

POLICYMAKERS AND SCIENTISTS COME TOGETHER FOR PARLIAMENTARY LINKS DAY 2023



Stephen Metcalfe MP, Chair of the Parliamentary & Scientific Committee, welcomes attendees to the event.

20 JUNE 2023

This year's Parliamentary Links Day was a huge success with a packed room at the House of Commons. MPs, representatives from scientific organisations and those related to parliamentary science policy convened to discuss science and economic development.

Stephen Metcalfe MP, Chair of the Parliamentary & Scientific Committee, introduced Parliamentary Links Day, emphasising the importance of the interaction between parliamentarians and the scientific community, as it enriches the policy making process.

Links Day is the largest science event on the annual parliamentary events calendar. It is organised by the RSB on behalf of the science and engineering community to

strengthen dialogue with parliament, and to provide MPs with a more rounded understanding of the scientific issues we face.

George Freeman MP and Chi Onwurah MP, Minister and Shadow Minister for Science, Research and Innovation respectively, gave speeches on the importance of science and how it can propel the UK economy.

George stressed that science in relation to our economy is something that we can all agree on and that we have to invest more and do more to make this country a laboratory for the innovations of tomorrow.

Chi discussed the necessity of sustainable growth and how it can only come from a science and technology based economy, which is why the Government must continue to invest in R&D.

A panel of academics then examined how science and the economy interlink, highlighting the value of a strong connection between both parliament and the sciences in all capacities to advance in policymaking. Dr Jo Reynolds, Royal Society of Chemistry, chaired the panel and Professor David Leslie, Lancaster University, kicked off the discussion by speaking about his expertise: Artificial Intelligence (AI).

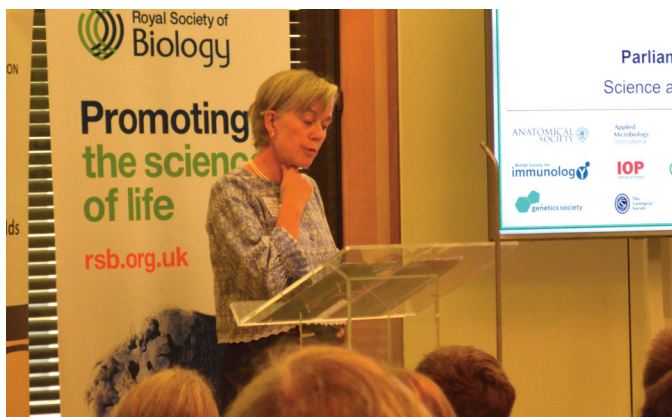
He touched on how the skills shortage is a key blocker for collaboration, as well as data sharing issues both legally and practically. He mentioned that modern AI is great but has requirements that many companies cannot meet, both in terms of resources and data. He noted that more traditional stats skills can fill in the gap, as bringing these into play is a powerful addition to the AI toolkit.



George Freeman MP, Minister for Science, Research and Innovation



Chi Onwurah, Shadow Minister for Science, Research and Innovation



Professor Dame Angela McLean, Chief Scientific Adviser for Government

Professor Sarah Main, CaSE, further supported this point by noting three dimensions of a science based economy: people and skills, maximising local impact of R&D, and business

R&D. She stressed that we need a people strategy, to ensure that we match education provision to changing skills requirements.

Following the panel discussion, Professor Dame Angela McLean,

Government Chief Scientific Adviser, gave a keynote address on exploiting R&D to produce measurable change for the people of the UK. She highlighted that science is for everyone, for people from all backgrounds, and that we should encourage more people to become scientists.

Other panellists and speakers included Professor Diane Coyle, Bennett Institute for Public Policy, and Professor Jonathan Napier, Rothamsted Research.

Links Day, now in its 35th year, is run by the Royal Society of Biology on behalf of the following organisations: Anatomical Society, Applied

Microbiology International, Association of Applied Biologists, Biochemical Society, British Ecological Society, British Pharmacological Society, British Society for Immunology, Council for the Mathematical Sciences, Genetics Society, Geological Society, Institute of Physics, Nutrition Society, Physiological Society, Royal Society of Chemistry, Society for Experimental Biology, Society for Radiological Protection.

Thank you to everyone online and in person who joined us for the event, a recording will be available on the RSB's YouTube channel.

This report, including the images, is provided courtesy of the Royal Society of Biology

DISCUSSION MEETING, 22ND MAY – ‘DEEP TECH SME ECO SYSTEM – SUPPORTING RESEARCH INTENSIVE SMES FOR GROWTH’



The Royal Society of Chemistry were our partners for the 22nd May Discussion Meeting in the House of Commons on: *'Deep Tech SME Eco System – supporting research intensive SMEs for growth'*.

L- R: **Dr Alexander Reip**, Chief Technical Officer, Oxford NanoSystems; **Stephen Metcalfe MP**, Chairman, P&SC; **Tanya Sheridan**, Head of Policy and Evidence, Royal Society of Chemistry; **Dr Joe Marshall**, Chief Executive, National Centre for Universities and Business; **Adam Afriyie MP**, Chair, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) Board; **Stephen Benn, Viscount Stansgate**; President, P&SC and **Professor Martin Freer**, Vice-President for Science and Innovation, Institute of Physics' Council.