



### ... Plant Health

With registration opening for our annual IPPM conference (page 3) and a huge number of community events and opportunities in the plant health sector (page 5 - 8).

And ICYMI, don't forget you can also watch our recent webinar 'all about' IPM & Biocontrol over on our YouTube channel now.



### ... Parliament

We bring you the final report from the 2026 early-career parliamentary event: Voice of the Future (page 9) and offer you the opportunity to submit your comments / experiences on 'University financial sustainability' for our upcoming Parliamentary Links event (page 2).



### ... Publishing

After a great meeting with the Annals of Applied Biology editorial team last month, this issue we take a moment to appreciate the journals that keep the AAB running (page 2) and announce exciting upcoming special issues!

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# AAB News

*With Europe in the midst of dramatic heat wave as we pull together this month's edition in the stifling AAB home-office, our thoughts are with all of our members working in the field and the increasing climate pressures faced by our farming community. Keeping our fingers crossed for a more stable June, take a moment now to catch up on the latest news, opportunities & events in the community!*

## Annals Senior Editors Meeting

It was fantastic to be able to bring most of the Annals of Applied Biology Senior Editorial team together in London last month. Meeting at the Linnean Society on 20th May (with a few more joining in online) our SEs discussed current and future directions for the journal, the now omnipresent topic of how to deal with the influx of AI papers and reviews, diversifying the board and how we might be able to nurture more of our Early Career Professionals with the launch of a editorial training programme.

For us here at the AAB, it's safe to say that Annals of Applied Biology and Plant Biotechnology Journal are truly the lifeblood of our society - without our journals and the excellent team of people behind them, we simply wouldn't be able to do what we do. Not only do these publications offer a space for our wider community to share their science with the world, but all profits from our journals get re-invested into society activities: funding travel awards, subsidising conferences & events for the community and supporting our work in the background as we create opportunities and promote applied biology for a more sustainable world.

We'd like to extend a big thank you to all of our authors, reviewers, editorial advisors, senior editors, and especially to our current and former Editor-in-Chiefs - Antonino Malacrino and Ricardo Azevedo - for all their hard work and continued dedication to publishing high-quality applied biology research to advance sustainability in biosciences!

## Parliamentary Events

Later this month a selection of AAB councillors, staff and members will be at the UK House of Commons again for Parliamentary Links Day. This year's theme 'University financial sustainability: challenges and opportunities in higher education and research funding' is a particularly hot topic for many of our academic community as cuts continue to be announced across UK plant science and agricultural departments. Charlene, the final early-career representative from our last parliamentary visit, touches on this key issue in her meeting report - check it out on page 9. As always, we will be in parliament to represent our members, so if you'd like any particular topics covered please [email Jordan by 15th June](#). And please encourage your local MPs to pop in and engage with us!

# Upcoming AAB Events

## Acrylamide in Cereal Products: Progress and Prospects

*3rd- 4th June, Palermo, Italy*

Addressing the latest research and prospects for reducing acrylamide in food from breeding, farming practices, food processing and beyond. [Online Registration still open](#)



## Webinar 'all about' Plant Genome Editing

*16th June, 2pm BST*

The next webinar in the brand-new AAB-PlantEd series will feature talks from Claudia Payacán-Ortiz (Neocrop Technologies): "Integrative Platform for Accelerated Development of Wheat Varieties via Multiplex Genome Editing" and Jillis Grubben (Wageningen University): "Crispr4All: Accessible Genome Editing using ThermoCas9"

[Register for free](#)

## Webinar 'all about' Rice

*30th June, 1pm BST*

As part of the ongoing webinar series 'all about' plant sciences and sustainable agriculture, we're proud to present this webinar 'all about' Rice on behalf of Oryzanet - a BBSRC-funded international network supporting collaboration, innovation, and training across rice research. Featuring a Keynote from Ari Sadanandom (Durham University, UK) and early-career spotlight on Moe Moe Kyi Win (Kasetsart University, Thailand), plus a recent paper highlight from Annals of Applied Biology (speaker TBC).

[Register for free](#)

## International Conference on Photosynthesis Research (ICPR26)



*26-30th July 2026, Liverpool, UK*

Bringing together academia and industry to translate new mechanistic understanding of photosynthetic function into improved crop production and more efficient terrestrial carbon sinks. With Keynotes from Danielle Way (Australian National University) and Nobel Laureate David Baker and Nathan Ennist (University of Washington, USA), ICPR26 will be our biggest event to date, featuring more than 20 concurrent sessions and 9 plenaries.

