

National Conference for Science Technicians 2026

Wednesday 2 September 2026, 10am – 5pm

We The Curious, Bristol BS1 5DB; and online

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

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

The programme for the conference is as follows:

09:30 Registration and networking with refreshments

10:00 Opening remarks

10:30 **How to Make Yourself Transferable – Bitesize Session**

JP Ashton-Kinlin, FIScT

In an evolving professional landscape, developing transferable skills is key to career progression and resilience. This interactive taster session introduces practical tools to help technicians identify their core strengths, articulate their value, and take ownership of their development. Attendees will explore strategies for recognising transferable skills, aligning them with future opportunities, and building confidence in presenting their professional value, whether seeking progression within their organisation or exploring new directions.

11:30 **Making Chemistry Accessible for All: Disability-Inclusive Laboratories**

Dr Ilaria Meazzini, Senior Programme Manager Inclusion & Diversity, Royal Society of Chemistry

Chemistry laboratories are central to scientific learning and discovery, yet many remain inaccessible to disabled scientists, students and staff.

This talk explores the physical, systemic and cultural barriers faced by those individuals in laboratory environments and outlines practical, evidence-based recommendations to address these issues and foster inclusion across the sector.

12:15 **Lunch and networking**

Lunch is included for delegates.

Exhibition stands from the RSC, HEaTED/NTDC and sponsors will be available to visit.

Delegates may also visit the We The Curious museum.

13:30 **Parallel session**

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

- Professional recognition through registration

In this session, we will look at professional registration as a Registered Science Technician and Registered Scientist, professional body membership, and progression through these development frameworks. We will also discuss benefits, how to achieve registered status, and an introduction to RSC membership.

- Making the Invisible Visible

Making the Invisible Visible is an interactive workshop exploring how science technicians can raise the visibility and understanding of their role within schools and the wider science community. Through real examples, discussion, and collaborative activities, the session will explore practical ways to highlight technician contributions, promote professional recognition, strengthen communication, and advocate for the vital role technicians play in supporting high-quality science education.

- Shaping Your Career: Support, Strategy, and Next Steps

This session will be run by the RSC's Career Development Team and will explore practical strategies for shaping and developing your career, including how to build a realistic career plan, identify development opportunities, and turn career goals into actionable next steps. We will also look at the role mentoring can play in supporting professional growth, building confidence, and expanding your perspective on future career possibilities.

Designed specifically with technicians in mind, this session will provide practical tools, reflective exercises, and guidance to help you take ownership of your career development and make informed decisions about your next steps.

- How to make your workplace smarter with AI

This session will also be livestreamed to online attendees.

AI is becoming normalised in day-to-day work activities and is developing into an essential skill across sectors. This session will look at ways that technicians can integrate AI into their workplaces to simplify and automate tasks. The potential challenges around data governance and ethical use will also be discussed to give an understanding of ways to use AI safely and responsibly.

14:30 Coffee and networking

15:00 Stronger Together: Shared skills and stories from technicians across sectors

Panel session featuring technicians from different sectors, aimed at learning about different technician roles, finding common ground, and how to move between sectors.

Panellists:

Maureen Wade RSciTech MRSC MRSB MIScT

Lead Technician, The Victory Academy, The Thinking Schools Academy Trust

Mark Withers MRSC MChem

Senior Purchasing Technician, King's College London

Tyler Harvey-Cowlishaw RSci

Technical Manager, University of Nottingham

15:45 RSC Technical Excellence Prize winners' presentation

16:30 Closing remarks

17:00 Close

Speaker details:

JP Ashton-Kinlin, FIScT

JP Ashton-Kinlin, FIScT is a professional development facilitator specialising in career progression and strategic growth. With a background in business leadership and supporting professionals across Higher Education and Industry, JP delivers practical, action-focused sessions designed to build clarity and confidence. His work focuses on helping individuals recognise their value, articulate their strengths, and take proactive steps towards progression within their organisations and beyond.

Dr Ilaria Meazzini

Ilaria is a chemical scientist by background and the Senior Programme Manager for Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) at the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC).

In her current role, Ilaria leads the efforts of the RSC I&D team to increase the diversity of people choosing and fulfilling their potential in the chemical sciences. Areas of focus of the team include disability and accessibility, gender parity, socioeconomic inclusion, race and ethnicity and LGBTQ+ inclusion. Ilaria represents the RSC as sponsor for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for EDI in STEM and is a member of the Faraday Institution Training and Diversity Panel.

Before this role, Ilaria spent several years working closely with the chemical sciences community, to enable collaborations across researchers, industry representatives, policymakers and funding bodies on areas such as sustainability and air quality.

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