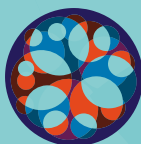


**Biochemical Society  
and Portland Press**

# Strategy

2019-2021



**BIOCHEMICAL  
SOCIETY**



**PORTLAND  
PRESS**



## Introducing our **Strategy**

### **Advancing molecular bioscience**

Biochemistry is the exploration of life at a fundamental and molecular level. The Biochemical Society exists to advance the molecular biosciences, both as an academic discipline and to promote its impact on areas of science including biotechnology, agriculture, and medicine. Biochemistry helps to play a key role in tackling global issues such as improving lifelong health, treatment of disease and food security.

The Society was established in 1911, during the early origins of molecular biology, and it is the largest UK single-discipline learned society in the biosciences. We are proud to be working with exceptional scientists and researchers from around the world, many of whom are at the forefront of this important field.

Our mission in the molecular biosciences is to support the dissemination and advancement of science, delivering opportunities to share knowledge and expertise, critically discuss ideas and provide forums in which to gather together and collaborate. We achieve this through the delivery of our publications and journals, scientific meetings, educational activities, policy work, awards and grants to scientists, students and others across and beyond our community. We are also in the fortunate position of owning our publishing arm, Portland Press, which was founded in 1990 as a custodian of the Society's publications. Portland Press is key to the Society influencing and driving positive change in the areas of scholarly research communication and the publication of peer-reviewed content.

The Biochemical Society and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Portland Press, work to support innovation and the advancement of science.

We achieve this through the circulation of knowledge and the sharing of ideas and research across the scientific community for the benefit of society at large.



## Building on progress

**Between 2013 and 2018, the organization carried out a period of restructuring. We now have the right capacity, flexibility, focus and resilience to deliver our ambitious strategy in the face of considerable external challenges. This three-year strategy covers both the Biochemical Society's activities and those of Portland Press.**

The strategy incorporates the feedback received from our member survey and from our Local Ambassadors, and it has been developed in partnership between Society Trustees, the Portland Press Board, Committee members and the staff team.

Our goal has been to embed and build on progress made during the period 2016 and 2018, while broadening our reach to fulfil our mission in a rapidly changing world. We will respond to these changes by engaging and collaborating with not just our members, but with all stakeholders and practitioners in the molecular biosciences to strengthen and champion our discipline.

A more interconnected world and continuing developments in technology have encouraged further consideration of our global network, to provide more flexibility and accessibility to reach more bioscientists, no matter where they are based. The policy landscape is also changing with the potential withdrawal of the UK from the European Union. Following a 2017 decision to transition publishing models to Open Access (OA) over an undefined length of time, a significant change to the landscape in 2018 was the launch of Plan S – an initiative to promote and accelerate OA publishing, with significant implications for publishing income, publishing processes and revenue operations. The impact of these various factors on the molecular biosciences is not yet completely realized. We have developed our strategy by embracing change and committing to adapt and transform in order to ensure we continue to serve those across our increasingly global, interconnected, diverse and multidisciplinary community.

We could not continue to deliver our activities without the ongoing support and dedication of our Members, Trustees, Board and Committee Members, Local Ambassadors, and Journal Editors, Reviewers and Authors. Our thanks go to these individuals and to the various other organizations and learned societies with whom we work closely.

**Pete Downes**  
President  
**Biochemical Society**



**Kate Baillie**  
Chief Executive  
**Biochemical Society**  
Managing Director  
**Portland Press Ltd**



# Bringing together **molecular bioscientists**

We will continue to expand our work, supporting Early Career bioscientists, building industry engagement and involvement, extending our international links and networks, and fostering diversity and equal opportunity for entry and progression in our discipline.

As a membership body, we will continue to scan the landscape, reviewing and adding benefits and activities to support members at all stages of their career.