[Registration closes 19th June](#)

## International Symposium on Rice Functional Genomics (ISRFG2026)

*8-10th September 2026, London UK*

The 23rd ISRFG will bring together a global community of rice researchers to discuss 'fundamental science for climate resilient rice'. The AAB are proud to organise this on behalf of Oryzanet - a BBSRC-funded international network supporting collaboration, innovation, and training across rice research.

[Register now! Early-bird registration closes 15th June](#)



## Auxin 2026

*4-8th October 2026, Albufeira, Portugal*

We are delighted to announce that the Auxin2026 meeting will take place in the Algarve next year. This quadrennial event brings together leading and emerging researchers in auxin biology to discuss the current state and future prospects for this exciting and fast moving research area! With 27 invited speakers from around the world, don't miss out!

[Register now - Abstract deadline for posters 30th June](#)



## ECPro 2026 - Career Essentials for Applied Biologists

*20th - 21st October, Nottingham UK*



Our ECPro group are hosting their first conference this October, focussing on communication and career development for early career applied biologists. With talks, panel discussions, workshops and plenty of opportunities to network with fellow early career professionals across academia and industry - check out the draft programme online now!

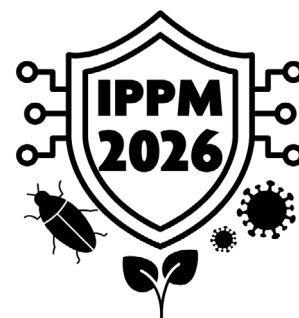
[Register now - Abstract deadline 1st September](#)

## IPPM26 - Technological Innovation for Integrated Pest, Pathogen and Weed Management

*3-4th November, Leicester UK*

IPPM26 will be returning to Leicester by popular demand - this year expanding to include weed management alongside pests and pathogens. With an outstanding line-up of invited speakers already confirmed, we encourage you to join us and submit abstracts in 4 broad categories reflecting the journey of bringing IPM technologies from the lab into the field: Prevention, Detection and Decision Support, Control and Integration.

[Register now](#)



## Sustainable Crop Nutrition - AAB President's Meeting

*17-18th November, York UK*



Join us as we address global issues in sustainable crop nutrition, bridging fertilizer use, soil health and plant uptake of nutrients essential to human health. The AAB President's Meeting is a biennial celebration of the research interests of the current AAB President - Professor Dale Sanders FRS. The programme will feature talks from submitted abstracts and invited speakers: Tony Miller (John Innes Centre), Stephanie Swarbreck (Niab), Ute Kraemer (University of Bochum) and Tim Mauchline (Rothamsted Research) and award talks from the 2026 AAB President's Medallists.

[Register now](#)

## [SAVE THE DATE - further details coming soon](#)

### Advances in Nematology 2026

*10th December 2026, London UK*

### International Advances in Plant Virology - IAPV 2027

*6-8th April 2027, Cambridge UK*

### Monogram 2027

*23-25th March 2027, Nottingham UK*

### Plant Biology Education II

*13-14th April 2027, Cambridge UK*

# Events in our Community

## Royal Society Environment Prize Lecture: Feeding the world without costing the earth

16th June, London & Online

Join the RS for the Royal Society Environment Prize Lecture delivered by Professor Andrew Balmford FRS. Professor Balmford will consider how to reconcile biodiversity conservation with meeting human food needs and other land-demanding activities.



[Register for free](#)

## BES Webinar: Extreme weather & land management impacts

24th June, Online



This webinar from the BES Soil Ecology Special Interest Group features talks from Franciska de Vries (VU Amsterdam): 'Understanding and predicting soil microbial community response to extreme events' and Elaine Haskins (UC Dublin).

[Register for free](#)

## Royal Society of Biology's Plant Health Series: Summer Conference

25th June, Online

Join the RSB for this online event which will comprise lectures and short flash talks from a range of professionals within the industry, including keynote speakers Dr David Guillame-Schoepfer (Tropic) and Dr Rumiana Ray (University of Nottingham). There will also be opportunities to engage with different members of the plant health community and build bridges across the many disciplines within the sector, through a Q&A panel discussion and a dedicated careers session.



[Register for free](#)

## SEB Plant Environment Physiology Group Early Career Workshop

24th July, Liverpool UK

Ahead of Photosynthesis 2026, the SEB PEPG group are pleased to present this one day satellite meeting for Early Career Researchers. Join us to network and share your research and experiences in a relaxed environment. Featuring talks from submitted abstracts, a Poster Session and a 'Careers Panel discussion', featuring Erik Murchie (University of Nottingham), Elizabete Carmo-Silva (Lancaster University), Gemma Molero (KWS) Ian Smillie (LI-COR) and Jordan Robson (AAB).



