

Annual Review

2019 – 2020



About the Society

The British Society for Immunology is the leading UK membership organisation working with scientists and clinicians from academia and industry to forward immunology research and application around the world. Our friendly, accessible community consists of over 4,300 immunologists, giving us a powerful voice to advocate for immunological science and health for the benefit of society. Our staff of 17 work with our Trustees and members to achieve maximum impact for immunology.

Mission

The British Society for Immunology’s mission is to promote excellence in immunological research, scholarship and clinical practice in order to improve human and animal health.

We accomplish this by:

- Working with our members to support current and future generations of immunologists
- Sharing our passion for immunology through meetings, publications and the media
- Building up an understanding of our work by engaging with the public and those working in the research and health environments
- Working with partners in pursuit of our mission, building on common interests.

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Message from our President and Chief Executive

Welcome to our annual review for 2019–20. When writing this foreword 12 months ago, none of us could have predicted what was laid in store for the year ahead. COVID-19 is a global crisis but one in which immunologists have a key role to play, through research, patient care and public information. While the British Society for Immunology has excelled in delivering our strategic plan, with the overall aim of promoting excellence in immunological research, scholarship and clinical practice to improve human and animal health, we have also been proactive in adapting and evolving our activities to maximise our support for members and our externally facing work during this global crisis.

Supporting our membership has always been the bedrock of our work and this year was no different, with an array of grants and new initiatives to support our members and recognise their excellence. We were delighted to welcome our membership to the BSI Congress in Liverpool, which provided four days of spectacular science and networking opportunities. With almost 1,400 attendees, the sense of community around the event made it stand out as our flagship activity for bringing members together – it certainly was an event not to miss. On top of this, it was a pleasure to support our dedicated Regional and Affinity Groups host many smaller specialist events throughout the year. These highly popular scientific showcases really are invaluable for the continued development of our discipline.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we pivoted a number of activities to ensure we could provide maximum support for members. We were extremely proud of the way the immunology community came together to drive the global research efforts forward and the BSI's role has been to stand shoulder to shoulder with members to support them during this unprecedented time. Notable among our activities were our highly popular Coronavirus and career development webinar series, which provided vital information and a sense of community while many of our members were working from home.

On the wider stage, we have been setting the agenda for immunology by maintaining a vocal presence through our influencing and engagement work. Immunology is a central pillar of the life sciences and medical ecosystem, a fact that has come to the fore in the recent COVID-19 pandemic. As such it's important for us to have a powerful and authoritative voice to represent the discipline to the wider world. Immunology research has never been more crucial than during this pandemic and the BSI is determined to be there to put the discipline centre-stage, both in terms of advocating in support of our profession and acting as a reliable, trustworthy voice for immunology in media and public debates. We've seen a number of notable successes in our work, including

our collaboration with the Academy of Medical Sciences to form an influential Immunology and COVID-19 taskforce.

Our aim to constantly strive for excellence is also well reflected through our official journals, *Immunology* and *Clinical & Experimental Immunology*. Through the hard work of the editors, publishers, BSI members and staff, both journals have recorded impressive impact factors, and in the case of *Immunology* its highest ever at 5.016. With an increased emphasis on integrating the journals into Society activities as well as building their international reputation, we're in a strong position to ensure they continue to flourish as the publishing sector evolves. Looking to the future, we've also put in the groundwork to launch our first fully Open Access journal, *Immunotherapy Advances*, next year – an exciting move for us.

Making connections and building meaningful partnerships to establish the BSI as an integral part of the global immunology community is an ongoing overarching theme for us. We can deliver so much more impact for our members and wider society by working together with other organisations. We've seen important successes, not least through our COVID-19 response, that have allowed us to provide increased support for and representation for our members while driving forward the discipline of immunology. Of particular significance has been our Celebrate Vaccines campaign to highlight the vital role that vaccination plays in improving global public health.

The BSI's Trustees and staff are committed to building on our current achievements to ensure that the Society continues to flourish and innovate in new programmes of work to support our members and represent immunology to the wider world. None of our achievements would be possible without the hard work and expertise of our many members and partners who generously volunteer their time to help us achieve our goals. We're thrilled to see the dedication and enthusiasm with which you embrace the opportunities to work with us and be part of our journey to help shape the future of immunology.

Thank you all!



Arne Akbar
President



Doug Brown
Chief Executive

Our Achievements 2019 – 2020

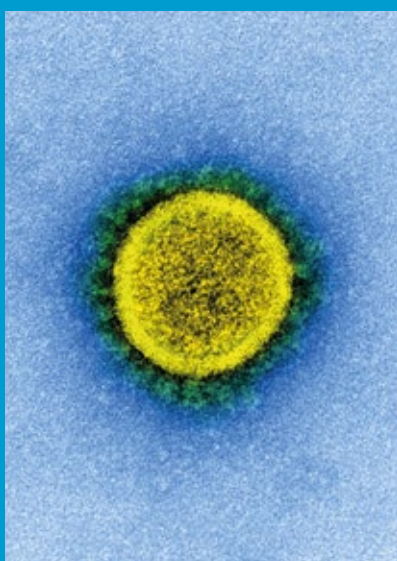
Ran our very popular Congress, with 1,400 people from 35 countries in attendance

Disseminating the latest findings in immunology to our community



Celebrated our official journal, *Immunology*, reaching an impact factor of 5.016

Developing our official journals to advance immunology and foster innovation



Launched our Connect on Coronavirus initiative

Supporting our members through the pandemic with our webinars and online information hub



Provided expert input and information to policymakers, media and public on the COVID-19 pandemic

Feeding scientific expertise into public debate to help our country navigate the pandemic

Grew our membership to over 4,300 people, the largest number to date

Building momentum for our welcoming and diverse community



Supported our Regional & Affinity Groups to bring their communities together and put on highly successful events

Championing local and subject-specific research networks

Celebrated our Immunology Teaching Excellence Award

Recognising and rewarding outstanding immunology educators



Developed our online presence with a record number of website visitors and social media followers