“ Early Career biochemists play a central role in the development and delivery of world-class research in the areas of molecular and cellular biosciences. By supporting young bioscientists we sustain scientific excellence, foster networking across membership and the wider community, bringing benefits to health and the economy.

The Early Career Advisory Panel works to ensure that the views, needs and concerns of our Early Career members are recognized and mapped onto existing and future Society activities and initiatives. The Panel aims to shape the way the Society achieves its mission by engaging with young bioscientists in all areas of the Society's mandate, including meetings, communication, policy, training and education.

**Dominika Gruszka,**  
Chair, Early Career Advisory Panel  
Molecular Biophysicist, The Francis Crick Institute

”

We will grow to

**7,000**

paid members  
by 2021

## Early Career **Bioscientists**

A third of our members are Early Career bioscientists. There has already been a great deal of enthusiasm and support for our Early Career Advisory Panel since its inaugural meeting in November 2018. This Panel will play an important role in guiding the Society's future activities and supporting a strong future of molecular bioscientists in the UK and internationally.

## Working with industry

In addition to our strategic collaboration with learned societies and other partners, the Society will also focus its attention on continuing to build engagement with industry.

We want to encourage closer networking between industry and academia, to facilitate sharing of best practice and ensure we are supporting current and future molecular bioscientists across the breadth of our field.



## Expanding our international networks

The Society will continue to host scientific meetings across Europe, identifying opportunities further afield. This international presence will be supported by attendance at global events, including sponsorship of poster prizes to scientists around the world.

In 2018, over 85% of journal authors were international. We will focus our work to develop activity in China and Japan and broaden our coverage of scientific research, building on the increasing interest in *Bioscience Reports* within this region. We will also explore opportunities to expand and strengthen our presence in Europe and The Americas.



