

# National Conference for Science Technicians 2023

Wednesday 6 September 2023, 10am–4.30pm  
Science and Industry Museum, Manchester; online

The Royal Society of Chemistry invites you to a one-day conference for technicians working in all sectors, focusing on **career pathways**.

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

**The programme for the conference is as follows:**

**09:30** – Registration and networking

**10:00** – Opening remarks

**10:30 – Having Great Career Conversations**  
Emily Thorpe, MI Talent

*This workshop will help you to identify actions you can take to prepare for, and provide tools for how to structure, a great career conversation. We will also discuss tips to make any career conversation a great one and there will be time to identify our individual next steps. During the session we will:*

- *Identify actions you can take to prepare for a career conversation*
- *Introduce a way to structure career 'asks'*
- *Introduce top tips for presenting yourself during a career conversation*
- *Identify next steps for our own career conversations*

**11:15 – 1-Page Persuasive Proposals / Business Case for Technicians**  
Sandy Sparks, MI Talent

*This workshop session will provide an opportunity for technicians to develop their knowledge and skills, develop confidence, consider stakeholders and strategy, and discuss the essential elements of a persuasive / business case or proposal. 1-page persuasive proposal is a useful approach to obtain support for training / learning & development opportunities, additional resources or funding and / or support.*

- *To provide an overview of persuasive / business case proposals.*
- *Develop knowledge, skills and confidence for technicians submitting a persuasive proposal / business case.*
- *Discuss the essential elements of a persuasive / business case proposal as well as stakeholders and strategy considerations.*
- *Share top tips for persuasive / business case proposals.*
- *Provide an opportunity to network and have peer and inter-institutional support and learning.*

**12:15** – Lunch and networking. Exhibition stands from the RSC, sponsors and the NTDC will be available to visit.

In-person delegates also have an opportunity to see the rest of the Science and Industry Museum.

**13.30 – Parallel sessions.**

**Upon registration, in-person attendees will choose their preferred workshop from the following:**

- Recognition for technicians through research authorship  
*Clare Stevenson, John Innes Centre; Martin Dellar, University of Nottingham*
- Returning to work following a career break  
*Kate Dixon, Manchester Metropolitan University; Emily Gale, Loughborough University; Abigail Mortimer, University of York; Daphne Jackson Trust*
- How job progression structure, such as RSC accredited schemes, can support technical staff  
*Lucy Kavanagh, NNL; Mike Edmondson, NNL; Katty O'Brien-Quilty, Thames Water*

**Online attendees will be presented with the following independent workshop:**

- Success using the RSC and other pathways as a technician  
*Lisa Alford, Tonbridge School; Lisa Howes, Tredegar Comprehensive School*

**14:30** – Coffee and networking break to meet with colleagues and discuss the previous session.

**15:00 – Technician celebration**

Simon Hettrick, HiddenREF; Emily Rose, Pfizer

*Attendees are invited to share any work they would like to celebrate during this session which can be recorded on an online board [here](#). Alternatively, scan the QR code to access the board.*



**15:45 – Keynote talk: Apprenticeships as development opportunities for new and existing staff**

Uzma Sadiq, Apprenticeship Manager UCL; Martin Dellar, University of Nottingham; Hannah Beska, Nottingham Trent University

**16:30** – Closing remarks.

## Speaker list

**Emily Thorpe, MI TALENT Technical Training Manager (part-time)**

MI TALENT is a collaboration of eight research-intensive universities that focus on technicians and supporting their personal and professional development. Emily is seconded to the TALENT project from the University of Birmingham's People and Organisational Development team and has worked in a variety of Learning and Development roles across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Emily is particularly interested in helping others to identify and explore the different learning and development and careers options that are open to them.

**Sandy Sparks, MI TALENT Technical Training Manager (part-time)**

MI TALENT is a collaboration of eight Research Intensive Universities that focus on technicians and supporting their personal and professional development. Sandy has a portfolio career and has both international and national experience. Sandy has a passion for building capacity & capability of people. Sandy's learning and development interests include skills development, career development, EDI and leadership development.

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**Simon Hettrick, Deputy Director of the Software Sustainability Institute and a Director of the Southampton Research Software Group**

Simon works with stakeholders from across the research community to develop policies that support research software, the people who develop that software and the researchers who rely on it. Simon is a passionate advocate for Research Software Engineers. He orchestrated a campaign to gain recognition for this community, which has grown from a handful of people in 2013 to an international community numbering in the tens of thousands. He was the founding chair of the UK's Association of Research Software Engineers.

Simon is the Chair of the Hidden REF: a national campaign that looks to recognise all research outputs and every role that makes research possible. In this role, Simon campaigns for a broader interpretation of how people can contribute to the conduct of research. Simon has worked on this campaign with groups that support other vital-but-unrecognised roles, such as librarians, research managers and others. He is a member of the TALENT advisory board and a keen supporter of the Technician Commitment.

**Emily Rose, Senior Associate Scientist at Pfizer**

Emily started her career after A-Levels as a level 3 apprentice, after which she was awarded RSciTech. In 2018 she started a Level 6 apprenticeship as a contractor at Pfizer. She was employed full-time in 2020 as a technician while finishing her apprenticeship. Emily has now graduated and remains at Pfizer as a senior associate scientist. She works within High Throughput Experimentation where robotics and automation are used to run many small scale chemical reactions at once. Emily is an advocate for apprenticeships as a route into industry. She enjoyed her time as a technician and appreciates the fantastic work technicians do.

**Uzma Sadiq, Apprenticeship Manager at UCL.**

Currently co-managing the development and growth of early career and mid-career Apprenticeships internally at UCL. Over 10 years of experience working in Apprenticeships in FE, from teaching and assessing, managing quality and compliance and delivery teams to now working HE.

**Martin Dellar, Head of Technical Services for the Faculty of Science at the University of Nottingham**

Martin has been a technician at the University of Nottingham for almost 40 years, starting as a trainee engineer in the School of Chemistry, developing his career over a number of years to become the Senior Technical Manager for the School and progressing into his new role within the Faculty of Science. He is passionate about giving technical colleagues the opportunity to develop personally and professionally, championing the cause of getting greater recognition and visibility for the contribution technical colleagues make to research and teaching within sector.

**Hannah Beska, Senior Chemistry Technician at Nottingham Trent University**

Hannah Beska RSci AMRSC started as an Apprentice in Chemical and Environmental Engineering at The University Of Nottingham in 2011, by 2018 she had completed a HNC in Applied Chemical Science and was working as an Analytical Technician in the same department. In July 2018, she moved to NTU where she started as a 50/50 Technician in Chemistry and Biochemistry before being moved to full time Chemistry in 2020. Currently she is a Senior Technician in Chemistry specialising in Physical Chemistry and the Radiation Protection Supervisor for Powder and Single Crystal Xray, and is undertaking an Apprenticeship to complete her BSc.

Hannah has been featured in Chemical World's magazine – Chemists amid Coronavirus as well as the Science Grrl blog.

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The Asset Resale Service For Universities

UniGreenScheme collect store and sell surplus lab equipment for universities, research institutes and numerous private sector laboratories. The award winning resale service was founded in 2016 by Michael McLeod, a post-graduate student who was frustrated at seeing unwanted but useable equipment being thrown into a skip.

Since then the service has prevented over 1.2million kg of equipment waste, rehomed 20,000 pieces of equipment and saved the sector over £3m versus recycling. UniGreenScheme now employ over 20 staff and are growing rapidly with over 5,000 pieces of used laboratory equipment currently available in stock.