Extending our reach to maximise the impact of our activities



Launched our highly successful Celebrate Vaccines campaign

Championing the importance of vaccines in improving global public health

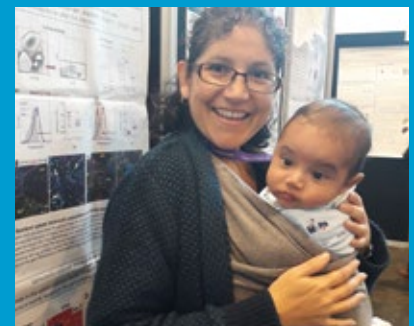
Worked in partnership with key stakeholders to build alliances with greater impact

Over 30 partnerships supported including in autoimmunity with Connect Immune Research and cancer immunotherapy with National Cancer Research Institute



Supported our members to develop their skills through online career webinars

Providing access to useful and informative career development resources



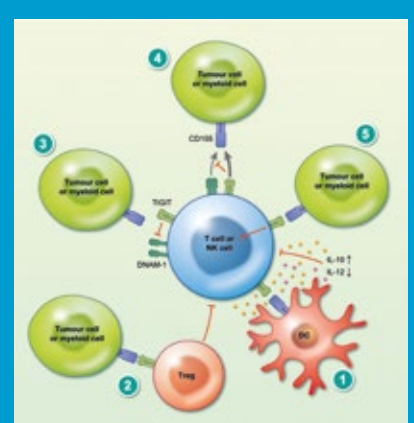
Launched our Carers' Grants to support those with caring responsibilities attend our events

Supporting diversity within our immunology community



Published our 'Protecting the world: 200 years of immunology research' report

Increasing awareness of the crucial contribution that the UK has made to vaccine research



Published a record number of review series in our journal, *Clinical & Experimental Immunology*

Building and disseminating knowledge within our discipline

Images: NIAID, CC BY-2.0; Shutterstock

Who we are

The British Society for Immunology is the leading UK membership organisation working with scientists and clinicians from academia and industry to forward immunology research and application around the world. We are indebted to our members who volunteer their time and expertise to develop and carry out the Society's activities. Our work is overseen by a Board of Trustees, assisted by several committees, who work with Society staff to take forward our strategy and promote excellence in immunological research, scholarship and clinical practice in order to improve human and animal health.

Trustees



Arne Akbar
President



Ann Ager
Chair of Forum



Calum Bain
Early Career Trustee



Emma Chambers
Early Career Trustee



Fiona Culley
Treasurer



Robert Davies
Co-opted Trustee



Colin Dayan
Clinical Secretary



Matthias Eberl
Trustee



Paul Harding
Co-opted Trustee



Edith Hessel
Co-opted Trustee



James Lowe
Co-opted Trustee



Allan Mowat
Trustee



Divya Shah
Trustee



Deborah Dunn-Walters
Trustee

Secretaries



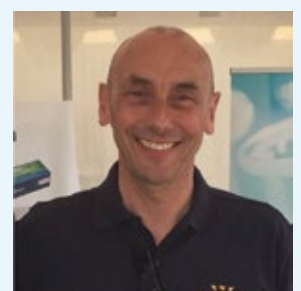
Helen Collins
Education Secretary



John Curnow
Groups & Meetings Secretary



Donald Davidson
Public Engagement Secretary



Gary Entrican
Congress Secretary

Membership correct as of June 2020

Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees is responsible for overseeing the business activities of the BSI. The members of the Board have the legal responsibility to ensure the Society is well-run, financially sound, and that it meets its charitable aims and objectives.

Forum

Our Forum members represent a diverse mix of immunologists from different career stages, backgrounds and geographic locations. The committee is led by our Trustee Ann Ager. In addition to some of our Trustees and Secretaries, the following people sit on our Forum: Matthew Buckland, Alice Burton, Louise Cosby, Ceri Fielding, Megan MacLeod, Helen McGettrick, Fane Mensah, Rebecca Newman, Laura Pallett, Antonios Psarras, Elma Tchilian, Faith Uwadiae and Federica Villanova.

Committees

The BSI is supported by a number of committees who oversee key areas of our work. These include the Congress Committee who manage the popular BSI Congress, and the Clinical Committee who represent our clinical members and oversee engagement with the wider clinical community. We also have a Grants Panel who assist with marking our grant applications.

Regional & Affinity Groups

We have 29 active Groups who represent different subject areas and regional groupings in immunology. We are indebted to our Group members who volunteer their time to bring sections of the membership together by organising meetings, arranging seminars and putting on public engagement events.

Our members

The BSI has over 4,300 members who join us from all walks of immunology. From students up to senior levels, they contribute to our work through many different routes, including speaking at our conferences, helping with our public engagement activities and advising on our policy work – our grateful thanks to our whole immunology community.

Our corporate members

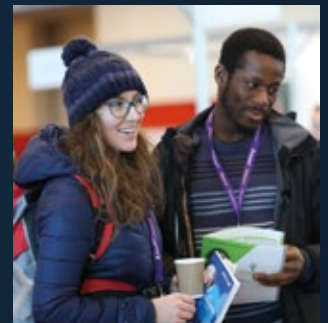
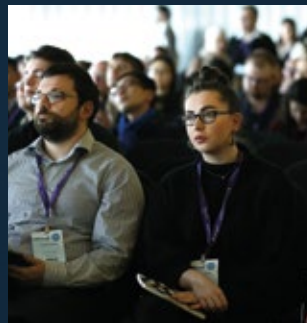
We are grateful to our corporate members whose continuous support enables us to undertake our work and reach our charitable aims.

Staff

Our staff team of 17 bring together specialists from a wide range of sectors to take forward the Society's work in supporting immunologists and being the voice of the discipline to a wider audience. The team is led by Chief Executive Doug Brown, supported by the senior management team of Otto Balsiger, Jennie Evans, Lucy McIvor and Jane Sessenwein.



The BSI staff team



Join us!

We're always looking for new members to get involved with our activities. Check our website (www.immunology.org) for upcoming opportunities.