[Abstract submission extended to 19th June!](#)

## IPPS9: Phenotyping for All: Bridging the Gap in Global Agriculture

12-16th October, Accra, Ghana



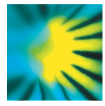
The 9th International Plant Phenotyping Symposium (IPPS9) convenes a global community of scientists and industry partners to confront the challenge of food insecurity in an era of unprecedented global shocks - focusing on the adaptation and deployment of plant phenotyping tools specifically tailored to serve Pan-African research and agriculture.

[Register now](#)



## New Phytologist Symposium: Forest interactions

13-16th October, Leysin, Switzerland



New  
Phytologist

Explore plant interactions in forest environments at all levels from micro- to macro-scales and across the whole spectrum of plant biology.

**Register now - hurry places limited**

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## Rank Prize Symposium - Hidden Hunger: from plant breeding to policy

7-10th September, Lake District, UK

Applications are currently open to join the next Rank Prize symposium as an early-career speaker this September. To apply please send a CV and short statement of interest (max 1 page) to [helen.berrington@rankprize.org](mailto:helen.berrington@rankprize.org)



**Apply by 30th June**

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## Plant Pathology 2026 (PPATH2026) and Early Careers Plant Pathology 2026 (ECP2026)



8-11th September, Norwich UK

The British Society for Plant Pathology (BSPP) invite you to register for their annual meeting. Featuring a fantastic set of confirmed speakers, plus plenty of opportunities to present from submitted abstracts. PPATH2026 will also feature a session co-organised by the AAB Applied Plant Pathology group on "Surveillance and Improved Disease Control".

**Abstract deadline for poster presentations: 30th June**

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## UK Precision Breeding – Farming Futures Conference

24th September, Norwich UK



Join the John Innes Centre for a one-day conference bringing together farmers, breeders, researchers, policymakers, and industry leaders to explore the fast-evolving opportunities of precision breeding in the UK.

**Save the date**

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## Adapt to Thrive: Enhancing multi-stress tolerance for crop resilience (CROPADAPT2026)

14- 15th October, Ghent, Belgium



The junior scientists at ILVO are excited to invite you to a dynamic, young scientist-led plant symposium that brings together researchers, students, and professionals from across the plant sciences community. The program is structured around two complementary perspectives: immediate resilience, focusing on how plants endure stress today, and future resilience, exploring innovative ways to shape the next generation of crops.

**Register now - early-bird rates end 1st July**

## Horticulture and Healthy Diets 2026

26th November, Kent UK

In collaboration with the East Malling Trust, the AAB are happy to present this exciting one day event designed to support healthy diets with a thriving UK horticulture sector. Featuring Keynotes from Henry Dimbleby (author of the National Food Strategy) and Prof. Martin Warren (CSO of the Quadram Institute) - the event will feature plenty of opportunities to share your own work. We especially encourage Early-Career Professionals to submit abstracts, if selected to present ECPs will receive free registration!

**Register now - Early-bird savings end 1st September**



# Community News

*Do you have something to share with our community? Opportunities, jobs, achievements... we'd love to hear about them. Get in touch with AAB Office!*

## Rothamsted Research drills first UK Precision Bred crop



A true milestone last month as researchers at Rothamsted drilled the first crop to receive a Precision Bred Organism (PBO) Release Notice. The trial, led by friends of the society: Dr Smita Kurup and Dr Mollie Langdon, explores how CRISPR-Cas9 gene editing can increase seed size, yield and quality in Camelina - a close relative of oilseed rape. With potential to translate findings into enhancing OSR yields for UK farmers, as Mollie puts it: "It is an exciting time to be working on gene editing and to explore its potential benefits for UK agriculture. Field trials like this allow us to better understand how these innovations could support farmers and growers in the future."

## New handbook on continuous cover forestry (CCF) management

A new handbook for forest managers on continuous cover forestry (CCF) is now available. Authored and published by Forest Research, the best practice guide covers information on both transforming stands to continuous cover forestry (CCF) and on managing stands using CCF approaches. The handbook, '[Transforming and managing stands under continuous cover forestry](#)', is freely available from the Forest Research website.



## Well-Adapted UK - 4th Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk



The fourth iteration of the 'Climate Change Committee's Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk was published last month featuring recommendations from experts on farming, food security and land management. With an underlying message that immediate action is needed, supported by stronger policies, regulation, planning, and long-term investment, to create a UK that can cope with a warmer and more extreme climate. Well worth a browse - [read the assessment in full](#).