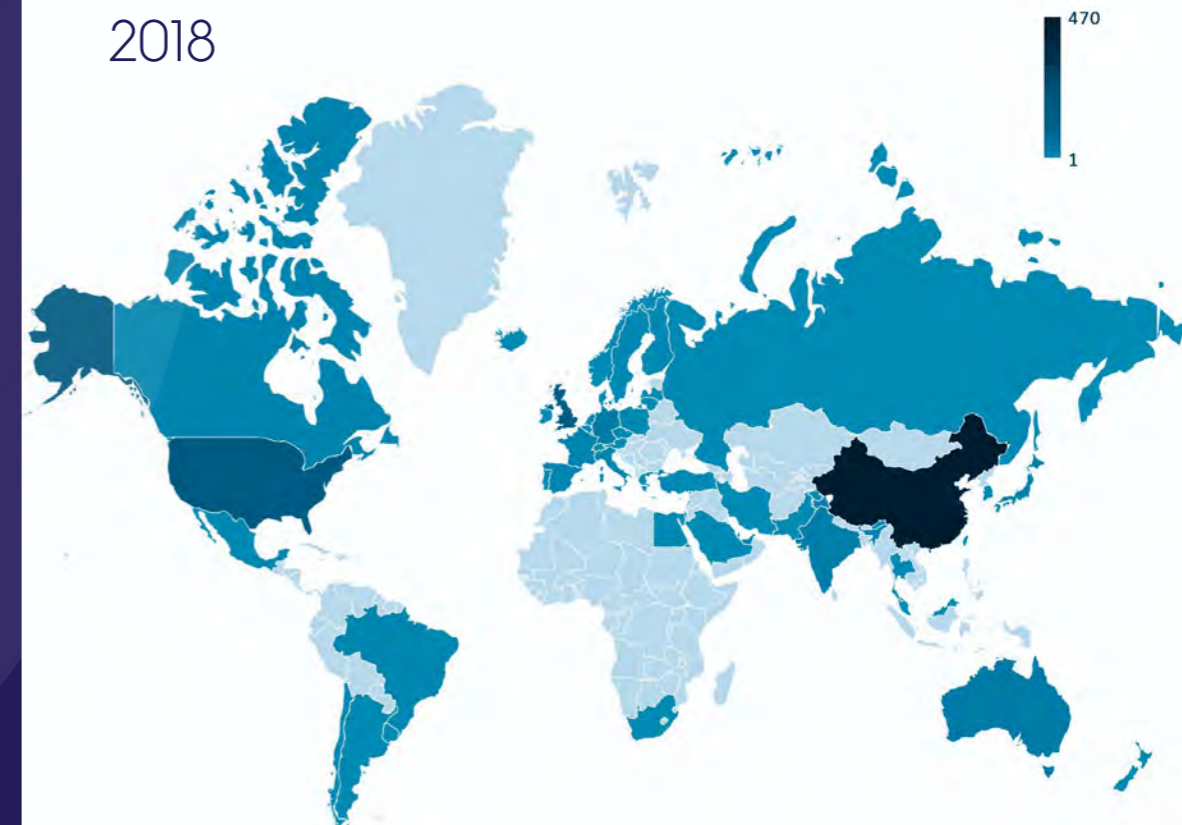
“

Biomedical research leads to developments in health, medicine and biotechnology. However, despite all the genomic advances made in the last two decades, it is still as hard, if not harder, to discover new significant medicines that will make a difference to a growing and ageing patient population. To tackle big challenges such as cancer or Alzheimer's disease, it is becoming increasingly imperative that academia and industry develop strong and effective partnerships. I am proud to have joined the Biochemical Society's Clinical & Translational Research Theme Panel where I can participate in discussions around the latest research and organize scientific events with like-minded scientists from both the public and private sectors. The Society's focus on bringing together both academia and industry at the same table and facilitating these relationships is of critical importance. Having all stakeholders as part of the conversation from the outset maximises the potential for success.

”

**Dr Augustin Amour,**  
Scientific Leader - Adaptive Immunity Research Unit, GSK

## Global Portland Press Authors 2018



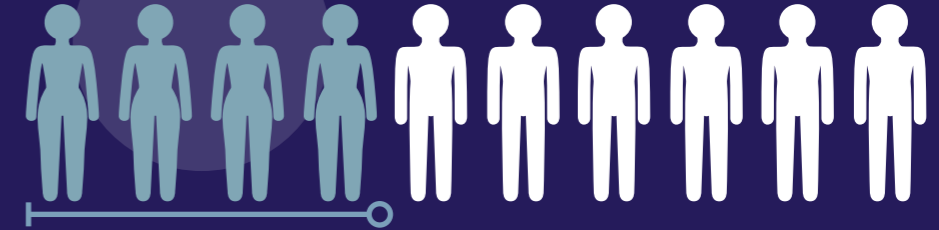
## Diversity and equal opportunity

The Society is an active member of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Science and Health (EDIS) group and the Royal Society of Biology's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. The Publications Committee is also developing and will oversee the implementation of a plan around inclusivity on journal Editorial Boards. They will reconsider peer review practices to encourage diversity and equal opportunity and provide more opportunities for Early Career scientists to engage with our journals. We will work with these groups and others to help drive equal opportunities in science careers for diverse minority groups.

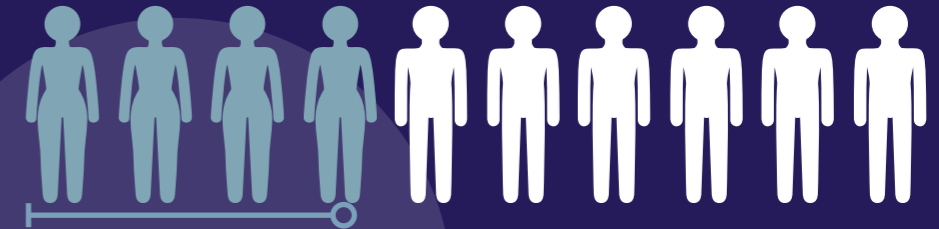
In its own work, the Society strives towards a **50:50 gender balance** on its committees, for its award nominations and for event speakers. We will continue to ensure gender representation is well balanced, and proactively encourage diversity in science, providing grant funding to support diversity-related projects.