Our community

Our members are at the heart of everything we do. The United Kingdom is a world leader in immunological research, and immunology underpins many aspects of recent advances in our knowledge of human and animal health and disease. As the largest professional immunology society in Europe and third largest in the world, we are a friendly, accessible community for immunologists from all disciplines, which supports diversity and works across different sectors and national borders. We work with members from across the spectrum of the discipline, from basic science through to clinical application, and from different sectors, to support current and future generations of immunologists.

Membership of the British Society for Immunology brings many benefits. These include discounts to our meetings and to our exceptional BSI Congress, access to a diverse range of grants, bursaries and prizes, free access to our journals and much more. The Society provides tailored support for our community through our highly valued Regional and Affinity Groups, but we are also there to represent immunology to the wider world. Members value our strong voice to speak out with influence and impact on behalf of immunology in policy, public engagement and the media.

We bring the immunology community together to promote excellence in immunological research, scholarship and clinical practice in order to improve human and animal health.

4,327 members

1,587

Full members

1,245

Postgraduate

382

Early career

354

Concessionary

759

Undergraduates



Top reasons our members value us



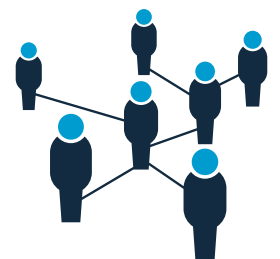
Supporting members' careers through our grants programme



Accessing the latest cutting-edge research through the BSI Congress



Being part of our community with a strong voice to represent immunology to the highest levels



Developing professional networks through our Regional & Affinity Groups

Our members come from **78 countries** around the world.

9 out of 10 members would recommend the BSI to their colleagues

Regional and Affinity Groups

The BSI's Regional and Affinity Groups are a key part of the BSI community and carry out much of the core activity of bringing our membership together. The scientific discussions and networking that take place at these meetings are invaluable for the continued development of immunology. The strengths of our 17 Regional Groups are to bring together immunologists within a local community, boosting local research networks. The 12 Affinity Groups have all been created to focus meetings and discussions on specific areas of immunology and they continue to evolve as immunology expands its reach and knowledge.

Case Study



Immunology North East Group

The BSI's Immunology North East (INE) Group brings together members from the Universities of Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria and Sunderland, as well as local NHS trusts. We organise approximately 10 seminars per year from nationally and internationally renowned immunologists, which are designed to inform about the latest cutting-edge research and give the opportunity to engage with the speaker in a more relaxed environment, furthering discussion of research and careers. We also hold a monthly lunchtime journal club that provides an informal, friendly environment for more junior members of INE to present and discuss published immunological research, in the presence of pizza, helping them to develop analytical and discussion skills.

To further interaction and collaboration within the region, we hold an annual research day, alternately hosted by one of the four INE universities allowing members to showcase their research alongside invited keynote speakers. We also participate in and organise public engagement activities, including Pint of Science and a quarterly INE pub quiz, to emphasise that immunological research can also be fun. INE uses Facebook and Twitter to further promote 'all of the above'.

Amy Anderson

Chair, BSI Immunology North East Group

17

Regional Groups

12

Affinity Groups



Keeping you informed

The BSI works hard to ensure good communication channels with our members to keep them informed about our activities and about developments in immunology in the wider world. This has been a particularly important part of our activities this year with the COVID-19 pandemic. The popularity of our website continues to grow with over 2.65 million page views this year and over 1.3 million unique users. This is an increase of 51% and 53% respectively compared with last year's figures. Of particular popularity continues to be our BiteSized Immunology section along with our new Coronavirus information hub, which collects the BSI's activities on COVID-19 with useful resources for our members and the wider public.

Our email communications to members and additional subscribers have become a mainstay for keeping the immunology community informed and connected, with audience numbers growing considerably over the course of the year. Our flagship membership magazine *Immunology News* is published quarterly and continues to be a popular way of engaging with our members. The magazine includes feature articles from leading immunologists, an education and careers section and more information on our activities. As it contains many articles likely to be of interest to a broad audience range, it is an important part of our work to increase exposure of the BSI to the immunology community and beyond.

Our social media channels continue to grow in importance as a way of engaging with our membership and the wider world at a more immediate level, to interact with our supporters and spread the word about our work and the wonders of immunology! This year has been a particular success story for our social media channels with touchpoints such as BSI Congress, our #CelebrateVaccines campaign and our coronavirus work being especially influential in driving our engagement figures. In particular, Twitter has seen an increase in followers of 42% compared with last year, while our LinkedIn audience has grown by 95%. Across all channels, our social media posts were seen over 3.6 million times.



Twitter: 8,816 followers



Facebook: 33,282 likes



LinkedIn: 7,061 followers

Correct as of 30 June 2020

Influence and impact

The UK is a world leader in immunology research and we are now witnessing how decades of investment and research into immunity are yielding breakthroughs in the treatment of critical disease areas. With this success, it becomes more important for us to give a powerful voice to immunological science and health and to advocate on relevant issues for the benefit of society. Indeed, with the current coronavirus pandemic, we have increased our activities even more to ensure the voice of immunologists is heard loud and clear in public debate. Alongside this, we have consolidated our previous activity to ensure the policy environment supports the UK's future growth in the field and that the public have access to and can engage with the latest research.

Engaging with stakeholders

We've strengthened our policy and public affairs work significantly to raise our profile and take forward engagements with policymakers to bring about meaningful change for immunology. Our achievements last year include:

- Through our Parliamentary Questions programme, we've had 33 written questions answered, submitted by seven different MPs from four political parties. Additionally, we had one oral question asked on antimicrobial resistance.
- Met with seven MPs, including Shadow Health and Social Care Secretary, Jon Ashworth MP, Chair of the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, and PPS to DHSC Ministerial Team, Steve Double MP.
- Responded to 12 consultations on a wide range of topics including vaccination uptake, COVID-19 and biosecurity.
- Worked with the Department for International Development and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the importance of the GAVI replenishment conference to raise funds for vaccinations for children in low- and middle-income countries.
- Gave oral evidence to three Select Committee inquiries; one from the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee on pandemic preparedness and two inquiries from the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee on COVID-19 and on ageing.
- Ran a campaign to inspire our members to engage with their parliamentary candidates in the run up to the UK's General Election.
- Participated in stakeholder network meetings with the Royal Society of Biology, Association of Medical Research Charities, Campaign for Science and Engineering and Royal Society.

