

Task Group on Education & Mobility

At the ExBo Meeting in Frankfurt in October 2002, the Task Group on Education presented a comprehensive Expression of Interest for submission to the European Commission entitled *European Funded Research – Identifying Successful Outcomes*, a Network of Excellence that included participation with the EFB Task Groups on Innovation, International Relations and Public Perception of Biotechnology. In this project, it is planned to liaise with scientific groups in receipt of EC funding with a view to facilitating the publication of the key results from their work in a format that can be understood by a diverse range of lay audiences. In this way we would be addressing and facilitating two of the important aspects identified by the European Commission, namely that of trust and transparency. The EoI generated a high level of interest and it is now our intention to follow up this initiative with a formal bid to the European Commission, as a Specific Support Action in Priority 1.

The Task Group on Education & Mobility has also been a contributor to the following EC project grant applications:

- With the lead organiser ISAAA (International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications) for a project (under the ASI@ITC call) entitled *BIOLEARN – A Distance Learning Programme for Agricultural Biotechnology Issues in Asia*.
- With the lead organiser the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain for a project (under the Citizens-2 call) entitled *Towards a European Programme of Science and Innovation Management (ESIMS)*.
- With the lead organiser EFB Delft Branch Office for a project (under the SOCIETY-3.1 call) entitled *Encouraging, Supporting, Training & Rewarding Academic and Industry Life Scientists throughout Europe in their Relations with Society (ESTRAILS)*.
- With the lead organiser EFB Task Group on Public Perceptions in Biotechnology for a project (under the science & society work programme) entitled *Raising Awareness of Researchers on Ethics (RARE)*.
- We have also submitted an Expression of Interest entitled *Promoting Periscientific Education in the Life Sciences (PROPELS)*, under the Science and Society call for Expressions of Interest.

Other activities are as follows:

- With Peter Philippsen (Biozentrum University of Basel), we organised a workshop for ECB11 in the name of the EFB Task Group on Education & Mobility on the theme of *Recruitment, Training and Employability in Biotechnology*.
- Professor Charlie Bryce (Chairman) represented the Task Group at the 1st Young Europeans Biotech Network conference held on 29 November – 1 December 2002 in Bertinoro, Italy. A presentation was given on the theme *A Flexible Approach to Promoting Entrepreneurship in Biotechnology* and attendance was used to promote EFB Personal Membership to this group of young scientists. Arising from the meeting, comprehensive discussions took place resulting in the formal incorporation of YEBN into the EFB structure.

- Professor Charlie Bryce (Chairman) was in communication with BioVision to present an EFB Task Group workshop on *Entrepreneurship in Biotechnology* at the BioVision.nxt Conference in Paris, in April 2003. Because of a change in the theme for the meeting, the workshop was rescheduled for BioVision.nxt in 2004.
- As a Task Group we continue to be involved in a large collaborative EC-funded project with EMBO to coordinate a series of continuing education workshops for biology teachers in Europe. The aim of the workshops is to provide teachers with an opportunity to:
 - ▶ Update their current theoretical knowledge
 - ▶ Update their current practical knowledge
 - ▶ Become more aware of the experimental and media resources that are available for biology teaching, and where to obtain them
 - ▶ Discuss teaching methods and present examples of best practise, with the emphasis on integrating experimentation into classroom teaching
 - ▶ Witness at first hand basic research in progress via a visit to the research laboratories of the host institute
 - ▶ Experience the multinational nature of research
 - ▶ Build a network of common interest in promoting the teaching of molecular biology and hence multiply the effect of the workshop
 - ▶ Establish durable contacts with scientists who may offer school parties to visit their laboratories or offer to visit schools to give talks

- **EQUATES:** European Qualifications and Transcript Service

This would be a service to assess formal qualifications of applicants for posts from European countries (principally, but perhaps global) and would be on offer to a diverse range of employers (academic, industrial and professional).

It is planned to seek setup costs for the service (possibly from the EC¹ and/or a large industrialist²) in order to generate (i) a comprehensible profile *pro forma* to ensure consistency of responses, and (ii) comprehensive database of Assessors (using a range of EFB networks from Task Groups and Sections).

Thereafter, the service would be self-financing with a cost levied to users (e.g. ~400 €³ of which ~ 300 € would be a fee to Assessor and the balance would go to EFB central funds/Task Group funds).

- Professor Charlie Bryce (Chairman) has been active in facilitating the incorporation of the Young European Biotechnology Network (YEBN) and the European Association for Higher Education in Biotechnology (HEduBT) into the structure of the EFB through the creation of formal Cooperation Agreements.

Professor C.F.A. Bryce
Chairman of Task Group on Education & Mobility

¹ EC may be interested in sponsorship in light of enhancement in mobility and addressing equal opportunities

² With the possibility of allowing a rebate on the use of the service

³ With the possibility of allowing a rebate to Institutional Members of EFB