

This list of frequently asked questions with answers is for your reference only, and should not be distributed. It has been created to help you talk both generically about what the Royal Society of Biology (RSB) does, and more specifically about the benefits of membership.

Before you start talking about RSB and membership, find out a bit more about your audience – are they studying or working? Are they interested in keeping up to date with the biosciences? Perhaps they are looking to progress in their career?

When you know a bit more about their priorities, you can advise them on the parts of membership you think they would be most interested in, and explain what features of RSB membership would be most relevant and beneficial for them.

What is a professional association?

Your audience may not be aware of what a professional association is, or why they exist, so this can provide some context. “A professional association is usually a non-profit organisation that represents and raises the profile of either a particular profession or academic discipline. The RSB exists to represent, promote and further the biosciences.”

What does the RSB do?

The RSB is the UK’s leading professional association for the life sciences and a single unified voice for biology in the UK. As an organisation, our vision is of a world that understands the true value of biology and how it can contribute to improving life for all. The four key areas of our work are:

- Advising government and influencing policy
- Advancing education and professional development
- Supporting people working in the life sciences
- Engaging and encouraging public interest in the life sciences

Who can become a member of the RSB?

The RSB is the UK’s leading professional association for anyone who works in or has an interest in the biosciences. We have membership grades to suit all levels of interest and experience. We represent, support and engage with more than 17,500 members, from 14-year-old school students, to Nobel Laureates, and almost 90 organisational members, who represent and work in specific areas of the biosciences.

Can I join if I am from overseas?

Yes, our membership is open to everyone around the world who fulfil the membership criteria.

What are the benefits of RSB membership?

The RSB supports its members throughout their career and education. In addition to supporting the future of biology in the UK, your membership will make you a part of a significant (and growing) network of bioscience professionals, help you stay up to date with biology-related developments, and provide you with additional recognition for your skills and experience. Key features of RSB membership include:

Professional recognition

- Recognition as a professional biologist via post nominal letters (grade dependent)
- Achieve Chartered or Registered status through our professional awards (grade dependent)
- Access our reputable Continuing Professional Development scheme
- Discounted training courses for all abilities and interests

Information and updates

- Subscription to our award-winning members' magazine, *The Biologist*
- Topical newsletters to stay up to date with developments in science policy, biology education and the RSB's work

Professional networking opportunities

- Invitations to attend regular online and UK-wide bioscience events
- Opportunities to join committees and groups to strengthen your portfolio or CV

Shape the future of biology

- Volunteering roles at outreach and engagement events
- Input into the UK's biosciences policy work
- Exclusive member grants and awards

How much does membership cost?

The price of membership depends on what grade you apply for and your level of experience. We offer a range of discounts (up to 50%) for those who are in full-time education, recent graduates, unemployed, retired, or members of one of our Member Organisations.

What membership grade should I apply for?

If you are not sure what membership grade is right for you, you can complete our short survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RSBgrade>). Alternatively, email membership@rsb.org.uk with your CV or a brief career and education summary with dates, and our membership team will be happy to advise you on the appropriate membership grade.

How do I become a member?

To become a member of the RSB, you need to submit an application through our online portal, mySociety (<https://my.rsb.org.uk>).

When can I become a member?

We hold quarterly membership elections for new members to join. These are held annually on: 1st January, 1st April, 1st July and 1st October.

Do I need to be nominated by a current member?

No, anyone who has an interest in the biosciences can join the RSB without the need to be nominated by a current member.

How do I upgrade or renew my membership?

Current members only need to pay a £15 administration fee to transfer their membership to a higher grade. This fee is waived for students wishing to transfer to the associate (AMRSB) grade. You can renew your membership online through your mySociety account (<https://my.rsb.org.uk>),

alternatively you can call the membership team on 01233 555 665.

Is my school a member?

Contact us with your school's name and we will be able to let you know.

What benefits do I get as an undergraduate student?

For just £15 per year, undergraduate students can join at the student affiliate grade and benefit from:

Strengthen your CV

- Join a Science Council professional register
- Enter a competition or apply for an award
- Volunteer at one of our public events
- Write for the RSB blog or *The Biologist*

Funding and discounts

- Apply for a regional grant to run a public engagement event
- Apply for a travel grant for overseas travel
- Receive a 20% discount on life science titles from Wiley-Blackwell and Oxford University Press

Discover

- Free subscription to our award-winning magazine, *The Biologist*
- Subscribe to a variety of electronic bulletins to keep up to date with developments in science policy, biology education, upcoming events and available grants
- Join your regional branch and attend events, to network with local members and professionals

Life after your degree

- Attend careers events to learn more about your options after you graduate
- Discover our online careers resources, undergraduate studentships and grants, and jobs board

How do I get involved with my regional branch?

There are 16 regional branches across the UK, and 2 international branches in Hong Kong and Australasia. Once you have been elected as a member, you can join your local branch to keep up to date with their activities, or even join the branch as a branch committee member.

Can you help fund me?

We offer grants for individual members of the RSB:

Travel grants

To help fund overseas travel in connection with biological study, teaching or research. Grants of £500 are available every year for the following grades of member to apply for:

- Travel grant for a student affiliate or associate member of the Royal Society of Biology (AMRSB)
- Travel grant for an early career member of the Royal Society of Biology (MRSB)

Outreach and Engagement grants

If you have an idea for a local public engagement event and are looking for some additional funds to help make it a success, you can apply for up to £500 for event delivery.

Big Biology Day grants

Big Biology Days are a one-day science festival bringing together organisations under one roof to celebrate the life sciences by engaging the general public. You can apply for up to £500 to run your own Big Biology Day.

Can you help with careers advice?

We provide free downloadable careers resources for teachers and careers advisers in schools and universities: www.rsb.org.uk/careers

Contact

Head office address

Royal Society of Biology, 1 Naoroji Street, London WC1X 0GB

Membership team

Email membership@rsb.org.uk or call 01233 555 665

Other queries

Email info@rsb.org.uk or call 020 3925 3440