Case Study

Improving our nation's health through vaccination

As a world leader in vaccine research, the UK should ensure this excellence is reflected in the provision of vaccines to our children, a critical factor in improving our nation's health. The UK currently does not meet the 95% uptake rate needed to prevent disease spread for any of the routine childhood vaccinations. Advocating the benefits of vaccinations and proven ways to increase uptake (such as providing more accessible services, more information for parents and increased training for healthcare workers) continues to be a key focus of our work.

Over the year, we have responded to numerous consultations on the importance of supporting vaccination and the services which ensure their delivery as well as being a vocal advocate for vaccination in the media. Following the UK's loss of WHO 'measles free' status, we provided a robust response to Prime Minister, Boris Johnson's, announcement of a new 'Vaccine Strategy', which includes recommendations of what needs to be done to increase vaccination levels.

Additionally, we have engaged with MPs across the House including meeting with Shadow Health and Social Care Secretary, Jon Ashworth MP. We also wrote to all new MPs following the General Election to highlight how important it is that the new Vaccine Strategy is published and implemented quickly to increase vaccine uptake and protect our children from these infectious diseases.

Case Study



BSI President, Arne Akbar at Parliament

Speaking up for immunology

A key aim of our policy work is to ensure the voices of immunologists are heard at the highest levels and to ensure relevant scientific knowledge is fed into policy debate. This year, our President, Professor Arne Akbar, gave oral evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry on 'Ageing: science, technology and healthy living', which aims to investigate how approaches from science and technology could be used to increase health span, to mitigate some of the negative effects of ageing, and to support older people living with poor health. Topics of discussion included the critical role that the immune system plays in ageing, where our understanding is currently on the underlying scientific principles, what potential therapeutics are in the pipeline and what support ageing research needs in the UK to be able to thrive. Our response and involvement in this inquiry marks another step forward in our overall policy work to make sure we represent our members and the discipline overall to the wider world.

Public engagement

Engaging with the public on immunology is one of the key aims of the BSI and we've been busy working to achieve this, both through running public engagement initiatives ourselves and through providing support to our members to build their engagement skills. Ensuring that the public has access to reliable, evidence-based immunology information has become all the more important with the coronavirus pandemic and the need for us all to understand the science to make informed choices about our health. As well as our Celebrate Vaccines project (see page 17), we have also run stands at several science festivals to encourage the public to find out more about immunology. We're very grateful to our members and our Regional and Affinity Groups who volunteer to help us out at these events.

Case Study



BSI at Cambridge Big Biology Day

The British Society for Immunology was pleased to attend the Cambridge Big Biology Day, a family-friendly science-focused day out. Our stand concentrated on the immunology of vaccines, with a plethora of different activities to help us engage conversations with attendees and to explain how vaccines work and why they are important.

The event was both fun and educational, and our enthusiastic volunteers from our Cambridge Immunology Regional Group were kept busy all day. Younger children were kept entertained with pathogen modelling, using plasticine and craft items (things got a bit messy!) to create their own virus or bacteria, while older children built on their knowledge with our antibody army game, emphasising how antibodies are specific to a bacteria or virus and help clear the body of these disease-causing bugs.

The event served as an excellent opportunity to allow our members to build their skills and confidence in communicating with diverse audiences about their research, while also providing a platform for us to engage with a broad range of public audiences to increase knowledge and interest in immunology.



Our public engagement stand at the BSI Congress to help members share ideas on successful engagement activities



Our volunteers at Dr Jenner's House Museum Discovery Day

Media highlights

Through our media work, we aim to promote evidence-based and accurate coverage of immunology in the news and ensure that journalists have access to relevant experts who can provide knowledgeable responses. We do this through providing expert comment to breaking news stories, working with programme researchers to shape TV or radio broadcasts and through providing background briefings.

This year, our media work has been dominated by two topics which have received very high levels of coverage: vaccination and COVID-19. On vaccination, the BSI is a strong vocal advocate on the importance of vaccines and how they work. This included working with the Royal College of Nursing and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health to run a briefing at the Science Media Centre on issues around vaccine uptake. On COVID-19, we are working hard to ensure that the expert voice of immunologists features prominently in this fast-moving, complex and high-profile story.

Our coverage has included all major national news outlets such as BBC, ITV News, Sky News, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sun*.

23

BSI press releases/
response statements

94

Articles in the UK
national press

500+

Articles in the worldwide press

Support throughout your career

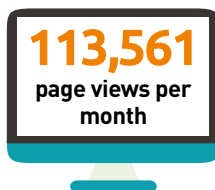
The BSI is a hub of expertise to support our members in forging strong careers in the many sectors in which immunologists are employed. It is essential that our members feel supported at all stages of their careers, from undergraduate through to retirement, and beyond. One of our core responsibilities is to offer careers and educational support to current and future generations of immunologists. We do this through ongoing initiatives, such as our grants schemes, our education website BiteSized Immunology and our highly rated mentoring scheme.



BiteSized Immunology

BiteSized Immunology is our highly popular online educational resource which provides a comprehensive overview of the immune

system, delivered in short self-contained articles that highlight major 'take home' messages. The content is designed for use by bioscience undergraduates, A-level students and anyone with an interest in the subject. This year, we have continued to review current content and commission new articles to ensure we keep up to date with the immunology field.



Teaching recognition

Supporting higher education immunology teachers is important to ensure that the next generation are inspired to follow a career in immunology. The BSI runs a number of initiatives to support this sector of membership.



