





## Plant Biotechnology Journal: Editor-in-Chief vacancy

Applications are invited for the post of Editor-in-Chief of Plant Biotechnology Journal.

Plant Biotechnology Journal is currently ranked 11th in the plant sciences category of the Journal Citation Record with an impact factor of 4.886. It will publish its tenth volume in 2012, with a frequency of nine issues per volume and one volume per calendar year. The Journal is jointly owned by the Association of Applied Biologists, the Society for Experimental Biology, and Wiley-Blackwell. The Editor-in-Chief will be appointed by and report to a Management Committee consisting of two representatives from each of the three owning parties.

The current Editor-in-Chief is stepping down at the end of 2012. The Management Committee wish to appoint a successor capable of building upon the Journal's existing record of publishing high impact original research and reviews in applied plant science. The ideal candidate will have:

- Strong academic credentials and a track record of publishing in high quality academic journals,
- Previous editorial experience on high quality journals at editorial board, associate editor or editor level,
- An international reputation and proven network of contacts working within the plant sciences and associated areas of research,
- The passion, commitment, and vision to make Plant Biotechnology Journal the 'Journal of choice' for authors,
- Leadership qualities and an ability to motivate contributors, reviewers, Editors, Associate Editors and the officers of the Management Committee,
- A basic understanding of the business models adopted by the Journal and a willingness to develop the Journal in line with pre-defined objectives,
- The ability and time to juggle Journal editorship with any other professional or academic commitments.

A full job description is available on request but the key responsibilities of the role include:

- Seeking contributions to the journal and managing the peer review process for such contributions,
- Setting editorial policy and scholarly standards of the Journal; maintaining and improving those standards in line with key objectives,
- Working closely with the Editorial Assistant/Managing Editor to monitor copyflow, acceptance and rejection rates, and issue scheduling,
- Managing the Editorial Board, appointing and renewing Editorial Board members on agreed terms and to ensure that the Board's composition is sufficiently international and broad in
- To communicate regularly with the Editorial Board concerning the development of the journal, editorial strategy, submissions,
- To assist the Publisher in promoting the journal by advising on publicity and promoting the journal wherever possible through contacts and at conferences attended.

Applications are invited from individuals working in any branch of plant biology. All candidates should submit their formal CV together with written answers (not exceeding one page of A4) to the following two questions:

- 1. What are the key attributes of a successful academic journal?
- 2. What would be your plans and ambitions for Plant Biotechnology Journal in your first term as Editorin-Chief?

Potential candidates will be selected and ranked by representatives of the Management Committee. If formal interviews are required these can be arranged by tele- or video-conference for candidates applying from outside of the UK.

The position is for three years, commencing 1st January 2013, and carries an annual honorarium plus some expenses. The initial term may be extended by mutual agreement. The post may be held by a scientist resident within or outside of the UK.

Applications should be submitted by email to Felicity Clark at Wiley-Blackwell (fclark@wiley.com). The closing date for applications is 29th February 2012.



## The Vital Role of Technicians

Mark Downs, CEO, Society of Biology

echnicians are the unsung their contribution is beyond question. They often have unique fields a new shared sense of Council will issue registration skills and expertise that underpin the ability of companies, schools, the NHS and universities to perform their roles successfully. It is not easy to define the term "technician," as the Technician Council rapidly discovered after its inception in early 2010. The range of biology-based technicians is enormous covering general and clinical microbiology, animal husbandry, plant science, ecology and health care; the list is almost endless.

There has been concern for some time, that intermediate level scientists (for example new graduates) and technicians do not have clear career progression routes. There is also a sense that they lack the status of others within the science sector. These individuals support vital research, teaching and contract work, but are usually ineligible to apply for Chartered Biologist or Chartered Scientist status.

To try to address this, the Science Council, whose Board I ioined last year, is currently developing a new registration scheme for technicians and intermediate level scientists. This scheme aims to raise the profile of technicians and to support a number of initiatives which will enhance learning and development opportunities. Stakeholders throughout the science community will contribute to the development of the scheme and registration criteria.

The Society of Biology is committed to the success of this registration scheme; biology is the most diverse of the sciences,

and bioscience technicians work development. heroes of many science in vastly different disciplines In a structure that is very based organisations, but and roles. The register will give similar to Chartered Scientist, technicians working in different we envisage that the Science identity, and provide a much- licences to competent bodies needed method to assess and which will in turn offer and recognise competence across a manage professional registers. subjects. Registration will enable society sector across biology, us to work with partners to we hope to offer the opportunity and guidance about development opportunities, to share good to promote the benefits and data about the sector.

Toxicologists; the International Register of Fetal Morphologists, In parallel, the NHS is looking the data that Register members much synergy as possible. generate and their interpretation Professional registers and the

agreed to support us in this professional technicians and intermediate level to offer better co-ordinated and biology. rigorous continuing professional

professional range that is perhaps Wearing our hat as an umbrella broader than within other science organisation for the learned deliver more consistent advice for any biology technician to join, working with our members practice, and to gather better opportunities this should bring. Timescales are not yet fixed but The Society of Biology already after wide consultation in the manages several professional spring, we will aim to launch Registers: the UK Register of the pilot programme as soon as possible in 2012.

and the Register of Eligibility at ways to develop the NHS for Qualified Persons. These career framework through its Registers are highly valued "Modernising Scientific Workforce by members - they formally in the UK" initiative. This will identify levels of competence include the work of many and expertise, which are difficult technicians and the associated to evidence by other means - training and education needed and also by the industries and to support them professionally. regulators of the relevant sectors In looking at the Technician's they represent, as they support Register we will seek to work confidence and reassurance in closely with the NHS to ensure as

inherent responsibilities for their I am delighted to say that the membership to abide by a code Gatsby Charitable Trust has of conduct, including continuing development, endeavour. Over the next two have been a part of the historic years we will develop and firmly career landscape for many of the embed a system that will enable professions. This new initiative alongside broader work on scientists in the biological sciences apprenticeships and sector skills to become early participants gaps is set to be a major area of in the Science Council's new work for all professional bodies registration framework. We over the next five years and hope this will help increase their the Society of Biology is keen to status alongside the opportunity take an early leadership role for

Please see overleaf for AAB/ SoB Members deal...