



Science Council

Annual Review 2014



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Introduction

by Tom Blundell, President and Diana Garnham, CEO



Over the last few years the Science Council has established itself as a leading voice for the professional practice of science, independent of discipline.

The Science Council believes in the value of a professional body sector, encouraging and advocating for professional membership by today's practising scientists. The Science Council supports our 41 member organisations – both professional bodies and learned societies – through benchmarking research, networking opportunities, collaborative projects and promoting the value of professional membership.

The career development framework we have created through our professional registers responds to society's need to attract, train, retain and retrain for a thriving science workforce, as well as encouraging improvement through continuing professional development.

The Science Council is proud of the breadth of our work beyond professional registration. Our diversity project has brought about the Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, which was launched in October and so far over half our membership has signed.

The Science Council also facilitates policy engagement: responding to consultations, maintaining a presence at party conferences and providing opportunities to learn from policy makers themselves. The Science Council is in a unique position, able as we are to bring together a range of disciplines and sectors, reflecting the multi-disciplinary practice of science in today's society.

2014 was a very successful year for the Science Council: we secured funding to grow our professional registers, we launched the first Declaration on Diversity for the science professional body sector, and our team almost doubled in size.

We continue to raise the profile of professional scientists and technicians working in the UK, building public trust and confidence in the application and practice of science.

Tom Blundell
President

Diana Garnham
CEO

PROFESSIONALISM

1

The Science Council serves society and the economy by enhancing the professionalism of the science workforce to build public trust and confidence in science

OUR IMPACT

■ Professional scientists

Our professional registers recognise high standards of professionalism and competence by scientists across all levels; a commitment to keeping skills and knowledge up to date; and accountability to codes of conduct that ensure the responsible application of science for the benefit of society.

In 2014 the Gatsby Charitable Foundation agreed to invest in the strategic development of the two registers launched in 2012, Registered Scientist and Registered Science Technician, for another four years.

One of the major breakthroughs for 2014 has been the development of a Common Application Process (CAP): a way for individuals to apply for both professional body membership and registration through the Science Council. By the end of December we had awarded the first 19 people professional status through this process and from 2015 have an online system available to encourage increased registrations this way.

Increased number
of Registered
Scientists by

33 %

Increased number of
Registered Science
Technicians by

60 %

“Technicians are hidden away between patients being diagnosed and patients being treated...professional recognition gives confidence to patients that the quality of their treatment is exactly what the doctor ordered. Patients don’t see us, but they rely on us.” Ruth RSciTech, Southampton

■ Careers from Science

The Science Council continues to manage award-winning website Future Morph, providing advice on careers from science to many young people, parents and teachers across the UK. Average visits increased by 44% between 2013 and 2014 to nearly 14,000 per month.

We continue to provide careers resources to support the Horner's Company-led Science Opens Doors project. This has engaged with pupils and their parents at 14 primary schools in 2014. We also continue to provide advisory input for the second stage of the longitudinal research into career aspirations of young people that is being undertaken by the ASPIRES team at King's College London.

“As a technician, I work in an environment that is dominated by other professions. It's easy to forget that I have a professional identity too! Registration via the Science Council demonstrates that level of professionalism.” Kelly RSci, Nottingham

■ STEM from the City

In June 2014, the Science Council worked in partnership with the Corporation of the City of London to deliver a STEM careers event for yr 9 children attending widening participation schools within the City of London and its neighbouring boroughs, encouraging them to continue studying and pursue science as a career.

A total of 376 students attended across the day, where 23 employers introduced them to 93 different STEM occupations from within their local areas. Feedback from the event was very positive from both attendees and exhibitors, and post-event evaluation showed students came away with a greater understanding of careers from science.

**“High profile speakers provided a true insight into STEM careers - providing inspiration to young people in the City.”
Volunteer, STEM from the City**

OUR IMPACT

■ Science employers

This year the Science Council welcomed 5 new Employer Champions: organisations that have committed to recognising professionalism and professional practice among their scientific staff.

In 2014 Wessex Water became the first employer from the water industry to be awarded CPD Approved Employer, with over 70 staff based at their scientific centre in Bristol.

We continue to encourage employers to invest in the training, development and professionalism of their science workforce and aim to have over 20 Employer Champions by the end of next year.

“It’s a great accomplishment to be accredited for our ongoing commitment to training and the quality of our staff. We are committed to support the important role of our scientists who carry out one million tests a year to protect public health and the environment and ensure we comply with stringent quality standards.” Helen Shapland, Head of Analytical Services at Wessex Water

► WHAT’S NEXT

Growing the professional registers is a key priority over the next few years: connecting with science employers and investing in the talent of their workforce, as well as developing our registrant community.

