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# Royal Society of **Biology**

## Our strategy 2025–2030

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# Biology is life



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# Biologists work across hundreds of disciplines

We are school, college and university students, technicians, apprentices, researchers, academics, journalists, industry leaders, innovators, teachers, policy experts, naturalists and entrepreneurs.

We study, work and research in fields that encompass humans, animals, plants, fungi, microorganisms and the molecular mechanisms of life.

**We are biology**



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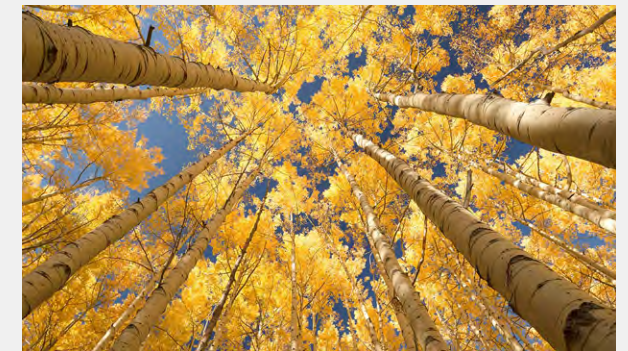
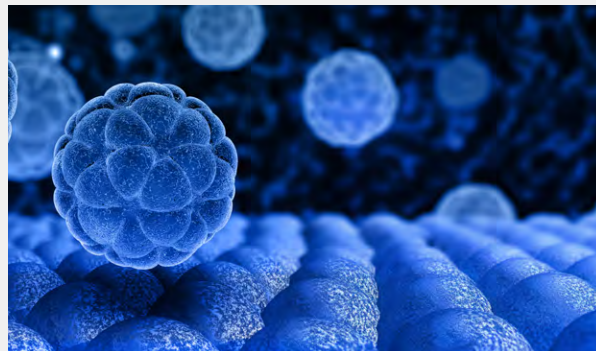


# Biology: the science of life

**Biology is the science of life, from the depths of the oceans to the outer edges of our atmosphere and beyond. It stretches from the molecular building blocks of life to the study of whole ecosystems.**

As the 21st Century progresses, humankind faces enormous challenges from climate change, food security, and the burden of disease to the biodiversity crisis. Extracting resources, unsustainable food production, emitting waste and wider damage to our biosphere are all taking their toll.

Often, as a result, we are experiencing increasing challenges from infectious and non-communicable disease. We are entering unprecedented times in the history of humanity and our relationship with the physical and biological world around us.



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The UK is a world leader in the biosciences, from innovations in vaccines to engineering biology. Biology has a central role to play not only in developing solutions to global challenges, but in providing economic growth and jobs in the UK economy.

In 2021/22, businesses in the UK life sciences generated £108 billion in turnover, with a further £14 billion directly from Agri-tech and £106 billion from the Agri-tech supply chain supporting 4.5 million employees.



UK life sciences  
**£108 bn**



Agri-tech  
**£14 bn**



Agri-tech supply chain  
**£106 bn**



Employees  
**4.5m**

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# Sustainability goals

**Whether it is water quality, medicines, agriculture, future cities or climate change, biology has a critical role to play.**

We are increasingly able to understand and mitigate emerging environmental challenges using the development of technology based on fundamental scientific discovery and through the application of nature-based solutions. By promoting and supporting the development and use of knowledge about biology across society, we can help solve these problems.

Our work aligns with at least fifteen of the seventeen UN Sustainability goals.



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# Bringing biologists together



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# Championing expertise and innovation

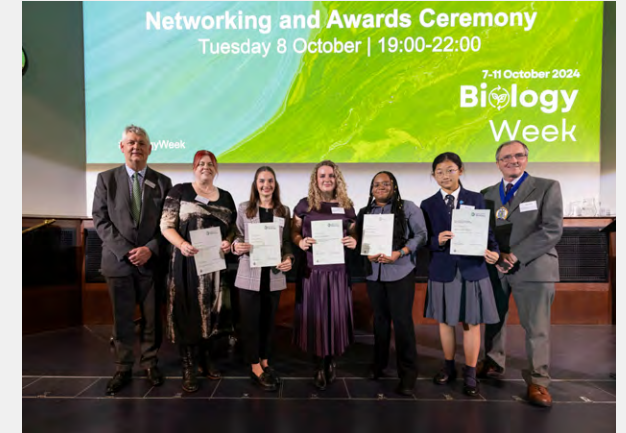
**We represent 22,000 members as at December 2024. This figure more than doubles through the RSB member organisation network, providing access to many of the very best minds and expertise across the whole of bioscience.**