## In 2018, we had...

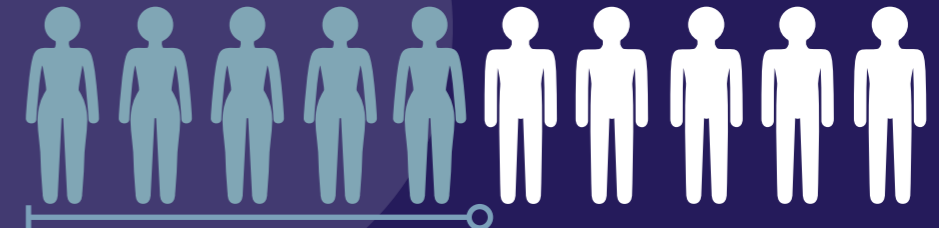
**39%**  
female  
speakers



**37%**  
female  
committee  
members



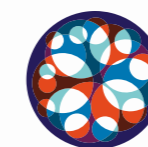
**53%**  
female  
committee  
chairs



Engagement  
Empowerment  
Society  
ETHNICITY  
Support  
Values  
Equality  
Inclusion  
Diversity  
Balance  
Education  
DISABILITY  
ACCESSIBILITY  
Fairness  
Attitude  
Collaboration  
Community  
Respect  
LGBTQ+

### The Biochemical Society, EDIS member

The Biochemical Society is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in the molecular biosciences. We believe that a lack of diversity and inclusivity across the scientific community represents a loss of potential talent to the UK and beyond.



**BIOCHEMICAL  
SOCIETY**



Equality, Diversity  
and Inclusion in  
Science and Health

# Supporting career development and lifelong learning

As part of our role to support current and future molecular bioscientists, we will provide learning and networking opportunities for all those studying and working across the breadth and depth of molecular bioscience roles in academia and industry. In addition to developing new careers resources, we will deliver a diverse range of activities to support career development, including face-to-face and online training, scientific meetings and exposure to various publishing activities, including workshops on authorship, reviewing and editorship for a journal.

## Training

The Society will work with its Training Theme Panel to deliver training covering a variety of skills and subject areas. The range of courses offered will be developed from proposals put forward by those working in the sector and where a gap has been identified to support lifelong learning.

Pictured: participants at **Modern Drug Discovery Workshop, October 2018**

## Careers events and resources

As well as continuing to attend careers events and develop our popular collection of career resources for post-16 students and undergraduates, we will broaden our careers support to a wider audience.

This will include working with teachers to develop new resources to embed careers information into school curricula.

We will also explore new ways to support postgraduates and Early Career scientists with careers-related activities and promote opportunities through our Jobs Board.



Explore **Life**  
Be a **Biochemist**

## Professional development and recognition

High quality continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers and educators is vital in supporting the future pipeline of molecular bioscientists. Since teachers typically work with hundreds of young people over their career, the impact of effective CPD can potentially be huge. Over the next three years, we will continue to support teachers to develop their skills and knowledge and facilitate opportunities within industry and academia for schools and further education teachers and their students.



All of our scientific meetings and training events will continue to be CPD accredited with certificates provided to attendees for their professional development and recognition.

To further support career development of those working in technical roles, the Society will offer Registered Science Technician (RSciTech) status to eligible members via the Royal Society of Biology and the Science Council.

# £300K

## grant funding and BURSARIES

## Providing grant funding & bursaries

In 2018, the Society awarded in the region of £300,000 in grant funding and bursaries, £175,000 of which was specifically directed towards travel grants and supporting CPD. We will continue to offer financial support to members in accessing CPD opportunities provided by the Society and externally.

