigilant as single Asian hornet is spotted in Hampshire.

## Water and air

### [Air pollution cuts up to seven months off child life expectancy in Birmingham, research suggests](#)

'It's awful that children living in the UK are breathing air that may shorten their lives'

## Climate and energy

### [Climate change made Europe's mega-heatwave five times more likely](#)

Scientists rushed to study whether the scorching temperatures last week were linked to global warming.

## Waste

### [Compostable Food Packaging](#)

This brief describes policy options to enable greater use of compostable packaging

### [The search for a cleaner, greener plastic](#)

Finding solutions to prevent harmful plastic waste is far from simple

### [Food recycling in Scotland 'up by more than 40%'](#)

### [Plastic Food Packaging Waste](#)

This POSTnote outlines the main options for reducing packaging waste (removing, reusing, replacing and recycling plastics) and examines the potential to combine them into a coordinated waste strategy.

### [Plastic-free July – what is Wales doing to curb plastic pollution?](#)

## Animal Research

### [Recognising the mouse as an important experimental model](#)

Last week we published a statement about the reasons why we're conducting a strategic review of mouse genetics. Here our Executive Chair Professor Fiona Watt provides some more information about the process.

## Government and Parliament

### [UK to put climate crisis and environment at the heart of overseas aid](#)

Government will spend £193m on directly tackling climate-related issues in first initiative

## Exiting the EU

### [Skidmore's support for 'essential' Horizon Europe applauded](#)

Chris Skidmore's unexpected declaration that the UK paying to join EU research programmes after Brexit is "essential" has been welcomed by leading figures in research.

### [UK plans £3m no-deal medicine transport](#)

## [UK-led cancer and climate trials at risk as British researchers become liability](#)

Projects headed by UK universities have fallen sharply since Brexit vote

## Research funding and higher education policy

### [Becoming an Innovation Nation: Driving up private investment into research and development](#)

Science Minister Chris Skidmore speaks about the role of private investment in achieving the Industrial Strategy ambition to invest 2.4% of GDP in R&D by 2027.

### [DfE to unveil new category of higher technical qualifications](#)

Education secretary plans to promote Stem-related courses, hoping to overcome middle-class snobbery

### [Postgraduate support to continue for EU nationals for a further year](#)

EU nationals coming to the UK for postgraduate studies now have guarantees for funding for studies starting in 2020.

### [University research to receive major funding boost](#)

Universities and Science Minister confirms an additional £91 million for university-led research.

### [Student satisfaction rises but universities should do more to improve feedback](#)

Students in the UK are more satisfied with their courses, according to this year's National Student Survey (NSS). However, many universities and colleges still have plenty of room to improve, the Office for Students (OfS) has said

## Schools education policy

### [Some English schools 'can't afford to teach five days a week'](#)

Labour MP Jess Phillips, whose son is affected, is leading a march in Westminster on Friday

### [Menopause lessons at school 'an important victory'](#)

## Open access and publication policy

### [Authorship: are the days of the lone research ranger numbered?](#)

Data suggest that single authorship is continuing to decline across the world, but will it always have a place?

## Diversity and inclusion

### [UK universities condemned for failure to tackle racism](#)

Guardian investigation reveals widespread evidence of discrimination in higher education

### [Leadership intelligence: how can universities get more BME leaders?](#)

Solutions from the UK and the US on how to improve diversity in leadership roles

## [Neurodiversity in the Workplace](#)

## [Carrying the PRIDE message to the ends of the earth](#)

## Outreach and engagement

### [#ScientistsWhoSelfie – How sharing selfies can build trust in science](#)

#### [What's wrong with “public engagement”?](#)

Jonathan Grant and Deborah Bull interrogate the ethics and framing of public engagement practice in UK universities.

## International news

### [Wide Sargasso seaweed: 5,500-mile algae belt keeps on growing](#)

'Great Atlantic Sargassum Belt' now appears almost every year, forming largest record bloom

### [The wrong kind of trees: Ireland's afforestation meets resistance](#)

Residents and campaigners say fast-growing Sitka spruces are spoiling the landscape

### [Drug resistant TB: Africa's forgotten health crisis](#)

The bugs are a challenge in Africa, but DNA-based diagnostics can help, write Gilbert Nakweya and Bilal Tairou.

### [Pioneering surgery brings movement back to paralysed hands](#)

Melbourne-based Natasha van Zyl has treated 13 young adults with nerve transfer surgery

### [Brazil sent one million salmonella-infected chickens to UK in two years](#)

A fifth of Brazilian chicken exports are contaminated with the potentially life-threatening food poisoning bug salmonella

### [Toxic processionary caterpillar plague spreads across Europe](#)

## Opinion

### [Eight ways to halt a global food crisis](#)

#### [Black academics 'can't fight race inequality alone'](#)

Others need to play their part in closing the 13% attainment gap at university, say overworked ethnic minority staff and students

#### [Climate change: can we avoid flying?](#)

You might struggle to cut out flying entirely. But there are ways to reduce its contribution to your carbon footprint.