# Career Development Opportunities



## Global South Conference Travel Grant

Biology Open has launched a new grant offering up to £3,000 to early-career researchers based in the Global South, wanting to attend international scientific meetings relating to the broad areas of research covered by the journal. Find out more and [apply by 19th June](#).

## Join the UK Young Academy

The UK Young Academy is inviting applications for new members. The UK Young Academy supports talented early-career professionals from across all disciplines, sectors, and backgrounds to connect, collaborate, and make a difference. Applications are open to early-career researchers & professionals (typically 3-12 years post-PhD) residing in the UK, who can demonstrate excellence and leadership in their field. Watch out for 'how to apply' webinars on the 5th and 24th June. [Applications close on 15 July 2026](#).



## Apply for 'Social Identity Matters in Mentoring' Programme



Mentoring has the power to shape who stays, succeeds, and thrives in science, yet many mentors have never received formal training on how social identity, lived experience, and systemic inequities influence mentoring relationships. The SI-MI Mentoring (Social Identity Matters in Mentoring) Program has been developed to address this gap: a free, online training aimed to help plant scientists be more effective mentors, emphasizing how social identity impacts the mentoring relationship. Through seven biweekly sessions participants will gain practical tools and strategies they can apply immediately in their mentoring relationships. Spaces limited - [apply by 20th July](#).

## Research Scientist Phytopathology - KWS

KWS are looking for a hands-on Research Scientist Phytopathology (m/f/d), to be based in Murcia, Spain. They will be part of the global phytopathology research team and responsible for the local implementation and execution of cucurbits plant pathology activities. [Apply now](#).



## Molecular Plant Pathology is inviting applications for Editor-in-Chief



Molecular Plant Pathology are seeking a new Editor-in-Chief to build on the journal's strong foundations and to continue developing as a highly respected international journal. The successful candidate will have an international network of contacts and will also ideally: Broad and extensive knowledge in the field of molecular plant pathology, Excellent communication skills and the ability to engage effectively, Ability to work to tight deadlines, Experience in journal publishing and editorial decision making. [Apply by 15th July](#).



# Meeting Reports - Voice of the Future 2026

*We were very proud to support five of our early-career members (coincidentally all women in science!) to attend the 2026 Voice of the Future event at the Houses of Parliament. This month we hear from our final delegate...*

## Dr Charlene Kunaka-Dambire University of Nottingham

[charlene.dambire@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:charlene.dambire@nottingham.ac.uk)

On Thursday 19th March 2026, I had the incredible honour of attending the prestigious Voice of the Future 2026 event, hosted by the Royal Society of Biology at the Houses of Parliament. Being selected as one of the representatives for the Association of Applied Biologists was something I felt proud of, not only as an early-career scientist, but also as a Black woman working in plant sciences, where we are under-represented.

The event brought together representatives from 14 scientific societies to question parliamentarians and senior government officials about the future of science policy in the UK. Sitting in those historic rooms, surrounded by scientists, policymakers, and leaders from across disciplines, I felt both inspired and aware of the responsibility that comes with being a voice for my field.



***“For me, attending this event meant more than simply participating, it was about visibility. Plant science is often overlooked in wider scientific conversations, despite the fact that it underpins some of the most urgent challenges facing society today, with food security, climate resilience, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity, and plant health being very urgent matters to wider society.”***

As a Black woman in plant sciences, I am also aware that representation within these spaces still matters enormously. There are not many people who look like me in these rooms, and that reality can feel both isolating and motivating at the same time. I wanted my presence there to demonstrate that plant science belongs at the centre of conversations about the future, and that young Black scientists deserve to see themselves reflected in these spaces too.

During the session, as representatives of the Association of Applied Biologists, we raised concerns about what steps the UK Government is taking to ensure long-term stable funding for applied biological research, particularly in areas critical to national priorities such as climate resilience, plant health, and sustainable crop production. Our question was addressed by Lauren Sullivan, Chair of the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and opened up a wider conversation about the long-term implications this could have for food security, climate resilience, and the future scientific workforce.

Our discussions also focused on the concerning closure of several plant science degree programmes across UK universities, and the growing disconnect between government ambitions for innovation and sustainability, and the quiet dismantling of educational pathways that train future plant scientists.