## Celebrating excellence and achievement

Every year the Society makes a series of prestigious awards to scientists and researchers that recognize excellence and achievement in the molecular biosciences. We will continue to review the Awards programme to ensure it includes an award for each career stage and for a diversity of career paths.

**Patrick Evers**, Chair of Research Area – Signalling, presents **Qian Wu** with her Early Career Research Award 2019.





# Encouraging wider dialogue and working collaboratively **across and beyond our community**

The Society gives a voice to our community to influence the changing culture of science through communicating the sector's work to policy-makers, via public engagement and through our publishing activities. We will work collaboratively to deliver and implement plans for a sustainable transition to Open Access and Open Scholarship. To achieve this, we will continue to work with learned societies, research institutions and funders, and other organizations in and beyond the STEM sectors and across all our areas of activity, reflecting the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of our community.

## Policy engagement

We are committed to engaging our community with key policy issues relating to the molecular biosciences and to representing their views to influence science and education policy.

Over the next three years, we will continue to feed into relevant consultations and respond to news stories, maximizing our influence through our close working relationships with the Royal Society of Biology and the Campaign for Science and Engineering. To support this work, we will continue to grow and engage our Policy Network, increase input into our policy activities from across the devolved nations and provide new opportunities to support members in how to engage with policy.



## Collaboration

The Society will maintain its strong commitment to strategic collaboration across the breadth and depth of the scientific sector and beyond. The Society, through its publishing arm Portland Press, is collaborating with other learned societies to navigate a transition to Open Access including via the Society Publishers' Coalition.

It is through these valuable relationships, with partners within and beyond the bioscience community, that the Society will be able to continue to provide a variety of opportunities for our members, journal authors and editors and the wider molecular bioscience sector to gather together and share ideas and expertise.

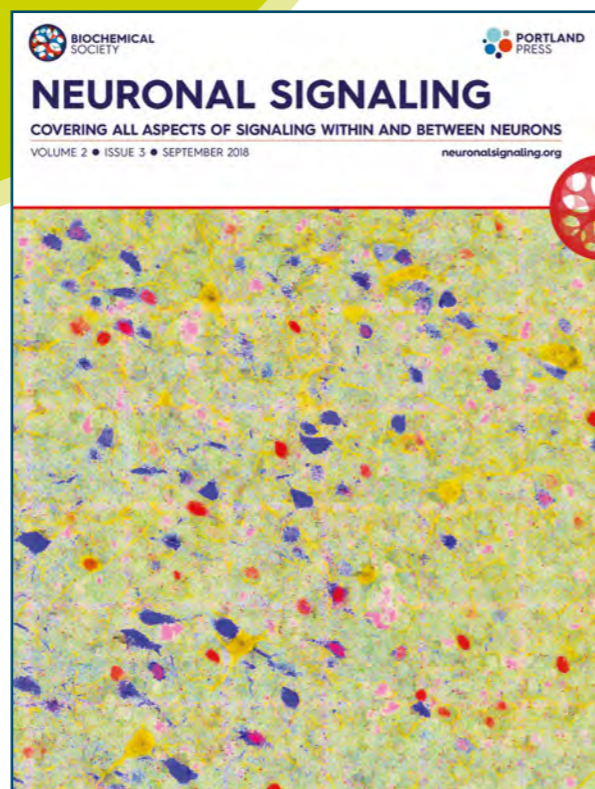
## Collaborating with over **137** partners in 2018



## Open access

The Society and Portland Press have a positive and proactive approach to Open Access, seeing this as a stepping stone towards Open Scholarship. Changes resulting from funder-driven policies and initiatives to promote and accelerate Open Access will have a significant impact on our revenues, surplus and publishing processes; we will work closely with researchers, higher education, other learned societies and research funders to support a sustainable transition to Open Access.

This transition will bring the opportunity for publishing journeys to be further improved and open the door to new thinking around offerings and commercial models, allowing Portland Press to serve the research and higher education communities well while continuing to return a surplus to the Biochemical Society in support of its charitable work.