■ Partners and partnership working

The Science Council works inclusively and in partnership with other organisations across science, including engineering, IT and mathematics, and those beyond science, including through our membership of the UK Inter-Professional Group. We continue to have excellent relationships with the Engineering Council, Engineering UK and the Society for the Environment, as well as a new relationship for 2014 with EngTechNow, the campaign to promote the Engineering Technician award, along with other organisations such as SCORE, with whom we explore the future of science education policy.

Since the launch of apprenticeship reform in 2013 we have been actively involved in the *Life Science and Industrial Science Trailblazer*, collaborating with employers across all scientific sectors, our licensed bodies and the sector skills council, Cogent Skills. Through our activity and input this year we have ensured that new apprenticeship standards are fit for purpose and lead to professional registration as a Registered Science Technician or a Registered Scientist.

This year we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with unionlearn to improve the status and recognition of science technicians. This is an excellent partnership for the Science Council as unionlearn are leading the ‘Technician Pathways’ Project, also funded by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation.

“Professional bodies are important partners in encouraging and supporting technicians to take up registration and access learning and development opportunities. This MoU is an important building block in delivering unionlearn’s Technician Pathways project.” Tom Wilson, Director of unionlearn

POLICY

2 The Science Council provides a voice on policy issues affecting the science community, fostering debate and the exchange of ideas

OUR IMPACT

■ Consultation responses

The Science Council contributes to a wide range of policy consultations from Government, Parliament and stakeholders across the science community and beyond. This year we responded to eight formal consultations on a range of issues, including the Demos Commission on Apprenticeships and two on digital skills for both the House of Lords Digital Skills Committee and the UK Digital Skills Taskforce.

Selected passages from our response to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee inquiry into GM foods and the application of the precautionary principle in Europe have been quoted in the resulting report. The House of Lords Digital Skills Committee report included reference to both our response and our 2011 workforce research report.

We continue to alert our member organisations to the latest consultations, particularly those where an organisation may have something unique to contribute, and update them on policy. More than one third of members submitted their own consultation responses over the course of the year.



OUR IMPACT

■ Public Affairs Network

2014 saw the launch of the Public Affairs Network, an association of policy professionals and other staff and volunteers interested in science policy from among our member organisations. The group meets to share ideas and information; to get to know each other better and identify areas to collaborate in; and to hear from guest speakers on key areas of science policy. 35 attendees heard short talks from Becky Purvis, Head of Public Affairs at the Royal Society and William Cullerne Bown, founder of Research Fortnight.

The initiative has been well-received and we intend to grow the network over the next few years through similar meetings and activities to increase the impact and influence of our member organisations across the science community and beyond.

“The Public Affairs Network is a great initiative, as it lets us chew over policy issues in an informal environment, and brings together a good range of people, from press officers to policy specialists to MPs.”

Robert Massey, Royal Astronomical Society



■ Party conferences

For the fourth year running, the Science Council hosted fringe events during the Autumn Political Party Conferences in 2014: raising our profile as a voice for the pan-science community, in collaboration with our members.

We held fringe event panel discussions at the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat conferences, in partnership with the Institution of Chemical Engineers, the Royal Society of Chemistry and Society of Biology, on the subject: *‘Creating jobs and wealth from investment in science and innovation: ensuring everyone benefits’*. Attendance across all three events was strong.

“The Science Council really helped us to get the message across to politicians and their advisors on the importance of science and scientific skills to the UK’s economy.”

Polly L Arnold, Crum Brown Chair - Chemistry, Edinburgh University

▶ WHAT’S NEXT

The Science Council will continue to identify and articulate common concerns, providing clarity on policies and priorities, and access to decision-formers for our member organisations. The biennial Roberts Lecture returns in 2015, a key component of our policy calendar.

MEMBER SUPPORT

3 The Science Council supports its member organisations to be more effective in meeting the needs of the science community, in order to build a strong professional body sector

OUR IMPACT

■ Members and membership engagement

Positive relationships with our members have been crucial to our success. Membership numbers remained steady throughout 2014 and the number of Licensed Bodies among our members has grown from 27 to 29.

Over the course of the year over 125 staff and volunteers from Science Council member organisations contributed to a range of issues affecting the sector through Council meetings, the CEO forum and other special interest groups.

We also published two benchmarking reports, using intelligence and insight gathered from 66% of member organisations, on Governance and Leadership (February) and Salaries and Remuneration (April). A third benchmarking project began on the subject of Volunteering, which was circulated in early 2015.