***“This [closure of plant science degree programmes] feels especially urgent to me. The UK cannot claim to prioritise food security, environmental sustainability, and climate adaptation while simultaneously allowing plant science education to disappear from higher education institutions.”***

These course closures are happening quietly, often without significant public discussion, yet their long-term consequences will be enormous. Plant scientists are essential in addressing the realities of climate change, crop disease, soil degradation, and sustainable food production. If we fail to invest in training the next generation now, we risk creating a dangerous skills gap in the future.

I had an opportunity to ask about was the need to create earlier opportunities for young people to engage with plant sciences while they are still in school. Many students simply are not exposed to plant biology as an exciting or viable career path. For students from under-represented backgrounds especially, access and exposure can make all the difference.

I believe we need stronger partnerships between schools, universities, research institutes, and industry to introduce young people to plant science earlier through outreach programmes, workshops, mentorship, and hands-on experiences. We cannot expect students to pursue careers they have never been encouraged to imagine for themselves.

One of the most rewarding parts of the day was hearing from the other invited speakers, including Vicki Heath, Catherine Ross, The Viscount Stansgate, and Emily Darlington. Listening to perspectives from across healthcare, policy, innovation, and education reinforced how interconnected science and society truly are.

I left the event feeling proud, inspired, and even more determined to advocate for the future of UK plant science. Attending Voice of the Future 2026 reminded me that scientists must continue to speak up, not only for research funding, but for education, representation, and the next generation of scientists who will inherit these global challenges. Most importantly, it reminded me that our voices matter, and that our perspectives, experiences, and questions deserve to be heard in spaces that have historically lacked diversity.



*The full AAB delegation at Voice of the Future 2026, photo courtesy of Royal Society of Biology.*

# Membership

*As a member of the Association of Applied Biologists, you join a community of over 1000 professionals working across all areas of Applied Biology to improve agricultural productivity, with added benefits...*

## Access to Grants

- ◆ Eligible to apply for 'AAB Carer & Accessibility Fund' (£500)
- ◆ Priority access to Early Career travel grants for all AAB events (£500)
- ◆ \*New\* access to members-only Early Career travel grants for external conferences (£500)

## Fellowship

Long-term continuous members (7+ years) can apply for Fellowship of the AAB (F Appl. Biol.).

## Discounts

- ◆ Save on registration fees for our scientific conferences & workshops (up to £100!)
- ◆ Two-way membership discount with the Royal Society of Biology (50% off!)
- ◆ 30% off Aspects of Applied Biology
- ◆ 10% discount in publication fees for Plant Biotechnology Journal
- ◆ Discounted membership for LMIC residents - contact Jordan for details!



**aab**

ASSOCIATION OF APPLIED BIOLOGISTS

**Become a  
Member!**

## Community

- ◆ Join an AAB specialist group & steer our society
- ◆ Share your news & opportunities in our monthly newsletter, circulated to ~4500 scientists

# Call for Papers

To coincide with *Photosynthesis 2026* we are happy to announce special issues in both of our journals. Guest edited by our very own president-elect Prof. Martin Parry (Lancaster University, UK) and Dr Ben Long (University of Newcastle, Australia). Watch this space and consider preparing a submission - the call for papers officially opens later this month.

## Plant Biotechnology Journal

Open Access

### Special Issue: Call for Papers

Engineering Photosynthesis  
for Efficiency

Submission Deadline: April 2027 (TBC)



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## Annals of Applied Biology

Biosciences for Sustainability

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### Special Issue: Call for Papers

Novel applications of  
photosynthesis for  
crop improvement

Submission Deadline:  
April 2027 (TBC)

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# AAB Specialist Groups



**Applied Plant Pathology**



**Applied Tree and Forest Biology**



**Biological Control and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**



**Cropping And The Environment (CATE)**



**Food Systems**



**Horticultural Quality and Food Loss**



**Nematology**



**Pesticide Application**



**PlantEd: Genome Editing in Plants**



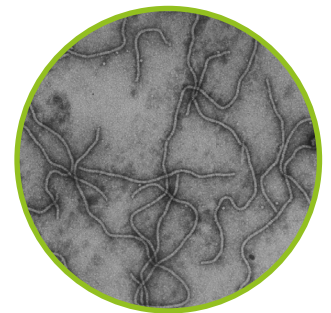
**Early Career Professionals**



**Soil and Root Biology**



**Monogram**



**Virology**

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Applied Biologists



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# Get in touch...

*As an Applied Biologist,  
our society is all about you!*

*So if you want to share an opportunity, contribute to the newsletter, or  
have any feedback on what you want to see from the AAB in future...  
please get in touch with Jordan*