## Public engagement

The Society's public engagement programme has grown significantly over the past three years and this is an area we will continue to develop. Engaging the public on key topics and issues such as genome editing and antibiotic resistance is crucial, not only in allowing questions and concerns to be better understood and addressed, but also in guiding policy-making in these areas.

In addition to running activities and debates at festivals and events across the UK, we will continue to add to our portfolio of public engagement training and resources, and to offer grant funding to support activities that communicate the excitement of molecular bioscience to young people and the community. This will include launching a new art and science initiative, providing opportunities for members to work in partnership with their local community.



# Promoting and sharing knowledge

We will develop the Portland Press portfolio to offer a home for every paper published within the molecular biosciences, growing to encompass the broader life sciences.

The Society will continue to provide a variety of opportunities to share research via its diverse programme of scientific meetings and training events.



## Scientific meetings and training events

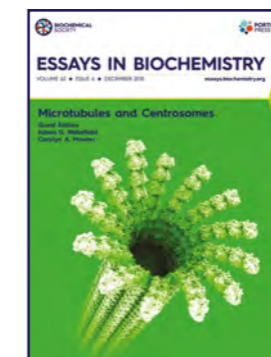
Providing access to a variety of forums, where scientists can learn new skills, explore, critically discuss and share research on a diverse selection of topics covering the molecular biosciences, is crucial to advancement in the sector. Over the next three years, our events programme will continue to improve accessibility and broaden our reach to new audiences via live-streaming technology and our online training portal.

## Publications

The focus over the next three years will be to increase the quality, number and breadth of articles published across the portfolio, providing global reach while addressing local challenges. We will also migrate our journals and the Society's magazine, *The Biochemist*, to a new publishing platform that will improve accessibility to scientific papers and offer a more engaging experience for users.

We will work with our researcher community to explore new ways in which we can support them, as well as providing more opportunities for Early Career scientists to engage with our journals. We will improve publishing processes and services for researchers and innovate with formats and offerings to add value. A new data policy will also be implemented in support of Open Scholarship.

Increase number of published articles to **2,200** per year by **2021**



# Promoting the importance of our discipline and through this, **the broader life sciences**

Through our activities, the Society and Portland Press will continue to raise the profile of the molecular biosciences and its valuable contribution to society. We will champion bioscientists, and the work they achieve, through the activities we deliver and amongst the general public.

We will extend our reach through strategic collaboration and connecting an increasing community of bioscientists. This will be largely achieved with the development of a new website that will help to engage not only Society members but also a variety of stakeholders in the molecular biosciences. We will continue to develop and grow our digital activity.

# Continue to ensure sustainable support for the **advancement of science**

We will ensure operational excellence across the organization through effective use of governance, business technology, finance and human resources, continuing to build our reputation as a knowledge hub for the life sciences, as well as a friendly and inclusive place to work.

Considering the ongoing value to the Society of its property investment, the offices will be relocated to enable agility in maximizing the performance of the Society's financial assets.

We will also work collaboratively with the Society's pension schemes to ensure their ongoing sustainability and best value to their members.

A key deliverable from Portland Press is a sustainable shift to commercial offerings for it to continue to support the Society's activities. We will work with institutional librarians and other partners to co-develop sustainable commercial models for an Open Access future.

A proportion of the funding from Portland Press activities, to the level of £500,000, will be invested to build resilience over the period between 2019 and 2021. This will support both diversification of income and transitioning publishing activities away from the 'paywalled' model.

Continuous improvements will be made to the organization's business technology infrastructure and processes to improve efficiencies and enable staff to work 'on any device, anywhere'. We will also develop and implement an Environmental Sustainability strategy across the activities of the Society and Portland Press, based upon the outcome of a sustainability audit.

**4.2m** articles  
downloaded  
in **2018**



# Biochemical Society

[www.biochemistry.org](http://www.biochemistry.org)

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