

# Technical Careers in Biosciences

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Dept of Plant Sciences

University of Cambridge

RSB Careers Day 2023



Royal Society of  
**Biology**

# My Background



BSc | **Biochemistry**



Year in Industry | **Biocatalysis**



MPhil | **Industrial Biotechnology**



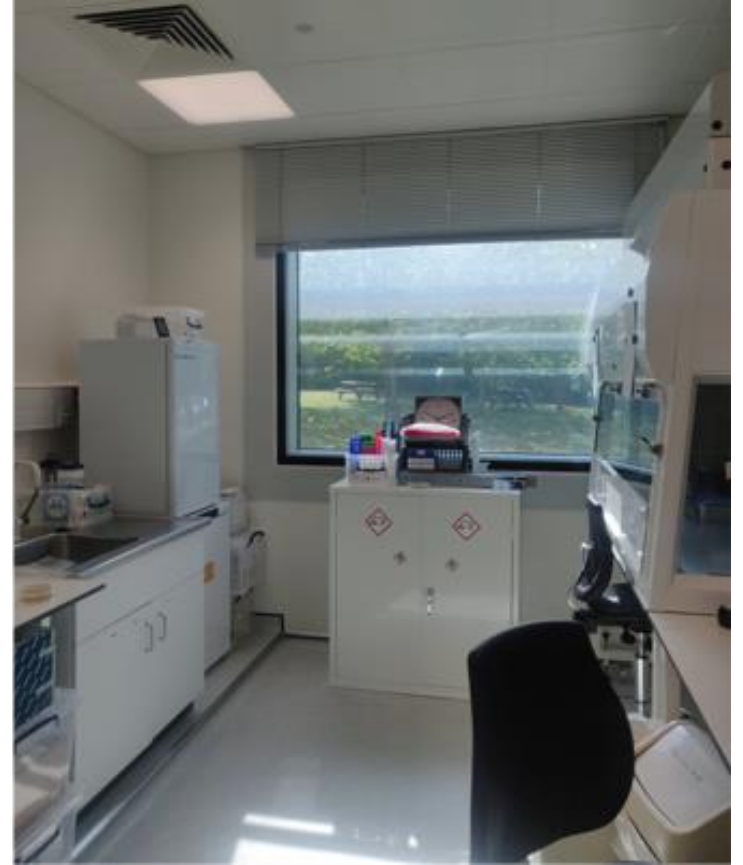
Research Technician | **Synthetic Genomics**

# Why bioscience?



Imperial College  
London







UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Department of  
Plant Sciences



# What is a technician?

# People in Science

	Undergraduate	PhD student	Postdoc	PI / Professor	Technician
seen by Undergraduate					
seen by PhD student					
seen by Postdoc					
seen by PI / Professor					
seen by Technician					



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Sketching-Science

# Technical roles are highly diverse

- Academia or Industry
- “Jack of all trades” or niche specialist
- Purely lab-based or managing / coordinating others
- One project or multiple projects or multiple disciplines

# Technicians: the backbone of research

- Integral part of ALL scientific development
- Practical and highly skilled
- Problem solvers
- Innovative and adaptable
- No longer a “hidden workforce”

# What do technical roles involve?

- Lab work (lots of it)
- Using specialist equipment
- Training others
- Collaborative projects
- Supervising students
- Analysing and distributing data

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**Skill, Dexterity**

**Responsibility**

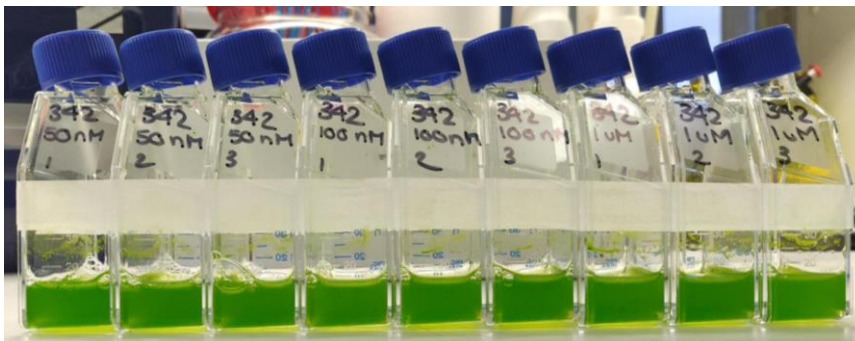
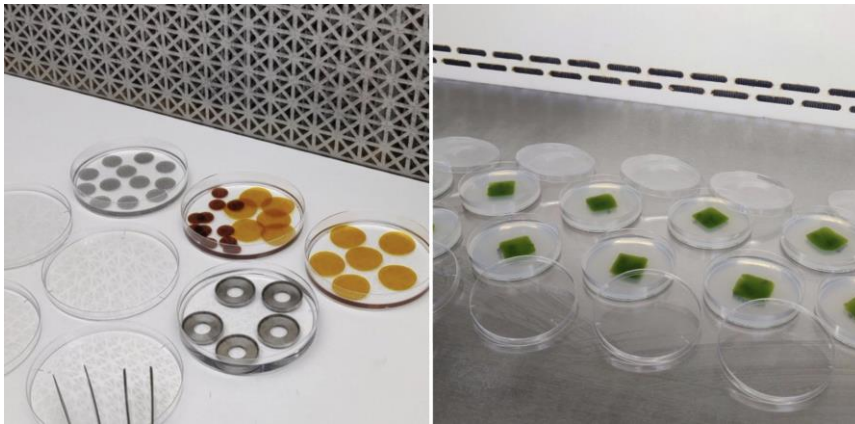
**Communication**