Dr Joanne Pennock

Our Immunology Teaching Excellence Award recognises

outstanding immunology teachers at higher education institutes in the UK. Now in its third year, we were delighted to present the award to Dr Joanne Pennock, a Senior Lecturer at the Lydia Becker Institute of Immunology and Inflammation, The University of Manchester. The judges felt that Joanne was a dedicated and passionate immunologist who demonstrated commitment, innovation and creativity in her teaching to bring the subject to life to students at all levels. It was clear to the judges that Joanne's teaching skill is valued by students and colleagues alike.

Mentoring scheme

The success of our mentoring scheme has continued apace. This key part of our strategic plan aims to support professional development among the immunology community, bringing together senior scientists with early career researchers to assist the next generation of immunologists with career development and progression. Our 2019 intake of 11 mentor-mentee pairs all valued the scheme, and finished well with positive feedback all round. For 2020, we have 8 mentors and mentees respectively taking part. Initial feedback indicates the scheme is working well, with particular comment made about the usefulness of the programme in light of the changes to the working environment that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused.

Case Study

Career development webinars

Providing access to credible, useful and informative careers resources is a key aim of the BSI. This year, we took our first foray into the world of webinars. We were particularly keen to trial this in our career development work to ensure that all members, no matter where they are based, had access to our careers resources.

We put on two highly successful career webinar series over the course of the year. The first was carried out in partnership with The Physiological Society and focused on key skills that members highlighted that they wanted to gain experience in – building resilience, networking skills and transitioning to independence.

We followed this up with an eight-part webinar series for BSI members. Wide-ranging topics included how to publish your research, public engagement skills, wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, and transitioning from academia to industry. This has been a particularly important offering to our members during the COVID-19 lockdown to allow them to continue to build their skillsets while working from home. Feedback has been hugely positive.

"Such a great webinar by @britsocimm on #Wellbeing during #COVID19! I liked the saying: "What connects the world is its shared vulnerability, not the internet or 5G" #reachout #mentalhealthawareness"

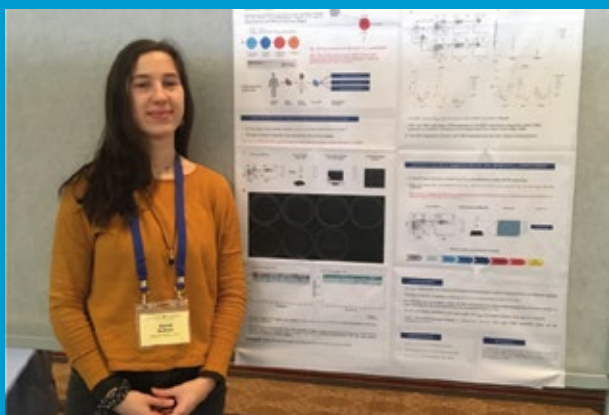
Dayana Hristova @hristova_dayana

Grants to support you

A significant proportion of our funds is distributed to our members through our grant schemes to support their research, help them to build their transferable skills and to participate in outreach projects. Although some of our grant schemes were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic meaning some activities – such as travel to international conferences – could no longer go ahead, we remain committed to supporting our members through these schemes in the future when circumstances allow.

59 members benefitted from our Travel Awards this year, enabling them to attend international conferences to present their work, boost their network and grow their knowledge. An additional 156 members were provided with funding to attend the BSI Congress. For the first time this year, we also offered Carers' Grants to support those attending BSI Congress who had caring responsibilities. Feedback on these was extremely positive, with 10 grants being awarded in total.

Case Study



Dani Koftori, PhD student at the Babraham Institute, received a BSI Travel Award to attend the Keystone meeting on T cell memory summary, Banff, Canada.

"The meeting was very informative with the biggest names in the field attending and giving presentations. It was fascinating to be updated on their current research and learn of the major challenges the field faces. I was given the opportunity to participate in this conversation and voice my opinion in front of a panel (and room!) of T cell experts!

"Furthermore, I presented my poster and received valuable feedback. I got comments on how to proceed with an experiment I was struggling with, met other people working on similar fields and talked to them to exchange ideas, and had a chance to present my work to the most relevant audience.

"This was truly an excellent chance for networking as I met many of the PIs I admire in person and had the opportunity to also talk to their students/postdocs."

Case Study



Carers' Grants

For the first time, the BSI provided Carers' Grants for our Congress. These were aimed at assisting people who have caring responsibilities or who require carers themselves to attend the event.

"The BSI carers' grant, together with the facilities provided and the parent/baby-friendly environment allowed me to attend the 2019 BSI Congress taking my 5-month-old baby with me. I was able to take my baby into some of the sessions or else use the crèche service provided. I also enjoyed the privacy of using the nursing room and the freedom of carrying my baby through the poster sessions with other parents/babies around.

"Attending the BSI Congress 2019 allowed me to reconnect with the latest research ongoing in immunology. I got updates on the state-of-the-art techniques to study lymphocytes trafficking and their role during inflammatory and infectious diseases. I also got in contact with people working in my topic of research and established networking.

"I would like to thank the BSI for being the facilitator of a more baby-friendly science environment through this grant. I sincerely hope the BSI continues giving this award to encourage parents to attend future congresses.

"Thanks a million for making parenting and science compatible."