#### [Antibiotic alternatives are 'no silver bullet'](#)

As antibiotics increasingly fail, numerous innovative alternatives are under development but there is no panacea, writes Mićo Tatalović.

## [Group of biologists tries to bury the idea that plants are conscious](#)

Environmental crisis clouding scientific objectivity about plants' feelings, says botanist

## [Queer Academic Freedom: the ability to be yourself](#)

Diversity of experience and thought can lead to better research. But that's not always what LGBT scientists experience in their work.

## [Tackle climate change by fertilising ocean with iron, expert says](#)

Iron aerosols could cause ocean forests to develop 'within weeks', Sir David King says

## People

### [First female medical students get degrees at last](#)

### [John Sheehy obituary](#)

### [Welsh swimmer's bid to reveal micro-plastics pollution](#)

### [In a picture: Filming the immune system in action – Prof. Georg Fantner](#)

By assembling a camera that can record video at nanometre resolution, scientists have filmed how the immune system kills bacteria by poking holes into it. Professor Georg Fantner tells us about how this was achieved and why his next challenge is to build a video camera that can film the inside of a living cell.

## Opportunities

### **Would you like to contribute to *The Biologist* magazine?**

*The Biologist* is looking to recruit new members to its editorial board, specifically early-career researchers who work in areas including ecology, conservation, whole-organism biology, environmental science and stem-cell biology. Interested candidates can find more details on the role and how to apply [here](#), or contact Head of Publications [Tom Ireland](#).

**Closes: 15 July 2019**

### **Biology Week intern**

Led by the Royal Society of Biology, [Biology Week](#) showcases the important and amazing world of the biosciences, getting everyone from children to professional biologists involved in fun and interesting life science activities. We are looking for an intern to help in the run up to, during, and after Biology Week. This internship is well suited to someone looking to gain experience in science communication, event organisation, and press and social media engagement. It is also suited to those with an interest in outreach and engagement and a passion for the biosciences. For further information and to apply, please visit [mySociety](#).

**Closes: 17 July 2019**

### **LASA 2019 call for 3Rs speakers**

The LASA 3Rs section conveners are inviting submissions for spoken presentations on any aspect of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement) to be given at the 2019 LASA annual conference, which will be held in Birmingham during the 3Rs session on Wednesday 27 November 2019. Anyone who wishes to contribute, should

submit a title and abstract using the submission form available on the [LASA website](#).  
**Closes: 31 July 2019**

### [The Nancy Rothwell Award 2019](#)

The Nancy Rothwell Award 2019 specimen drawing competition for 7 – 18 year olds is now open for submissions. Prizes include an experience day at the [Royal Veterinary College](#) for students, and their school can also win £100. Visit the Royal Society of Biology [website](#) for more information.

**Closes: 30 July 2019**

### [Get creative in this biotechnology photo competition](#)

This MeMBrane photo competition is an opportunity to get creative and take pictures of 'Biotechnology in Action'. Send your pictures to [MeMBrane@aston.ac.uk](mailto:MeMBrane@aston.ac.uk)

**Closes: 1 September 2019**

### **Royal Society of Biology, Outreach and Engagement Volunteering Opportunities**

RSB is looking for local volunteers to help run its hands-on science activities at [Basildon Street Science](#), Basildon, Essex on **13th July 2019**, 10:00 – 16:00; [Lambeth Country Show](#) Brockwell Park, London on **20th – 21st July 2019**; [Ipswich Maritime Festival](#) Ipswich Waterfront, Ipswich, Suffolk on **17th - 18th August 2019**; [Abergavenny Food Festival 2019](#) at Abergavenny, Wales, on **21st – 22nd September 2019**. If you live nearby and are interested in volunteering to help the RSB outreach team deliver hands-on science activities please email Dr Amanda Hardy via [outreach@rsb.org.uk](mailto:outreach@rsb.org.uk)

## Consultations

### [Safeguarding the environment in British Overseas Territories: call for evidence](#)

**Closes: 19 July 2019**

### [Fishing opportunities for 2020 under the common fisheries policy](#)

**Closes: 20 August 2019**

### [Non-elephant ivory trade: call for evidence](#)

**Closes: 22 August 2019**

### [Adding folic acid to flour](#)

**Closes: 9 September 2019**

### [Improving higher technical education](#)

**Closes: 29 September 2019**

## Events

### [Bioscience Careers Day 2019](#)

**26 October 2019**

Middlesex University, London

The Bioscience Careers Day (BCD) is the perfect opportunity to get your career on track - whether you are interested in working in research, science communication or even if you just want to know what options are available to you once you finish your

bioscience degree. Our top programme will enhance your prospects. Find out what happened last year in our [YouTube video](#). Visit [here](#) for full details and to buy your £10 ticket. Direct queries to Harriet McAra at [events@rsb.org.uk](mailto:events@rsb.org.uk)

### **Quantitative Methods in Gene Regulation V**

**9 - 10 December 2019**

Institute of Physics, London

And finally...

**Scientists may soon be able to predict your memories – here's how**

#### **Royal Society of Biology**

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