We can quickly inform policy debates, make the links across sub-disciplines and seek perspectives from every career stage and type. Ethical innovation, the skills agenda, school education, research funding and the application of the biosciences to everyday life are all within the remit of the Society.

We train and develop biologists, enable professional development and recognition, set standards and engage the public. We are evidence-driven and a trusted partner in public debate.

We give biology and biologists a strong voice and partner with others to support the broader science and technology agenda across the UK and increasingly internationally.

We support our member organisations in an environment that brings challenges for research, publishing and financial sustainability, by providing client services, running events and influencing the policy landscape in which they operate.





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# Our vision, values and mission

## Our vision

A world that values biology's contribution to understanding and improving life for all.

## Our values

Through **integrity, objectivity, leadership** and **curiosity** we embrace diversity and foster an inclusive environment, promote learning and collaboration, and champion the effective use of bioscience knowledge.

Our **Biosciences for all** programme embeds equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in all we do and will be central to the way we work. We will use direct interventions – through grants, meetings, networking and more – to support our membership and partners in promoting the value of EDI across bioscience.

## Our mission for public benefit

*"We will advance the science and practice of biology, to advance education therein and to co-ordinate and encourage the study of biology and its application."*

Through this mission we seek to make biology and its applications clear and relevant.



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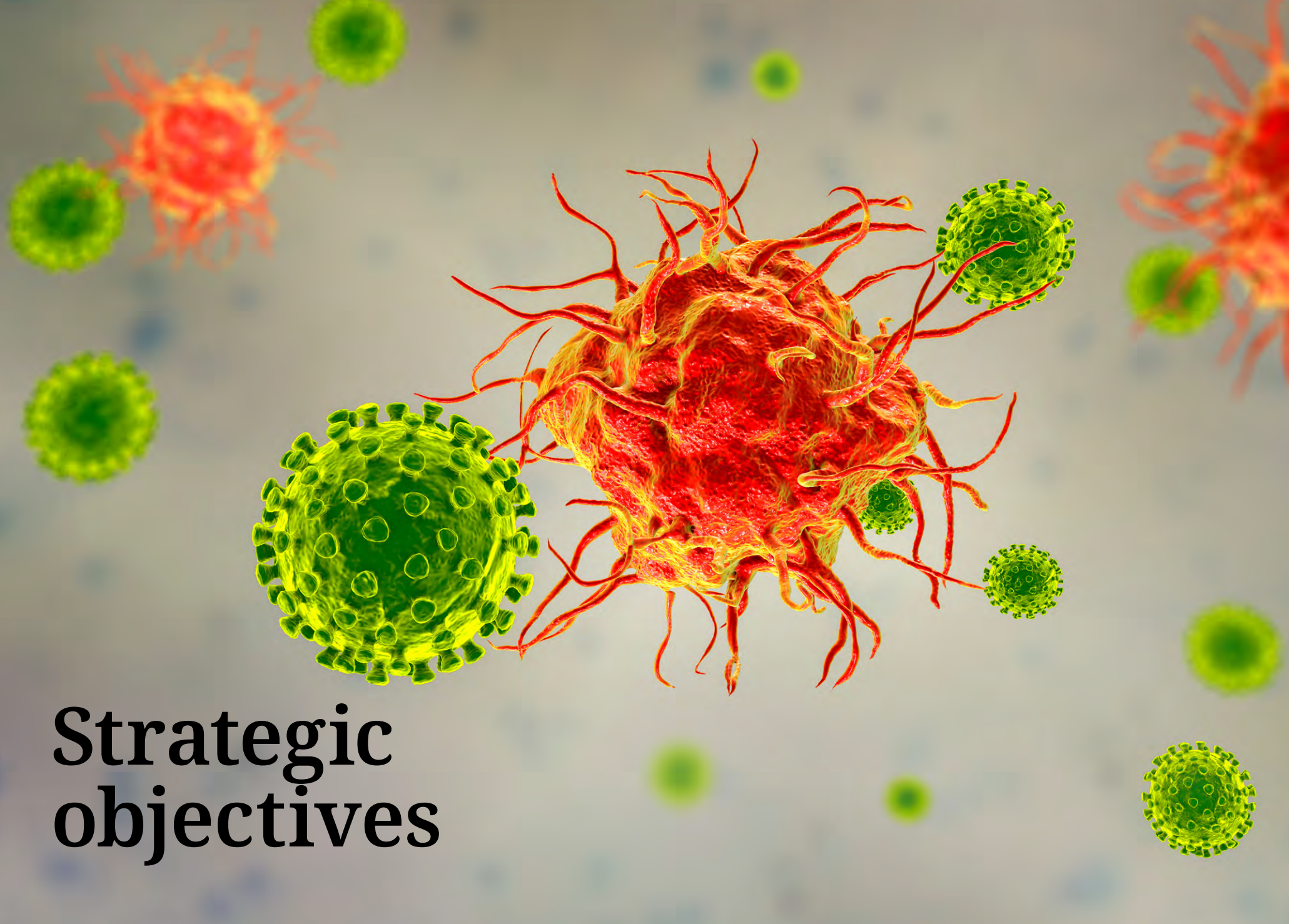
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# Strategic objectives