“As a smaller professional body for a relatively new profession, the opportunity to learn from well-established societies in the wider science community and share best practice is valuable. It is also reassuring to know that some of the challenges are not unique to us!”

Lynda Wight, TOPRA



OUR IMPACT

■ Diversity, Equality & Inclusion (DEI)

In March 2014 the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy Group first came together; an influential group of knowledgeable individuals guiding the project, which is working towards a science workforce that reflects the diversity of society.

This group has led the Science Council's activity and, in consultation with members, drafted the Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, which is the focal point of the project. The Declaration was launched at the Council meeting in October with 16 signatories. By the end of the year we had 50% of member organisations committed to improving diversity within their field.



THE DEI PROJECT SO FAR

EVENT TOPICS:

Unconscious bias: introduction and consideration of implications

Mentoring schemes: practice sharing and exploring potential for collaboration

Data: establishing a baseline and tracking progress

RESOURCES PRODUCED:

Diversity Roadmap: a framework for developing and managing diversity activity

Database of useful resources

Monitoring and benchmarking guidance, adapted from RAEng material

Guidance on diversity leadership and champions

Quick wins and starting steps

Glossary of key terms

Topic summaries, including mentoring, affinity networks, diversity policies, and more.

Further work is planned for 2015 to share learning and build networks of diversity leads and champions, as well as the intention to have all member organisations signed up to the Declaration by the end of the year.

■ Familiarisation with EU Policy – Brussels visit

In December 2014, the Science Council led 24 people from 13 member organisations on a visit to Brussels, to familiarise them with the European Union policy-making process and in particular their approach to science policy. We met with outgoing Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor Anne Glover; MEPs from the Labour and Conservative Parties; Christina Miller from the UK Research Office; and Neville Reeve from the Directorate General for Research and Innovation for the European Commission, all of whom provided valuable insight on engaging with European scientific policy making.

The feedback from delegates was extremely positive, with a number suggesting that an annual Science Council visit would help them engage better with the relevant individuals and institutions involved in EU science policy.

“For those who had never been before, I am sure it was an eye opener but even for someone who has been before there were aspects to it that were new to me and very interesting. I for one came away with a renewed feeling that to make an impact we have to find a way of having a sustained presence.”

