



SSAC Update Report - July 2014

The SSAC is Scotland's highest level science advisory body, providing independent advice and recommendations on science strategy, policy and priorities to the Scottish Government's Chief Scientific Adviser. Professor Muffy Calder, the Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland (CSA) and Dr Chris Masters are co-chairs of the SSAC.

SSAC issues a short report following each quarterly meeting to provide an update on their latest workstreams and areas of interest. This is the eighth of these reports. The SSAC held its last meeting at the Europa Building, Glasgow on 12 June 2014.

ONGOING WORK STREAMS

Current work includes:

- ✚ SSAC is currently finalising its work on **the current scientific evidence around Synthetic Biology** and the impact of novel biology on the Scottish economy. This work aims to consider the key issues surrounding synthetic biology and highlight the potential economic and environmental benefits for Scotland and potential risks. The working group are currently preparing their final report, which will be published on the SSAC website in early autumn.
- ✚ Dr Allan, Minister for Learning Science and Scotland's Languages has invited SSAC to consider current **Scientific Infrastructure and Scotland's needs and requirements for the future** and report back to him. This request follows a recent House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology report on Scientific Infrastructure published in November 2013. The resulting report will inform policy-makers and others. A SSAC working group, led by Professor Julian Jones and Professor David Cumming, has consulted widely with the science and engineering community in Scotland in order to collect evidence to support this work. The working group is now preparing their final report which will be presented to Dr Allan by the end of July. This timely piece of work will also inform a SSAC response to the BIS consultation on long-term science and research capital investment.

OTHER NEWS

- ✚ **SSAC Recruitment 2014 Update.** A number of the SSAC membership will be stepping down in January 2015 (nine members in total) as their term of membership had come to an end. In order for SSAC to continue to deliver on its remit the SSAC Secretariat have started the process of recruiting new members. The application process for new members has now closed (30 June).

However, since the advertisement of positions to SSAC commenced, the CSA for Scotland and SSAC Co-Chair Professor Muffy Calder has announced that she will be stepping down as Chief Scientific Adviser at the end of the year. In light of this news, **the decision has been taken to delay the process of recruiting new SSAC members until a new CSA for Scotland has been appointed.**

This allows the new CSA to have input into the recruitment process. In the interim, we will hold all applications that have already been received and there will be a further period, prior to the recruitment process commencing again, where we will accept any additional new applications following a period of notice on the SSAC website. For further information please contact the SSAC Secretariat.