

SSAC Update Report - December 2012

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. Professor Muffy Calder, the Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland (CSA) and Dr Chris Masters are co-chairs of the SSAC.

SSAC has decided to issue a short report following each quarterly meeting to provide an update on their latest workstreams and areas of interest. This is the second of these reports.

CURRENT WORK PROGRAMMES

There are currently two active SSAC work programmes:

- ✚ **SSAC Education** – Following the publication of *Science Education: Enhancing Support for Schools Through Collaboration* earlier in the year, the SSAC has been working with key stakeholders, including Education Scotland, to create an Industry/Academic Schools Liaison Co-ordinator for Sciences post. Significant progress has now been made and an advert for an Education Support Officer – Higher Education and Industry Links was advertised in Oct/Nov. The post will be based at, and managed by, SSERC on behalf of a Project Advisory Board which includes representatives from SSAC, Education Scotland, Deans of Science and Engineering in Scotland and industry amongst others. Interviews for the 2-year post were held in December with the selected candidate taking up post in the New Year.
- ✚ **SSAC Innovation** – Members approved a final draft of their Innovation Report which is now scheduled for publication in the New Year.

OTHER WORK

The SSAC is always looking to develop ideas for future work stream on a broad range of scientific issues and science-related policies.

- ✚ In particular, the SSAC together with the CSA are keen to highlight key science and engineering developments which may have a significant future impact for Scotland. The SSAC are continuing to work on 'Science Hot Topics' and have prioritised two areas – Synthetic Biology and Food Security – as ones which require some further attention over the next few months.
- ✚ The SSAC continued to engage with the work going forward in relation to the National Data Linkage Centre (NDLC) and provided input into discussions around the key messages and points of awareness that need to be raised.
- ✚ The SSAC have also recently published a paper 'Some Consequences of Open Access Publishing' which sets out some potentially detrimental transitional effects and disadvantages related to Open Access Publishing. A copy of the paper can be found on the SSAC website at <http://www.scottishscience.org.uk/article/open-access>.

OTHER NEWS:

- ✚ The First Minister will be hosting a reception for SSAC members at Bute House in early February to acknowledge the work of the Council. Members hope to discuss with him some of the key issues for science and engineering in Scotland.