

National Conference for Science Technicians 2022

Wednesday 21 September 2022, 10.30am–4pm

National Space Centre, Leicester; online

The Royal Society of Chemistry, Royal Society of Biology and Institute of Physics invite you to a one-day conference for technicians working in all sectors, focusing on **sustainability** – covering both sustainable technical careers and skills, as well as environmental sustainability.

As supporters of the Technician Commitment, this joint professional body event will bring together technical staff from across science to hear from other technicians, have the opportunity to attend talks from a range of top training providers, and learn more about sustainability and further support for technicians from professional bodies and organisations.

The programme for the conference is as follows:

10.30 – Registration and networking

11.00 – Opening remarks

11:15 – Technicians leading the pathway to more sustainable laboratories

Matthew Bennett MRSC, University of East Anglia, and Lee Hibbett, University of Nottingham

Do you know how much energy your lab consumes? Have you ever considered the environmental impact of the resources consumed or waste generated in the lab?

Laboratories are resource intensive and generate significant carbon emissions. There are many opportunities to reduce the environmental impacts associated with science facilities and across the sector technicians are leading the pathway to more sustainable laboratories.

This session will showcase technicians driving initiatives and improvements for sustainability in labs. Whether you are already implementing sustainability improvements in your labs or interested to find out what it's all about, join us to be inspired by the achievements of technical staff making it happen in their institutions.

12:15 – Lunch and networking. Exhibition stands from professional bodies, sponsors and the NTDC will be available to visit in the Boosters area.

In-person delegates also have the opportunity to see the rest of the Space Centre.

13.30 – Technicians stepping into supervision and management

Suhel Miah MSc, MBA, FCMI, HEaTED

'Technicians stepping into supervision and management' is an RSC approved course, designed and delivered by HEaTED, the leading organisation for Higher Education and Technician Educational Development; delivering skills, training and networking for all specialisms and disciplines of the technical workforce. This taster session will give you an opportunity to experience course delivery, training and learning methods. It will help you gauge the quality of the course contents and gain an insight into what the full course offers. You will hear and be able to speak with the actual trainer and find out what people say about the full course.

14.30 – Coffee and networking break to meet with colleagues and discuss the previous session.

15:00 – Hear from the RSC's careers team about support for technicians and how engagement with a professional body can contribute to sustainability

Laura Woodward BSc, Chartered MCIPD, Career and Professional Development Adviser, Royal Society of Chemistry

15:30 – Keynote talk: Secondments – a great way to Upskill and Contribute to Sustainability

Rajvee Shah Punatar PhD CSci MRSB, Francis Crick Institute

In her talk, Rajvee will tell us how her secondment position came about, how she went about organising the first Crick Technician Week in 6 months, how she persuaded senior directors & managers to support it, and the difficulties she faced in getting "hard to reach" technical staff to engage and participate.

16:00 – Closing remarks

Speaker list

Matthew Bennett MRSC, University of East Anglia

Matthew has been working in technical roles since 2009, he currently works as a Laboratory Coordinator at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and Sustainable Labs Specialist at University College London (UCL). Matthew began making sustainability improvements locally in the lab in 2013 before leading a University wide project via secondment to the UEA sustainability team. He has worked with industry partners to create sustainable products for the laboratory. At UCL, Matthew supports the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF). He is an active member of the Higher Education technician and sustainable labs communities.

Lee Hibbett, University of Nottingham

Lee has been a technician working at the University of Nottingham (UoN) for over 31 years working in many different types of research labs. In that time, sustainability has not really been on the UoN radar, so Lee is happy to see that in the last few years there has been a big drive in this field. Lee has always been passionate about sustainability and 3 years ago, set up the Technical Sustainability Working Group to work with UoN sustainability, to bridge the gap between labs and estates. The working group consists of likeminded technicians across all fields and departments coming together, to find and look for new ways to improve and change sustainable practices in the areas they work.

Suhel Miah MSc, MBA, FCMI, HEaTED

Suhel is a career technician with 30+ years of experience in providing technical services in Higher Education. He has provided operational and technical strategic management oversight, including the development and delivery of a range of customer-focused high quality technical service functions by leading specialist teams in both Russell Group and post-92 universities.

Suhel has a strong academic record (Executive MBA with DISTINCTION) and professional standing (FELLOW of the Chartered Management Institute), which has enabled him to add new perspectives and ideas to achieve business goals.

Suhel is the Founder and Director of [Consultancy & Facilitation Ltd](#). As an independent consultancy firm and a direct provider of skills training based in Lancashire, they specialise in helping organisations increase their people performance by delivering value-for-money services with clients across the UK. Clients include: University of Stirling, University of the Highlands and Islands - Perth College (Scotland), West Lothian College (Scotland), Staffordshire University and Higher Education Technicians Education and Development (HEaTED) Network.

As the Head of Training and Development at HEaTED, Suhel provides expert advice and guidance in the development of professional and soft skills learning. He designs and delivers skills training, provides development coaching and creates engaging and interactive content with insight.

Rajveen Punatar PhD CSci MRSB, Francis Crick Institute

Rajveen has worked in the field of cancer research for over twenty years and is currently a Principal Research Scientist in the laboratory of senior group leader Dr Stephen West, at the Francis Crick Institute in London. Her role is split between managing the day-to-day running of the lab, carrying out her own research projects, and supporting the work of PhD students and scientists.

Rajveen has been a strong advocate for her staff group and is involved in various activities at the Crick to help improve the visibility, recognition, sustainability and career development of LRS (Laboratory Research Scientists) and other technical staff groups. Rajveen is a founding member of the LRS Network, an elected representative on the Crick Staff Consultative Forum, and is a member of the LRS Training and Development working group.

As a natural extension of this work, Rajveen took up secondment position within the Crick Academic Training Team last year as Technician Commitment and Science Training Lead. A key part of this role was to chair the Technician Commitment Steering Group and to ensure delivery of the Crick's first ever Technician Week.

Rajveen accomplished this in March this year when the Crick hosted its first ever Technician Week. It was an ambitious programme that included talks, activities, workshops, and networking events- all designed to give the Crick's 580+ technical staff the opportunity to develop their careers, showcase their expertise, network, and celebrate their achievements. In all, 13 events took place over a 5-day period, attended by over 1000 participants.

Laura Woodward BSc, Chartered MCIPD

Laura is a Career and Professional Development Adviser at the Royal Society of Chemistry. With a background in recruitment and Human Resources, Laura has worked at the RSC for almost 16 years. Laura provides careers and professional development support to members at any stage of their career. She also manages our award winning mentoring scheme.

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