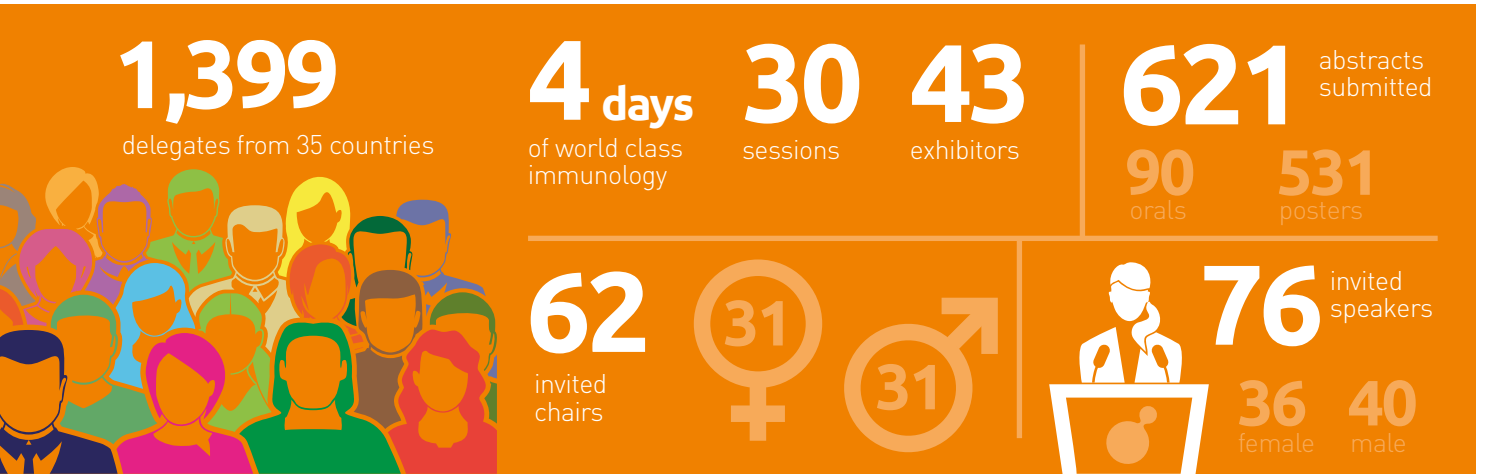
Noni Beristain, University of Birmingham
BSI Carers' Grant recipient

Undergraduate Achievement Awards

Through this scheme, we supported 14 departments to promote excellence in the study of immunology at undergraduate level and encourage gifted students to pursue a career in immunology.

BSI Congress 2019

In December, immunologists from all around the world came together in Liverpool for our flagship event: BSI Congress 2019. It was an amazing week of immunology, filled with a huge array of cutting-edge science, inspiring debates and plenty of opportunities to build collaborations. We were delighted to welcome 1,400 immunologists from around the world – a new record for our Congress as a stand-alone event. Doreen Cantrell from the University of Dundee gave an outstanding keynote lecture and this was followed by a plethora of plenary talks and invited lectures from leading international researchers from across the spectrum of immunology. Feedback from delegates was very positive, both in terms of the scientific content of the event and the networking opportunities afforded to attendees.



Our Bright Sparks winners 2019

Our Bright Sparks winners

Bright Sparks in Immunology is our competition to showcase the work of early career researchers and provide them with experience of presenting their work to a large audience. This year's first-placed winners were:

Emilie J Cosway (Birmingham) – Eosinophils: essential regulators of thymus regeneration

Nathalie Schmidt (London) – Rescuing hepatitis B virus- and tumour-specific T cell responses by modulating cholesterol metabolism.

What our delegates thought...

"The BSI Congress 2019 was a great convention of immunologists where I had the opportunity to listen to speakers from all over the world. The Bright Sparks session was the highlight of the conference"

"I had the great opportunity to present my research work in the form of a poster to peers and obtain their feedback and potential ways forward for my research"

"Many of the talks presented were extremely interesting and educational and I managed to establish invaluable connections"



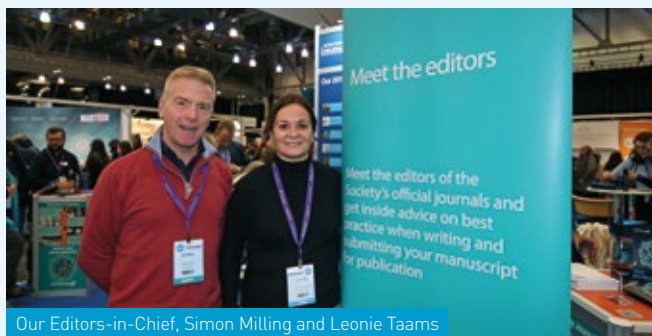
BSI President Arne Akbar with Keynote Speaker, Doreen Cantrell

Journals

The BSI's original ethos still lies at the heart of our Society – to disseminate research with the aim of promoting and advancing immunology to foster future innovation. The BSI is proud to achieve this aim through the publication of our two official journals, *Immunology* and *Clinical & Experimental Immunology*. Working with the publisher Wiley, our journals provide a significant proportion of the Society's income.



It's been a busy year for journals as we work hard to ensure they maintain their competitive edge in light of the current changes in the publishing industry. This year saw us record positive news on impact factors. While *Clinical & Experimental Immunology* held steady at 3.532, *Immunology* reported its highest ever impact factor of 5.016. Our thanks go to our hard-working editorial teams, led by Editors-in-Chief Leonie Taams and Simon Milling, for their ongoing commitment, and everyone who has contributed to the continued success of our journals, including authors, readers, reviewers and editors. While we are aware that the impact factor has certain limitations, we take this as one measure of the high-quality work submitted by our authors, contributing highly cited reviews and research.



Our Editors-in-Chief, Simon Milling and Leonie Taams

Throughout the year, we continued to work closely with our Editorial Boards to take a strategic approach to ensuring the continued high performance of the journals. Changes to the publishing environment in the form of Plan S have seen our journals team continue to work collaboratively within the wider sector, working with both Wiley and the Society Publishers' Coalition to ensure our voice is heard. While we support the principles of open scholarship and believe open access to research outputs will benefit all our shared communities, we believe the transition to full open scholarship must be managed in a sustainable, inclusive way to ensure the future system is fit for purpose for all stakeholders.

Excellence in autoimmunity

To celebrate International Day of Immunology, we compiled a selection of our favourite articles from *Clinical & Experimental Immunology* and *Immunology* to highlight this year's theme: autoimmunity and autoinflammation. This highly popular and unique collection featured some recent reviews and original research papers on the mechanisms underlying autoinflammation and autoimmunity, and how autoinflammation and/or autoimmunity can contribute to arthritis, psoriasis, colitis, lung diseases and CNS neurodegenerative disorders like multiple sclerosis.