**Teamwork**

**Leadership**

**Diligence**

# What do I do?



# Why be a technician?

- **Practical**, engaging day-to-day work
- **Impactful**, interesting science
- **Confidence** of mastering specific skills
- **Respect** from your lab mates!
  
- Lots of **opportunities** ...

# Opportunities & Career Progression

- UKRI-sponsored TALENT commission
- **Training**
  - BBSRC Flexible Talent Mobility Award
  - RI Christmas Lectures
- **Outreach** e.g. STEM Ambassadors
- **Mentoring**



# TECHNICIANS: THE DAVID SAINSBURY GALLERY

Step into an interactive world of careers and take a peek behind the scenes in our brand new gallery.

Try hands on exhibits that bring to life a wide variety of workplaces, from a blockbuster film set to a pharmaceutical lab, allowing you to experience the hidden yet vital careers of technicians.

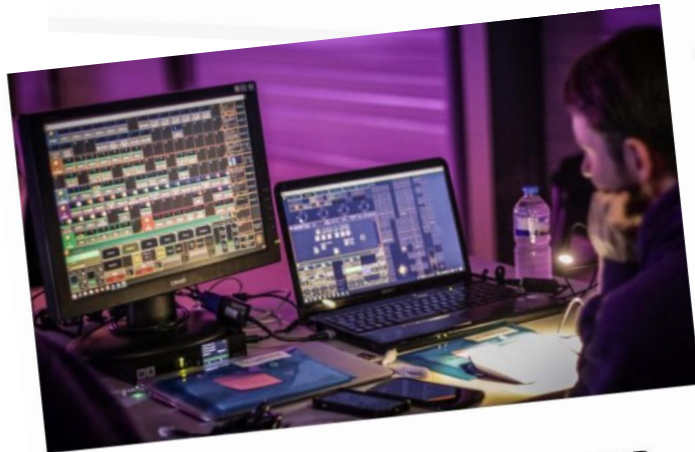
**FREE INTERACTIVE GALLERY**

**DATE:** Open daily, 10.00–18.00

**LOCATION:** Level 1

[Subscribe to our newsletter for updates](#)

[Technicians stories](#)



READ ONLINE

## TECHNICIANS: STORIES FROM BEHIND THE SCENES

Discover stories from technicians working behind the scenes to save lives, make energy greener, create everyday items for the home, provide entertainment and more.

# SCIENCE MUSEUM

# Support Networks

[techniciancommitment.org.uk](http://techniciancommitment.org.uk)

**The Commitment includes 4 key areas:**

- VISIBILITY**  
Ensure all technicians within the organisation are identifiable and that the contribution of technicians is visible within and beyond the institution
- RECOGNITION**  
Support technicians to gain recognition through professional registration and external awards schemes
- CAREER DEVELOPMENT**  
Enable career progression opportunities for technicians through the provision of clear, documented career pathways
- SUSTAINABILITY**  
Ensure the future sustainability of technical skills across the organisation and that technical expertise is fully utilised

**2023 IOP Awards**  
**Now open for nominations**

**IOP Technician Award 2023 – Nominations Closing Soon!**

The IOP Technician Award enables the community to recognise and celebrate the skills and experience of technicians and their contribution to physics. With the aim of raising the professional status of technicians, the IOP Technician Award highlights the diverse role

[READ MORE »](#)

**Technical leadership programme for women begins**

Helen Sharman OBE The Herschel Programme welcomes 2023 cohort The 2023 Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership has begun for the second year. 350 technicians from 71 higher education and research institutes are taking part in this year's six-month

[READ MORE »](#)

**Supporting Diversity within The Technical Workforce**

asConsulti

[heated.org.uk](http://heated.org.uk)

# Route to a PhD

- Technical skills
- Organisational skills
- Project management
- Independent intellectual input

Technicians make it happen



# Talk to me about ...

- **Life as a technician**
- **Choosing a good lab**
- **Industry Placements**
- **Should I do a masters?**
- **Writing applications *BSc, MRes, PhD, placements***
- **Science *SynBio, Biotechnology, Biocatalysis***