Dear UBMA members,

As semester / term comes to an end and the summer approaches it usually offers a little breathing space?! We hope you will find the time to attend some fantastic UBMA webinars we are super excited to tell you about and enjoy some downtime!

In today's newsletter:

- Dates for your diary—UBMA webinars: July 14th 1300-1400 & 23rd September 1230-1330
- Member news
- UBMA conference and AGM review
- Sector news from the ITSS & RSB
- Highlighting the IST conference— 15th September 2026, University of Liverpool
- Reminder to spread the word to you colleagues about the UBMA and encourage them to join our community
- A reminder to please follow us on LinkedIn and share our posts, lots of useful content will be posted there in-between newsletters

James Fox (Communications Officer)

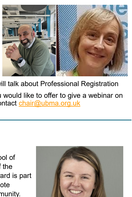
chair@ubma.org.uk

ubma
University Biosciences Managers' Association

31st May 2026

Dates for your diary

As announced at conference / AGM and as part of UBMA's Technician commitment action plan we are announcing the first (of what we hope will be many!) two career development lunchtime webinars. Further details & booking links to the webinars will follow shortly, presently we just ask you to add the dates to your diaries to reserve the time.



1. Tuesday 14th July 1300-1400: - Jibesh Alfred, Aston University, will talk about his career and winning the Times Higher Outstanding Technician of the year award, 2025.
2. Wednesday 23rd September 1230-1330: Michelle Jackson, University of Nottingham, will talk about Professional Registration

Details of other webinars are being finalised. If you would like to offer to give a webinar on any subject relevant to UBMA members, please contact chair@ubma.org.uk

Member News

UBMA member Claudia McKeown, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, was the successful applicant of the inaugural UBMA Conference Fund award. The award is part of our Technician commitment action plan to promote sustainability in the Bioscience management community.

The competitive award gives the opportunity for a junior bioscience manager to attend their first UBMA conference. The judging panel were unanimously "impressed with the level of detail and thoughtfulness that Claudia put into her application and the way in which she was clear about the benefits she expected to gain from attending". Congratulations Claudia, it's a pleasure to meet you at conference!

The 2027 call for applications will be announced prior to the 2027 UBMA conference.

If you have any member news / highlights you would like to be published in future UBMA newsletters, please contact: communications@ubma.org.uk

UBMA AGM / Conference

The 2026 UBMA annual general meeting took place online on 27th March 2026. Agenda items included:

- Matters arising from the 2025 AGM
- Reports from the chair, treasurer and membership secretary as well as from RSB, HUS and IST
- Statement from the President, David Smart
- Vote on the validity of the shortened committee election process & Announcement of results of election of committee & officers
- Appointment of auditors
- Discussion on UBMA's association with the Royal Society of Biology and potentially working more closely together in future
- Discussion of potential constitutional update to explicitly allow online AGMs
- Discussion of the UBMA's Technician Commitment Action Plan and self-assessment plan

The 43rd UBMA conference took place in Preston at the University of Lancashire from 8th to 10th April 2026. It was a tremendously successful event organised by Terri Blohm & Tony Dickson and their teams.

Around 20 UBMA members from the UK and Ireland attended and we were blessed with some fantastic weather for the conference photo on the Student Centre Roof Terrace! The weather was pretty changeable after that but the high quality of the programme kept spirits high for the remainder of the conference!

The programme consisted of workshops, facility tours, discussions, opportunities to network with other members and with suppliers sponsoring the conference.

On a personal level, I cant recommend attendance more highly. Shortly after arriving I had received some salient career advice, met some new bioscience managers, caught up with others and toured university facilities. On the first day, I learnt about the 'Bioarchaeology and Funerary Practices of Victorian England' whilst others had the opportunity to learn about the 'Photography of Cyanotype' or had 'an introduction to producing a podcast'.

Later in the conference we heard about / discussed timely topics such as laboratory sustainability (a subject that seems to be taking up more and more of our collective time), use and application of artificial intelligence (Copilot) and promotion pathways.

We heard talks on how to 'develop an Engaging Management Style', how rockets are being used to 'Examine our Sun from space' and then had the opportunity to tour one of four facilities: Vet School, Analytical Suite, Forensic Scene Flats or Clinical Skills suite. During our tour of the analytical suite it was particularly interesting to discuss facility management in general and how the facilities are funded at different universities.

Two wonderful conference dinners (Tapas and Turkish) gave further networking opportunities. To me, UBMA conferences feel timely, inviting, interesting and supportive.

On behalf of the UBMA committee, we very much hope to see you at future conferences. The 2027 and future conferences are yet to be finalised. Expressions of interest to host a future conference would be very welcomed, please contact chair@ubma.org.uk

Sector News

RSB's Apprentice of the Year Award 2026

The RSB's Apprentice of the Year award is now open for applications. The award celebrates apprentices and recognises their contribution to their teams and the wider bioscience community.

Celebrating 100 years of Sir David Attenborough Hon FRSB

Sir David Attenborough, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Biology, turned 100. Leading one of the most remarkable lives and careers with a dedication to biology, iconic broadcaster, and key supporter of the Society, Sir David has become synonymous with championing the natural world.

Tell the RSB about your lab's sustainability work

The RSB's magazine, The Biologist, is collating examples of successful sustainability initiatives or processes being implemented in bioscience labs and research groups around the world. The best examples will be published in an article on 'green biology' to help inspire others and share best practice. Please contact tom.ireland@rsb.org.uk if you have items to share.

UK ITSS Technical Careers Resource Hub

Support your technical career and your team with free toolkits, interactive workbooks, reports, and videos. These materials have been developed by technical and HR professionals from 27 UK organisations in higher education and research as part of the UK ITSS Technical Career Pathways Lab, funded by Research England.

UK ITSS Knowledge Exchange Placement Programme applications are now open

The programme gives technical professionals the opportunity to develop specialist skills on placement at institutions across the UK or internationally, while creating connections for future collaboration.

Apply before 31 July 2026 to secure your place.

Times Higher Education Outstanding technician of the year, 2026

Could you or a colleague be the next Times Higher Education Outstanding Technician of the Year?

One week left to nominate yourself or another technical professional for the THE Awards Outstanding Technician of the Year category, sponsored by Technician Commitment.

Technician Partnership Conference 2026

The Technician Partnership Conference 2026 is for anyone in higher education who wants to understand the people, practices and ideas that help universities thrive. The conference brings together technicians, leaders and sector partners for a day of insight and networking.

The event takes place at Newcastle University on 1st July 2026.

IST conference: Tuesday 15th September 2026, University of Liverpool

UBMA has Corporate Affiliation to the IST, which is the professional body for specialist, technical and managerial staff. This years conference theme is: Future Ready: Skills, Systems and Stories "You'll never work alone…..". UBMA officers will be in attendance, so it would be wonderful to catchup with other UBMA members and hopefully recruit as many as we did at the 2025 conference!

Bookings are open for the Institute of Science & Technology (IST) conference at the University of Liverpool on Tuesday 15th September 2026!

There are some excellent keynote speakers (including UBMA's very own Jiteen Ahwend) to hear from, a huge variety of workshops to attend and the opportunity to network with other technical professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Register here: https://www.tickettailor.com/events/ist/2163543

Conference Information: https://istonline.org.uk/conference-2026/

Supporting the technical workforce in the creative, digital, engineering and science technologies for over 75 years

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!

SPREAD THE WORD

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 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