Clinical & Experimental Immunology

3.532

Impact factor

680,171

Downloads
(Wiley online library)

Immunology

5.016

Impact factor

650,157

Downloads
(Wiley online library)

2019–20 virtual issues

- Joint: International Day of Immunology: autoimmunity and autoinflammation
- Joint: Celebrate Vaccines
- Joint: Cancer immunology
- *CEI*: Editors' choice 2019

2019–20 review series

- Joint: Interactions of the microbiota with the mucosal immune system
- *CEI*: Immune checkpoint inhibition: from molecules to clinical application
- *CEI*: Immunology of Diabetes Society review series: Insights into pathogenesis of type 1 diabetes
- *CEI*: Vaccines for emerging pathogens: from research to the clinic
- *CEI*: Immunology of pregnancy
- *CEI*: Neuroimmune interactions
- *CEI*: Translating immunometabolism
- *Immunology*: Barrier immunity
- *Immunology*: Tregs in cancer: where are we now?



Coming soon...

The BSI is always looking to the future. With this in mind, our publishing team have been hard at work this year, getting ready to launch a new journal in July 2020 – *Immunotherapy Advances*. Published by Oxford University Press, *Immunotherapy Advances* will be the BSI's first full Open Access journal and will be led by Editor-in-Chief Tim Elliott, with a remit to publish scientifically rigorous research relating to manipulations of the immune system for the benefit of human and animal health in all disease areas.

Connect on Coronavirus

The Coronavirus pandemic has affected our lives in countless ways. Immunologists have been at the centre of the scientific response to understand how the human body is affected by this virus and use this knowledge to develop treatments and vaccines. The British Society for Immunology's role has been to support our members in their work and to ensure that the voice of our members and the research they conduct is accurately represented in public forums to policymakers, the media and the public.

COVID-19 webinars

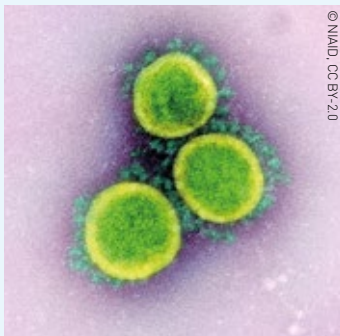
At the start of the pandemic, we quickly established a COVID-19 webinar series to provide immunologists with a platform to keep informed on the latest developments by hosting relevant and timely information from expert sources. The webinars examined the science behind the pandemic with expert speakers discussing new and significant studies, emerging research questions and public health challenges.

As a part of our commitment to rapid dissemination of COVID-19 information, these webinars were free to view with the recordings hosted on our website. They proved immensely popular, peaking at a live audience over 2,000 people per webinar, the largest ever standalone BSI event. With thousands more watching the recordings via our website, these webinars provided a crucial service to the immunology and wider scientific community to keep them up to date with the latest developments.



Representing our members' perspective

In mid-March, we published an open letter to Government reflecting significant questions that the immunology community had over the strategy to tackle the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak at that time. This letter made an important contribution to Government policy and we know that it raised awareness of immunologists' concerns at the highest levels, with the Government subsequently putting much more emphasis on social distancing, particularly for at-risk groups.



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Public engagement

Engaging directly with the public around the science of COVID-19 is another key area of focus. We have curated a collection of public engagement resources on COVID-19 on our website, along with developing our own, such as 'Colour in Coronavirus' and informative infographics.



Collaboration focus: COVID-19 and Immunology taskforce

Ensuring policymakers have access to the latest COVID-19 immunological research formed a key part of our work. We collaborated with the Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS) to convene an expert group to collate and review what was currently known about the immunology of COVID-19, and identify immunology research priorities. Chaired by our President, Professor Arne Akbar, the taskforce published their findings in early May, which were also fed through to the Government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) to inform their discussions. This also resulted in members of our taskforce being invited to attend SAGE to ensure that immunology was well-represented in discussions. Our expert group has continued with their dynamic approach to ensure that we can respond quickly to issues on COVID-19 as and when they arise. Our huge thanks to the taskforce members who have contributed to this work.

Media profile

Working with journalists to make sure that the media and public are kept well informed on the immunology of the COVID-19 pandemic is very important to us. BSI spokespeople have been active on many topics, regularly commenting on antibody tests, vaccine progress, effects of age on susceptibility, how to keep a healthy immune system to name just a few topics. We've worked with every major newspaper and broadcaster in the country, covering both breaking news and more in-depth analysis. This is an area of our work that we feel makes a real difference to public debate on COVID-19 and is one that we're certain to pursue in future.

Visit our online **Connect on Coronavirus information hub**: www.immunology.org/coronavirus.

Celebrate Vaccines

Celebrate Vaccines is the BSI's campaign to champion the critical role of vaccination and vaccine research in saving lives and advancing global health. Our aim is to strengthen public understanding of the importance of vaccination and help everyone make informed decisions about vaccinations and their children's health.

We joined forces with several partners to carry out vaccine advocacy in the run-up to the 2020 Gavi Replenishment Conference, hosted by the UK Government. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, aims to help low-income countries protect children from preventable infectious diseases through supporting routine immunisation programmes. The Replenishment Conference aimed to raise \$7.4 billion to immunise 300 million children and save more than 7 million lives. The BSI represented the voice of researchers who work on vaccines in our policy, media and public engagement work with an overall target of showcasing the benefits of vaccine research in advancing global public health as well as increasing overall uptake rates of childhood vaccinations in the UK.

#CelebrateVaccines trended nationally on Twitter with over **1,800 posts** using our hashtag

#CelebrateVaccines social media campaign

Due to lockdown, our original plans for face-to-face events were redeveloped into a virtual engagement campaign. We called on BSI members to join us in raising the expert voice of the immunology community loud and proud in support of vaccination, and we were not disappointed.