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# Our strategic objectives

Our focus for the five year period 2025–2030 is underpinned by three pillars that have been co-created with our community.

1

Ensuring our members are supported and empowered



2

Increasing professionalism by enhancing quality and standards



3

Strengthening our national voice for the biosciences and bioscientists



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# 1. Ensuring our members are supported and empowered

## **Our members are the Royal Society of Biology.**

Our individual members work across every aspect of biology, while our member organisations draw together biologists with a focus on specific disciplines.

This combination of breadth and depth ensures RSB can deliver and/or support expert advice to policy makers and the public in the context of the overall policy, educational, and regulatory environment.

It also provides a stepping stone to higher levels of international engagement. We aim to provide the best value for both individual and organisational members by reflecting their shared priorities and concerns, and delivering the benefits and services they need.

We recognise that the public also has a crucial role to play in understanding and using biology to help address global challenges, as well as applying bioscience knowledge in many other aspects of daily life. Biologists, with RSB members at the fore, can help provide the evidence and context to facilitate debate.

Our suite of RSB publications – spanning digital content, magazine, book and learned journal formats, and aimed at all audiences from children to professionals – helps to synthesise expertise and inform discussion.

We will also ensure that we use outreach and engagement, as well as our history and experience in Citizen Science, to reach a wider audience of the engaged public and potential new members.

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# Key outcomes



## Advocacy action plan

Significantly enhance our right to advocate on behalf of the UK biosciences sector through membership growth, setting out a membership action plan that will recruit both individual and organisational members in the UK and more widely.



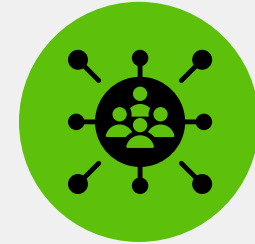
## Sector productivity

Help improve sector productivity and sharing of best practice through increased support for bioscience organisations via our dedicated client services and further developing and articulating more focussed offerings and outcomes for all member organisations.



## Careers services

Help ensure support for biologists of the future through a step-change in our careers services and products, focussed on graduates and other early career members.



## Innovation hub

Continue as a hub for innovation and impactful citizen science, and operate across the bioscience community to promote outreach and engagement.

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## 2. Increasing professionalism by enhancing quality and standards

**The RSB is uniquely placed to enhance quality and standards in the biosciences.**

Our broad view across the sub-disciplines and high-level access to policy makers provide an opportunity for national impact.

For example, our **Evolving 5-19 Biology** curriculum framework forms the basis of an excellent education for all young people and will be used to improve the coherence of school bioscience ensuring solid foundations for further study and training.

Similarly, our **degree accreditation programmes** provide a quality mark and assurance that universities are supporting workforce development and employability of bioscience graduates.

