

# Working together for chemistry

EuCheMS 2016 General Assembly

Professor Sir John Holman

President, Royal Society of Chemistry





# Our history

- Founded as Chemical Society of London 175 years ago
- 1<sup>st</sup> paper at Chemical Society of London read by German chemist Justus von Liebig




# Our commitment to collaboration

- 55,000 members in 125 countries
- International collaboration more important than ever for UK chemistry community
- Committed to EuCheMS and partnerships around the world



# Our shared mission

- We have different areas of interest, different expertise, different nationalities
- But we all want to maximise the benefit of chemical sciences research to humanity



*Global knowledge, to solve global challenges, is a web we weave together. With each new strand it becomes stronger, but there is no way of knowing on whose strand the next dewdrop of inspiration will form, or where the next big idea will land. The only thing that is certain is that we can cast a much wider net together.*

Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation



# Our support for research collaborations

- Focus on early career researchers
- Conference travel grants awarded to 1/3 of our PhD student members in 2016
- Supporting UK students and post-docs taking part in EuCheMS Congress



# Researcher Mobility Grants

- >150 awarded since 2014
- For early career researchers to come to UK or visit labs abroad
- Collaborations on key challenges
- Opportunities to use specialist equipment



# Case study

- Dr Aron Lau (University of Strathclyde) visited Austrian Institute of Technology
- Working with Professor Erik Reimhult (BOKU, Vienna)
- Using Lau's nanoporous membranes to enhance Reimhult's biosensor tech
- Presented preliminary data in UK & US





# Focusing on global challenges

- Bring together multi-disciplinary groups
- Work with partners around world



# Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

- 50,000 deaths a year in Europe & US
- In UK work with other scientific organisations & industry
- Supported EuCheMS event on AMR in European Parliament



# Energy, environment & sustainability

- Need policy & scientific solutions
- 2015 workshop on microplastics in marine environments
- Brought together researchers, industry, European Commission & UN Environmental Programme



# Commitment to openness

- European Commission is committed to open innovation; open science; and being open to the world
- As European chemists, we can help achieve this vision
- We need to work together to maximise benefit of chemistry for Europe & the world



# Future of the Chemical sciences

- We wanted to understand what chemistry and chemists will look like in 10 to 20 years
- Robust scenario-planning process
- Involving people from across industry, academia & government



# Four scenarios

- Four surprising, but plausible scenarios
- **Not** predictions – instead tools to challenge conventional thinking
- E.g. What would happen if chemistry disappears as a separate discipline?



# What do you think?

- Read the report: [rsc.li/futurechem](https://rsc.li/futurechem)
- We welcome ideas about we can work together prepare for the future



## In summary

- UK chemistry community committed to international collaboration & openness
- Working with EuCheMS and partners around the world
- Hosting 7<sup>th</sup> EuCheMS Congress in Liverpool in 2018