

The voice of the biosciences: RSB's science policy impact in 2023

At a glance

RSB published our [general election manifesto](#). We hosted and joined panels, committees, groups, workshops, events and campaigns. We synthesised our members' evidence and expertise and delivered it direct to policymakers and advisors in Parliament, Government and wider sectors - including then Minister for Science, Technology, Research and Innovation George Freeman MP. We hosted 41 and attended 43 knowledge exchange meetings and events with policy- and decision-makers across science sectors, in research funding and Government. We wrote to civil servants, MPs and Peers with over 14 briefings and letters. We submitted four detailed responses to Government and Parliamentary calls for evidence.

View our [science policy priorities](#) and find out more about the [impact of our policy work](#). Subscribe to receive our [science policy](#) and [plant science](#) newsletters direct to your inbox.

Headlines

- Research landscape: [working together](#) with sister societies the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Institute of Physics (IOP) and many others, we continued to meet frequently with policymakers and advisors through the year, including civil servants at the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). We provided evidence to Government and Parliament and advocated publicly for the UK's association to Horizon Europe. Congratulations to all involved in getting this over the line: association was formalised on 1 January 2024. To voice [community concerns](#) over proposed changes to UK visa requirements, we wrote to policymakers.
- Research culture: alongside the RSC, IOP and others we released [a statement](#) reaffirming our commitment to inclusivity in science. As part of our work to provide further opportunities for diverse early- and mid-career members to enter RSB committee and Council roles, we welcomed the first cohort of trainees on the RSB's SEAT Trainee Trustee Pilot Scheme.
- Nature and climate: we delivered the Society's [Nature and Climate Strategy](#). Our [letter](#) to the Prime Minister, ahead of COP28, called for holistic solutions to the interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and chemical and waste pollution. The Government published a report following the 2022 BEIS Secretary of State's Review of Net Zero and the report discussed several concerns flagged in RSB's [submission](#) to the review exercise.
- Ethical biological innovation: the House of Lords acknowledged RSB's contribution to development of the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill, made Act, and we engaged with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on the development of new regulations under the Act. Our annual Animal Science Meeting brought interdisciplinary experts together to focus on science, policy and regulations for animal breeding and genetic technologies. As member and secretariat of the [UK Bioscience Sector Coalition](#), RSB engaged with 16 meetings to bring advice to the Home Office and other related bodies on the regulated use of animals in science.
- Biological security: we [responded](#) to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee's call for evidence on emerging diseases and learnings from COVID-19. Defra published the Plant biosecurity strategy for Great Britain, which included points from RSB's response to the initial consultation (in 2020), including plans to continue working with the RSB through professional registers and sponsoring of our Plant Health Undergraduate Studentships (PHUGS). PHUGS is moving from strength to strength: 12 students completed [studentships](#) in 2023.

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