The professional registration, training and CPD opportunities we provide help to support a skilled and professionalised workforce, while RSB's code of conduct for individual members, and the associated professional supporting infrastructure, helps to ensure integrity of advice.

Standards help to maintain and grow public confidence in advice offered, the research the membership undertakes and the underpinning quality of educational and professional qualifications.

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# Key outcomes



## Improve early education

Improve the continuity of delivery of UK biology 5–19 education through embedding our **Evolving 5–19 Biology** recommendations in reformed curricula and qualifications, working with UK governments.



## Degree accreditation

Enhance the employability and skills of more bioscience graduates through a growth in the degree accreditation programme to help raise educational standards and ensure best practice is shared to support the delivery of bioscience education in universities across the globe.



## Continuous professional development (CPD)

Continue to support the bioscience workforce, and wider community, through a growth in professional registration uptake and retention that is backed by a rigorous CPD framework and further supported by relevant and high-quality training opportunities.

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## 3. Strengthening our national voice for the biosciences and bioscientists

**Governments and other policymakers welcome clear, considered messages and advice from experts, who join together through common cause and shared vision to provide balanced, evidence-based views.**

We will use our convening power to distil expert advice and to represent the professional interests of bioscientists across all roles and disciplines within the sector, including those in teaching, technical roles, academia, industry and scientists working for government – presenting evidence to policy makers of where investment, skills development or other support is needed.

We will be the voice of biology in pan-STEM discussions, ensuring a coordinated approach with chemistry, physics, maths and related disciplines wherever possible while continuing to recognise and value the interface

for key non-STEM disciplines such as social science. To foster creativity and innovation, we will promote equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

The RSB has a central role in facilitating scientific knowledge exchange and in harnessing the expertise of our community to advise policymakers on key bioscience issues of national and global significance. We will focus our efforts on areas where the RSB can have an impact, add value and provide leadership, and where we can complement the disciplinary expertise of our organisational members.



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# Key outcomes



## Excellence in teaching

Secure excellence in the teaching of the future UK biosciences workforce by continuing to work with partners across STEM to advise policymakers on addressing the crisis in teacher recruitment, retention and professional development.



## Improve research culture

Help attract and retain a diverse, innovative and well-resourced research workforce and deploy evidence-based advice to improve the biosciences research culture and landscape in the UK.



## Policy impact

Maximise the impact of policy work through strategic prioritisation, advising policymakers on both national and international issues where our members believe they have a key role to play, including areas such as scholarly publishing, biosecurity and ethical biological innovation.

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# Delivery, partnership, collaboration

**The three pillars of this five-year strategy will be realised through a detailed delivery plan, costed to ensure long term sustainability.**

We will seek to bring together individual members, member organisations and stakeholders across the biosciences to support information exchange and to enhance career opportunities. Specialist committees and special interest groups will allow more granularity of debate in areas such as outreach or equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our accreditation programmes will cover more UK universities and further develop international accreditation and advice.

Professional registration numbers will be grown, especially for the flagship Chartered Biologist designation.

New training offerings, targeted membership benefits and a focus on early career members will help support and grow future talent and ensure more biologists are made aware of the breadth of opportunity a bioscience career offers, especially post-graduation when university support is no longer accessible.

Through workshops, new member-based advisory pools, committees and working groups, we will ensure policy advice is balanced and fit for purpose.

We will also seek to ensure biology and biologists are appropriately represented, and opinions reflected, in pan-science advice through proactive and close association with key partner societies, especially in chemistry and physics. To that end, we will also organise pan-science events in the Westminster Parliament, and support events in the Devolved Administrations.

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# Resourcing the strategy

Public understanding of the critical importance of biology in a modern economy, and in addressing global challenges, will be enhanced through competitions, grants, local events and the effective use of media and social media, as well as through our flagship publication, *The Biologist*.

We will continue to ensure devolved policy areas have a direct link to the Society's advisory bodies and policy development while also developing our grant mechanisms to further support our members.

**Strong individual membership retention, sound recruitment and a stable member organisation network are needed to finance this strategy coupled with ongoing income diversification, increasing non-membership related income to more than 40% of the total.**

Services for bioscience organisations, accreditation, professional recognition and training will grow to achieve this.

