Dear UBMA members,

Welcome to the November newsletter, hopefully something for everyone to read about below.

In today's newsletter:

- Reminder to save the date for the 2026 annual UBMA conference: 8th-10th April 2026, University of Lancashire
- Member highlights:
  - UBMA member Jileen Ahmed won the Times Higher Education Outstanding Technician of the Year award, 2025. Congratulations Jileen!
- Highlighting the Institute of Safety in Technology and Research (ISTR) as a member institute with significant crossover to UBMA
- Highlights from the RSB Biology Week 2025
- Highlighting the RSB Apprentice of the Year award 2025
- Final reminder to complete the questionnaire to help shape our communications strategy, it will only take a couple of minutes and will be really useful!
- Reminder to spread the word to you colleagues about the UBMA and encourage them to join our community
- Registration for UBMA training courses available at reduced rate to UBMA members
- Request for images, news stories or highlights for our website
- Follow UBMA on LinkedIn, share our posts, add content and tag us - useful content will be posted there in-between newsletters

James Fox (Communications Officer)

ubma

University Biosciences Managers' Association

Save the date!

The 43rd annual UBMA conference will be hosted by Terri Blohm and Tony Dickson at the University of Lancashire between 8-10th April 2026.

Terri and Tony are working hard to develop the agenda, more details will follow and be posted in future newsletters and in the meetings section of the UBMA website

University of Lancashire

Member Highlights

UBMA member Jileen Ahmed won the 2025 Times Higher Education Outstanding Technician of the Year Award. Congratulations Jileen!

Jileen has worked at Aston University since 1998 and recently became Head of Technical Services for the University.

Jileen started at Aston in 1998 as a trainee technician and progressed to technical team leader. He took a degree with the Open University that was founded by Aston and have attended training courses throughout his time to develop his career. He cites being fortunate that his line manager was very supportive and they used the PDR process to identify courses that would help him to develop as a well as help the university meet its targets, a lesson for all of us as Biosciences managers!

Jileen highlights his passion for supporting and developing others, training up the next generation of technicians and sharing knowledge across the community.

Jileen's story is one of quiet determination, generosity, and a steadfast belief in the power of technical services to transform universities.

He is a very worthy winner of the Times Higher Education Technician of the Year award!

Highlighting the ISTR

The Institute of Safety in Technology and Research (ISTR) is a member organization with many synergies with the UBMA due to the fact that most Bioscience Managers have some element of Safety management within their role! Several UBMA members are ISTR members and we are exploring how we can work together to further support each other. More info about the ISTR below and on their website.

UBMA communications survey

A final reminder that we are still looking for your feedback on UBMA communications and for you to tell us what you want to hear about, how you want to hear from us and how frequently that should be?

To facilitate this, we kindly ask you to complete this survey, we don't expect it to take long and any feedback you can give us will be really useful. The link should take you to a google form (which may also be new software to you?!)

With 15 new members last month this is now the final opportunity to respond, feedback will be issued in the December newsletter.

RSB Biology week 2025 highlights

The Royal Society of Biology recently hosted its 14th annual Biology Week – a week of bioscience events across the globe.

Biology Week 2025 featured 123 events and resources, 43% of which were organised by the RSB's Member Organisations. These included competitions, talks, in-person and online events, and opportunities for building relationships with others in biology. More details on the events are at this link

The week began with a forum for RSB Fellows which was hosted by RSB Chief Executive Dr Doug Brown FRSB and Director of Communications and Public Affairs Susie Rabin, providing an opportunity to engage with RSB Fellows.

RSB ran its #IAmABiologist campaign which saw people from different fields across the biosciences showcasing a day in the life of their work, from a horticulture entomologist to a health data innovation and policy manager.

The fourth season of the popular A-Z of the Biosciences series was launched, starting with a video by the RSB's Council member Professor Jeremy Pritchard FRSB.

The annual Biology Week Networking and Awards Ceremony was held at the House of Commons, London which saw awardees from our creative and careers competitions collect their awards. Speeches were given by the Minister for Nature and the Viscount Stansgate among others, and there was ample opportunity for networking with people from across the bioscience community.

We hope you will consider getting involved in 2026!

RSB's Apprentice of the Year Award 2025

On 15th October, the RSB's apprentices of the year prizes were awarded at the RSB's awards ceremony held at the House Of Commons, London, as part of Biology Week 2025.

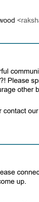
The award is split into two categories acknowledging the work of apprentices at different levels in the sector. Group 1 for the Level 3 & 4 category* and Group 2 for individuals studying at the Level 5+ category**.

Group 1

The Apprentice of the Year Award for Group 1 went to Tamara Martinez AMRSB, Apprentice Laboratory Technician, Nottingham Trent University

The Highly Commended award for this category went to Rebecca Stokes, Laboratory Technician, University of York, line managed and nominated by UBMA communications officer James Fox.

Group 2



The Apprentice of the Year Award for Group 2 was awarded to Rebecca Bojarski, Laboratory Scientist, Vertex Pharmaceuticals

The Highly Commended award in this category went to Pia Boeber, Laboratory Science Apprentice, AstraZeneca

The winners of each group receive a £250 cash prize, one year of free RSB membership, and a free application to either the RSci or RSciTech register.

The highly commended awardees each receive one year of free RSB membership and a free application to either the RSci or RSciTech register.

If you line manage an apprentice, look out for the award in 2026!

Request for images / news stories / member highlights

The UBMA website was recently redesigned and the new UBMA branding developed. During that time stock images were added to the website but we would like to replace these with images from members. If you have any images you would like to see, please do send them over.

Similarly, if you have any news stories or things you would like highlighted to the community, please also send details to James.

RSB Technical Skills courses

Royal Society of Biology

Dr Raksha Harwood, Training & Registers officer at the Royal Society of Biology (for which the UBMA is a member institute and receives reduced rates to training courses), contacted us with details of the latest RSB training courses on offer that might be of interest to UBMA members.

Learn new practical skills and elevate your technique with the Royal Society of Biology's laboratory-based courses! These include our courses in Aseptic Techniques, and Cell Culture: The Basics at the University of York on **22 January 2026** – a special bundle offer is available for booking onto both courses!

These courses contribute to the Technical Skills Certificate, which is designed to support the training and development of technical staff – the people who 'make it happen' and are essential for facilities to run smoothly! The certificate also supports applicants working towards Registered Science Technician (RSciTech) status by supporting key competencies for professional registration. These in-person courses are also an excellent networking opportunity!

Visit RSB's training events webpage for full details and to book your place on these courses.

Any queries, contact: Raksha Harwood <raksha.gohel@rsb.org.uk>

Join us!

You already know what a wonderful community the UBMA is, but do your colleagues?! Please spread the word about the UBMA and encourage other bioscience managers to join us!

Details on how to join are here or contact our membership secretary

LinkedIn

For those of you on LinkedIn, please connect, follow and share UBMA posts as they come up.

Search either for University Bioscience Managers Association, or UBMA and you should find us. Alternatively, click on the logo here.

From your UBMA Executive Committee

You are receiving this email because you are a member of the University Bioscience Managers Association. If you no longer wish to receive emails please contact the membership secretary by emailing membership.secretary@ubma.org.uk