

**This list of frequently asked questions with answers has been created to help you talk both generically about what the Society does, and more specifically about what membership can offer.**

**This document is for your reference only, and should not be distributed.**

If you have any questions, please contact [alexandra.spencer@rsb.org.uk](mailto:alexandra.spencer@rsb.org.uk)

## **Before you start telling people about the specifics of membership...**

I would recommend you find out a bit more about them – are they studying? Are they working? Where in the country are they based? What are they interested in? When you know a bit more about them, then you can tell them the parts of membership you think they would be most interested in – this turns a ‘feature’ of membership into an actual ‘benefit’, as it’s something that’s relevant to them!

## **Some people won’t know what a professional association is**

It may be that a lot of people aren’t aware of what a professional association is, or why they even exist, so sometimes that’s a good place to start to provide some context for the Royal Society of Biology. “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 biosciences.”

## **If you don’t know the answer**

Don’t worry! Make sure you take down their full details and question, and send it through to [alexandra.spencer@rsb.org.uk](mailto:alexandra.spencer@rsb.org.uk) and she will pass the question through to the most relevant member of staff.

## **“What does the Royal Society of Biology do?”**

The Royal Society of Biology 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 we work in 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.

We have over 17,300 members, from 14 year old school students, all the way up to Nobel Laureates, and over 100 organisational members, who represent and work in specific areas of the biosciences.



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- Exclusive post-nominal letters, once you have applied and signed our code of conduct.
- Apply for a 2017 travel grant to support overseas travel in connection with biological teaching, study and research. Closes 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
- Participate in our straightforward CPD scheme and receive a 50% discount on our training courses.
- Enter a competition, apply for an award or a grant.

## **Network**

- Attend RSB or one of our Special Interest Group's events to meet other professional members and Member Organisations.
- Join a regional branch to network with local members.

## **Engage the public**

- Volunteer at one of our public events, or apply for a grant to run your own.
- Apply to write for our blog or *The Biologist* – contact [media@rsb.org.uk](mailto:media@rsb.org.uk).
- Apply for one of our regional grants to support you in organising a science outreach event/activity for Biology Week 2017.

## **Support the future of biology**

- Engage with policy and government legislation by having your input in our consultation responses – contact [policy@rsb.org.uk](mailto:policy@rsb.org.uk).
- Support our work in primary, secondary and higher education – contact [education@rsb.org.uk](mailto:education@rsb.org.uk).

*\*For more in-depth information, please see the membership benefits grid.*

## **“I’m an undergrad student, what do I get?”**

For just £15 per year, features of membership are:

### **Strengthen your CV**

- Join a Science Council professional register. Read more about how to become a Registered Science Technician (RSciTech) after gaining at least 12 months of hands on experience, perhaps from your placement year.
- 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.

### **Network**

- Join your regional branch and attend one of their upcoming events, to network with local members.

### **Discover**

- Free subscription to the award-winning *The Biologist* magazine.
- Subscribe to a variety of electronic bulletins to help keep you up to date with developments in science policy, biology education, upcoming events and available grants.
- Attend an RSB event to meet other professional members and member organisations.

### **Life after your degree**

- Attend the Bioscience Careers Festival to find out about your careers options after you graduate.
- Discover our online careers resources, comprehensive list of undergraduate studentships, Member Organisation's grants and jobs board.

## “How much does membership cost?”

The price of membership depends on what grade you apply for, your level of experience, and what discounts you are eligible for. *\*Please refer to the membership benefits grid for further information.*

## “How do I become a member?”

Fill out an **interest form** (which can be downloaded and printed 2 per page at [www.rsb.org.uk/toolkit](http://www.rsb.org.uk/toolkit) for you to use at your event), this form will be sent back to head office who will contact you with more information. To apply, we will definitely require a CV; however certificates and references may also be requested, depending on the grade of membership you're applying for. Once you have completed the application through your mySociety page, and paid in full, then you will be elected to join the membership. Members are elected every quarter on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> October.

## “How do I upgrade or renew my membership?”

**Upgrade:** Providing your subscription is up to date, current members only need to pay a £15 administration fee to apply to transfer their membership to a higher grade. Your new subscription rate will become due on the renewal date following your election. The £15 transfer fee is waived for students wishing to transfer to the associate (AMRSB) grade.

**Renew:** When you wish to renew, please log into your mySociety page and your renewal transaction will appear under myOrders.

## “Can I join if I'm from, or returning overseas?”

Yes absolutely, if you fulfil the membership criteria then you're more than welcome to apply/maintain your membership. However, as the majority of our membership is currently in the UK, the majority of events and training will be held in the UK.

## “Is my school a member?”

Maybe! Get the person to fill in a form, scribble on the back that they're interested in SCAS membership, and we'll get back to them. The benefits of SCAS membership can be found on the grid.

## “How do I get involved with my regional branch?”

There are 18 regional branches across the UK, with one in Hong Kong. Once you have been elected as a member, you will receive email notification of events the regional branch committee (local to your mailing address) are organising.

If you wish to join your regional branch committee, you can email your local branch via the email addresses shown on each branch's webpage. To become an official committee member, you will have to be voted in at the Annual General Meeting. However if you want to get involved sooner, you can be co-opted on a branch's committee member before the branch's next AGM, and contribute to the branch committee's activities straight away.

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## “Can you help fund me?”

We offer two grants for individual members of the RSB:

### **Travel grants**

The aim of these grants is to give the opportunity of overseas travel in connection with biological study, teaching or research to those who would otherwise be unlikely to have it. Grants of £500 are available every year to the following grades of member:

- 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)

These open on 1 November and close on 1 March for 2017 travel.

### **Regional grant scheme**

If you have an idea for an event during Biology Week (7-15<sup>th</sup> October 2017) and are looking for some additional funds to help make it a success, apply for a grant by April 2017 (closing date tbc)

- Small Grant of £50 - £200
- Full Grant of £201 - £500

Please contact [regions@rsb.org.uk](mailto:regions@rsb.org.uk) if you have any questions.

## “Can you help with careers advice?”

We provide free downloadable careers resources on our website for teachers and careers advisers in schools and universities through the UK: [www.rsb.org.uk/careers](http://www.rsb.org.uk/careers)

## “How do I contact head office?”

**Head office address:** Royal Society of Biology, Charles Darwin House, 12 Roger Street, London WC1N 2JU.

**Telephone:** 020 7685 2550

**For membership enquiries:** 01233 504 804

### **Email enquiries:**

General: [info@rsb.org.uk](mailto:info@rsb.org.uk)

Membership: [membership@rsb.org.uk](mailto:membership@rsb.org.uk)

Education: [education@rsb.org.uk](mailto:education@rsb.org.uk)

Training: [training@rsb.org.uk](mailto:training@rsb.org.uk)

Science Policy: [policy@rsb.org.uk](mailto:policy@rsb.org.uk)

Regional Branch Coordinators: [regions@rsb.org.uk](mailto:regions@rsb.org.uk)

Media: [media@rsb.org.uk](mailto:media@rsb.org.uk)

The Biologist: [biologist@rsb.org.uk](mailto:biologist@rsb.org.uk)

Journal of Biological Education: [jbe@rsb.org.uk](mailto:jbe@rsb.org.uk)

Events: [events@rsb.org.uk](mailto:events@rsb.org.uk)