Stephen Benn, Society of Biology

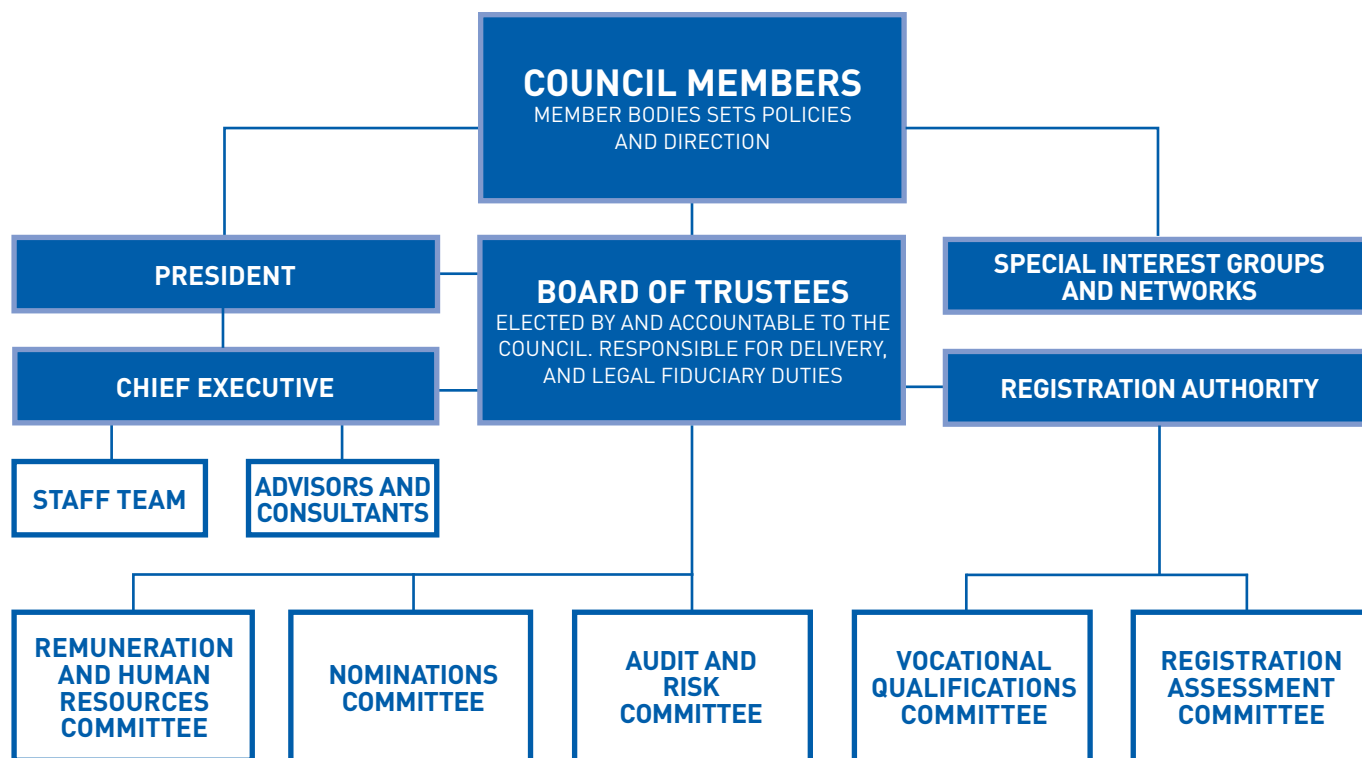
► WHAT'S NEXT

The Science Council is committed to articulating, raising awareness of and strengthening the role of professional bodies in science. Building on the success of the DEI project, we will explore further ways to support and guide our members, through sharing good practice and fostering collective action.



Science Council structure

- The Science Council is a membership organisation governed by a Board of Trustees answerable to the Full Council of Member Bodies.
- The Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and management of the Science Council and for ensuring that the Science Council meets its charitable objectives.
- The Full Council agrees the strategy, policies and priorities of the Science Council. The Council also elects the President and the Board of Trustees.
- The Board is advised on matters relating to the four Registers by a Registration Authority. The Registration Authority is appointed by the Board and is responsible for upholding the registration standards.



Our members and Licensed Bodies

Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine ❖
Association of Neurophysiological Scientists ❖
Association for Science Education ❖
British Academy of Audiology
British Association of Sport and Exercise Science ❖
BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT ❖
British Psychological Society ❖
British Society of Soil Scientists ❖
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management ❖
College of Podiatry ❖
Energy Institute ❖
Geological Society of London ❖
Institute of Biomedical Science ❖ ❖
Institute of Brewing and Distilling ❖
Institute of Corrosion ❖
Institute of Food Science and Technology ❖ ❖
Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology ❖
Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining ❖ ❖
Institute of Mathematics and its Applications ❖
Institute of Measurement and Control ❖
Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine ❖ ❖
Institute of Physics
Institute of Science and Technology ❖ ❖
Institute of Water ❖ ❖
Institution of Chemical Engineers ❖ ❖
Institution of Environmental Sciences ❖
London Mathematical Society
Mineralogical Society ❖
Nuclear Institute ❖

Oil and Colour Chemists' Association
Operational Research Society
Physiological Society
Royal Astronomical Society
Royal Meteorological Society
Royal Society of Chemistry ❖ ❖ ❖
Royal Statistical Society ❖
Society for Cardiological Science and Technology
Society for General Microbiology
Society of Biology ❖ ❖ ❖
Society of Dyers & Colourists
The Organisation for Professionals in Regulatory Affairs

❖ **Licensed to award Chartered Scientist (CSci)**

* **Licensed to award both Registered Scientist (RSci) and Registered Science Technician (RSciTech)**

❖ **Licensed to award Chartered Science Teacher (CSciTeach)**

Thank you

The Science Council would like to thank all the volunteers who give their time and considerable skill to upholding the quality and standards of the Science Council and our professional registers.

Board of Trustees

Professor Sir Tom Blundell CSci FRS
(President of Council and Chair
of the Board)

Professor Robert Ashford CSci

Dr Heather Barrett-Mold CSci

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Sarah May CSci

Professor Peter Sharp CSci

Corinne Stevenson

Brian Cameron (Observer),

Engineering Council

Trish Hall (Observer), Society for the
Environment

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy Group

Chaired by James Smith, Carbon Trust

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Working Groups:

Charter, Chaired by
Edmund Nickless CSci,

Roadmap, Chaired by
Jennifer Dyer, Institute of Physics,

Benchmarking and monitoring,
Chaired by Caroline Waters,
Equality and Human Rights
Commission (EHRC)

Registration Assessment Committee

Chaired by Claire Pollard CSci,
Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI)

Vocational Qualifications Committee

Chaired by Kate Barclay, Pfizer

CPD learning group

Chaired by Dr Trevor Lewis CSci,
Royal Statistical Society

**And to all our assessors, licence
review panel volunteers and the
many other people we rely on to
achieve our aims – too many to
mention by name!**



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