

Science Policy Newsletter – a weekly round-up of policy headlines and stories

26 April 2017

News

Royal Society of Biology blog

[How will environmental policy change post-Brexit?](#)

Top stories

[The March for Science: advocacy masterstroke or PR misfire?](#)

[Why the global March for Science is already a success](#)

On 22 April, from Oklahoma to Greenland, scientists and their champions will mobilise, and in many ways, the March for Science is already a success.

[What's happening at March for Science events around the world](#)

Nature reports from marches in cities around the world as people take to the streets in support of science.

['Evidence not arrogance': UK supporters join global March for Science](#)

Academics and industry workers rally in British cities amid fears that 'post-truth' era is devaluing evidence-based research.

[March for Science: Rallies worldwide to protest against political interference](#)

[Scientists prepare for protest: 'the march should be a starting point'](#)

March for Science organisers hope the mobilising thousands around the world can help restore science to its rightful place. But marching may not be enough.

Health and biomedicine

[The Speed of Science](#)

With 7000 medicines in the global pipeline, the life sciences industry is on the brink of some major innovations. Now, a General Election and Brexit loom. We [ABPI] look to current and future Government to continue to support the life sciences: the industrial and academic researchers who fail, succeed and keep moving forward.

[Human Tissue Authority: triennial review](#)

The main conclusion of the review was that the Human Tissue Authority performs necessary functions to a high standard and should continue to operate as an executive non-departmental public body. The review also contains recommendations to improve performance, governance and efficiency.

[Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority: triennial review](#)

The main conclusion of the review was that the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority performs necessary functions effectively and should continue to operate as an executive non-departmental public body. The review also contains recommendations to improve performance, governance and efficiency.

Food and drink

[New report on the challenges of carbon labelling of food products](#)

A new report explores how UK stakeholders and consumers perceive consumer-facing information that shows the carbon footprint of high-protein food products. The study was funded by the Global Food Security programme as part of the Policy Lab, in which post-doctoral researchers compete to write a report for the programme.

[Could a tax on meat help us save the planet?](#)

Agriculture and fishery

[Is Boston the next urban farming paradise?](#)

The city's healthy startup culture is contributing to Boston's rapidly growing reputation as a haven for organic food and urban farming initiatives.

Environment and ecology

[A General Election from out of the blue: What does this mean for ecology?](#)

[Committee finds a worrying landscape in Marine Protected Areas](#)

The Environmental Audit Committee is disappointed with the government's lack of ambition on designated Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Government and parliament

[CaSE report - Improving use of evidence in UK government policymaking](#)

[Letter from Chris Skidmore to Stephen Metcalfe regarding use of evidence by the Cabinet Office dated 3 April 2017](#)

Research funding and higher education policy

[Nobel laureates condemn 'unimaginative' research funding models](#)

Peer review process punishes academics who 'challenge the dogma' of their field, scientists claim.

[Address staffing, immigration and research concerns to protect UK universities](#)

The Education Committee report says the Government must provide guarantees to university staff from the EU and design a new immigration system that better meets the needs of higher education.

[Government confirms funding for EU students for 2018 to 2019](#)

EU students applying for university places in the 2018 to 2019 academic year will remain eligible for financial support.

[Higher Education and Research Bill 2016-17: Lords amendments](#)

This House of Commons Library briefing paper provides information on amendments made to the Higher Education and Research Bill 2016-17 during its Committee, Report and Third Reading stages in the House of Lords.

[Further changes to HE Bill as Commons gets set for ping-pong](#)

Pity the Higher Education and Research Bill team at the Department for Education.

[Ministers 'lose control' of HE bill in UK election 'wash-up'](#)

Government concessions needed 'if it is not to lose its bill', senior Labour peer warns.

[2VCs: Will the Tef do serious damage or just puncture a few egos?](#)

When the first official rankings for university teaching come out in June, there will be certainly be some red faces. But could the future of students and institutions hang in the balance?

[Demonstrating value for money](#)

Demonstrating 'value for money' is an important and significant challenge for the sector. Increased tuition fees have widened the debate beyond universities, funding councils and the treasury to include a much wider range of interests.

Open access and publication policy

[RSB Research Communication Newsletter - April 2017 issue](#)

Business and industry

[Collaborating to commercialise: Funding for universities to deliver the Industrial Strategy](#)

HEFCE is launching the Connecting Capability Fund, with guidance on the allocation of £100 million to support university collaborations in research commercialisation.

[The UK's future as an innovation powerhouse](#)

[Clark confirms £1bn for Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#)

Business secretary Greg Clark has announced that the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund will distribute £1 billion over the next four years.

Equality and diversity

[Making the most of our ASSET's](#)

When it comes to the reality of what it's really like for women in academic science, it is always useful to have evidence up one's sleeve to make a point as well as merely be able to relate anecdotes, personal or otherwise.

[Research evaluation 'actively contributes' to gender inequality](#)

Research excellence framework maintains discrimination in academy, says thesis.

Public engagement

[Power of the people](#)

Other

[Drive to register all UK scientists: benchmark or bureaucracy?](#)

Critics call proposal for world-first professional recognition system 'demented'.

People

[MRC Chief Executive Professor Sir John Savill appointed Regius Professor of Medical Science, University of Edinburgh](#)

Today [21 April 2017], the Medical Research Council announces its Chief Executive Officer, Professor Sir John Savill, has been appointed, as of 1 April 2018, the Regius Professor of Medical Science at the University of Edinburgh.

[David Sweeney to become Executive Chair Designate of Research England](#)

David Sweeney, HEFCE's Director of Research, Education and Knowledge Exchange, has been appointed Executive Chair Designate of Research England.

[Institute for Apprenticeships announces new appointments](#)

The Institute for Apprenticeships has appointed chairs for 15 route panels, and a panel of apprentices to advise the board.

[Natural England Board members re-appointed](#)

The Secretary of State has re-appointed 4 members of the Board of Natural England.

[Innovate UK appointments confirmed](#)

Three new non-executive directors for the Innovate UK board have been named by Business Secretary Greg Clark.

Opportunities

[Maddox Prize 2017 nominations](#)

The John Maddox Prize recognises the work of individuals who promote sound science and evidence on a matter of public interest, facing difficulty or hostility in doing so. Nominations are now open for the 2017 prize.

Closes 31 July 2017

Events

[Engaging with Parliament and responding to inquiries: a BES/ZSL workshop for ecologists interested in the science/policy interface](#)

26 May, London

This one day event, aimed principally at established scientists (post-doctoral and above), will review key knowledge and processes involved in engaging with Parliament and responding to Select Committee inquiries relevant to ecology, conservation and environmental management. The day will be structured around a series of talks and tasks, designed to promote active learning experiences and maximise individual networking opportunities for all. Topics to be discussed include the structure and function of Parliament, introduction to Select Committees, the nature and purpose of parliamentary inquiries, as well as practical tips for producing written and oral submissions.

And finally...

[What all those scientists on Twitter are really doing](#)

Analysis reveals that female researchers are over-represented on the social-media site and that mathematicians and life scientists are less likely to use it.

Royal Society of Biology

Science Policy Team
Charles Darwin House
12 Roger Street
London
WC1N 2JU
policy@rsb.org.uk

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Charles Darwin House, 12 Roger Street, London WC1N 2JU