The new strategy has been kick-started with a refreshed visual identity and website designed to maximise our impact and clarify our purpose.



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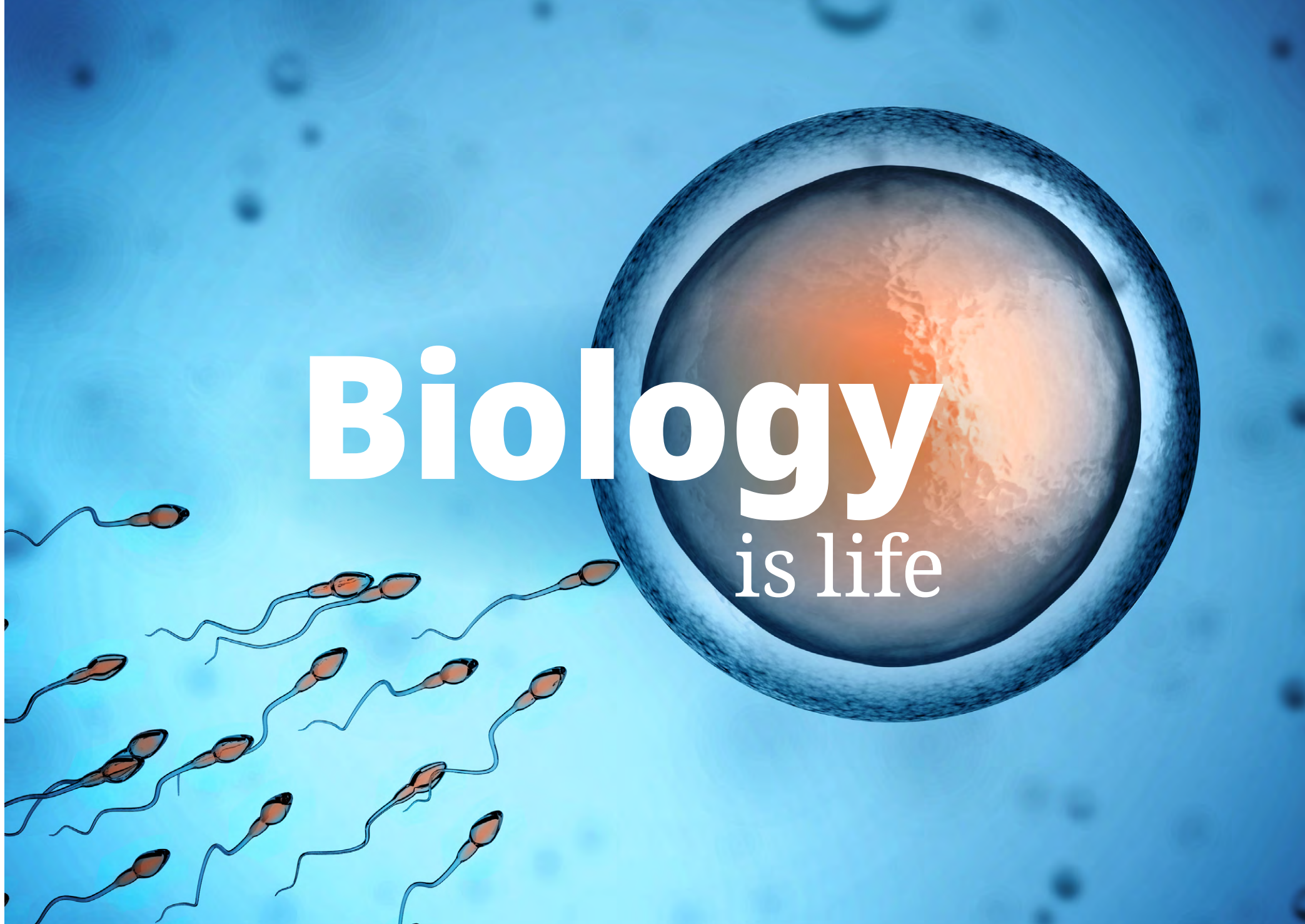
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**“We are your Society and connect  
the unique perspectives of all the  
biosciences through our people,  
events and networks.”**

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