On 26 March 2020, we held a mass online public engagement day to spearhead the vaccination conversation across digital platforms. We took to social media for a day of vaccine advocacy, education and celebration. Through appreciating the power of vaccines in saving lives, our highly successful Celebrate Vaccines campaign engaged and informed the narrative about how vaccines work and why they are important for improving global public health. We are now using this as a springboard to carry on the very important engagement work around vaccines.



Public engagement resources

We developed a range of digital educational and engaging resources to increase public knowledge about vaccines and enable researchers and doctors to speak up about the importance of vaccinations. These include:

- Three animations on the global impact of vaccines, how they are made and how they work
- Updated version of our ever-popular 'A guide to childhood vaccinations'
- Vaccines public engagement kit, containing 15 different activities to help engage with kids to explain more about vaccines
- Three lesson plans for Key Stage 2 and 3 to help teachers bring the science of vaccination to life
- A range of social media graphics to help explain the importance of vaccines

Protecting the world

A key part of our Celebrate Vaccines work was the publication of our new report, 'Protecting the world: Celebrating 200 years of UK vaccine research'. Through new analysis and expert interview, our report reviewed the UK's outstanding contribution to vaccine research and how this has improved global health. It also examines the future challenges that must be overcome to speed up the vaccine development pipeline to bring new vaccines to tackle existing and emerging diseases.

With the primary aim of championing the UK vaccine research sector to policymakers, while also making the case for the UK to make another substantial multi-year investment in the work of Gavi, we were delighted with the subsequent decision by the UK Government to fund Gavi to the equivalent of £330 million per annum for the next five years. This will help to provide vaccinations to 75 million children from low- and middle-income countries around the world.

Visit www.celebratevaccines.com for more information

Financial report



Message from the Treasurer

This was a challenging year for the British Society for Immunology as for many organisations, with COVID-19 having a significant impact on our activities for the last four months. I am very proud of the BSI team who have worked tirelessly to ensure they continue to deliver for our members throughout this time. Overall, the activities of the Society generated a surplus of £0.17m for the year ended June 2020.

We welcomed back our ever-popular Congress this year, with almost 1,400 delegates, which contained a wide variety of sessions, activities and innovations to support our community. This, along with our ongoing plans to diversify our income, meant that 2019–2020 was a great success in terms of income generation, with £2.23m generated, our highest ever annual income.

Total costs were higher than 2019. This was partly due to the return of the BSI Congress and also due to a greater focus on our policy and communications work, especially through the Celebrate Vaccines project. For this year, the most significant financial impact of COVID-19 on BSI activities was the postponement of several Regional and Affinity Group events and the reduction in travel grants awarded following the introduction of travel restrictions across the globe.

Financial health

Overall, the BSI is in good financial health. Reserves have increased to over £4m, climbing over £1m in the last four years. Our investments weathered the impact of COVID-19 on the financial markets and ended the year higher than 2019. The BSI also had a year-end cash balance of over £1m for the second consecutive year.

Looking to the future

The Trustees reviewed the BSI's reserves policy during the coming year moving to a risk-based approach to ensure the BSI holds the most appropriate level of reserves to cover potential risks and to fund investment in new income sources securing the BSI's long term financial health.

Fiona Culley
BSI Treasurer



Sponsors and donors

The British Society for Immunology is grateful for all the support we receive from our corporate members in helping us reach our charitable aims.

Gold members



Silver members



Bronze members



Our grateful thanks also go to all the companies and organisations who supported our activities throughout the year including our Regional and Affinity Group events.

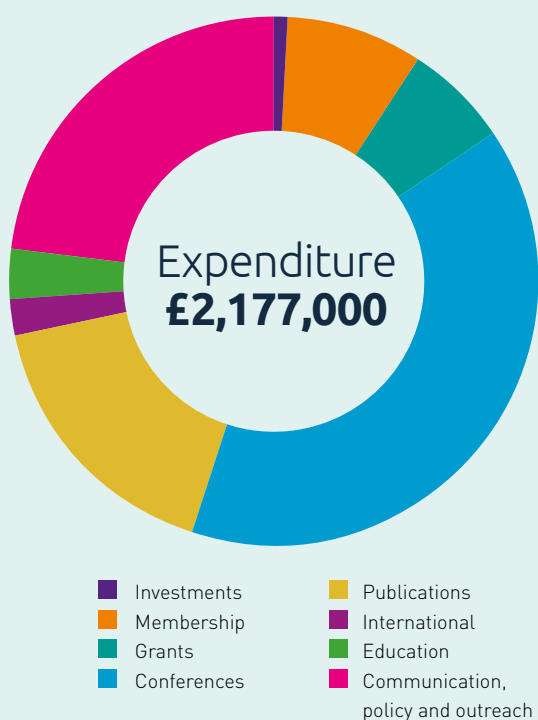
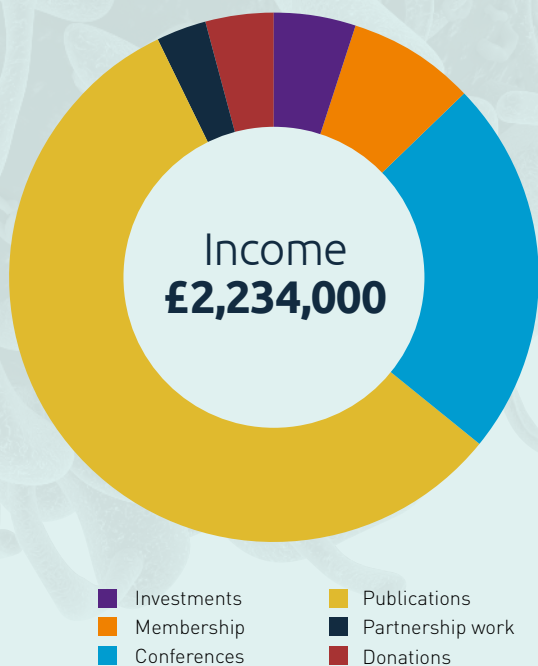
Membership correct as of 30 June 2020

Support for our coronavirus work

The BSI coronavirus initiatives are supported by **The Lorna and Yuti Chernajovsky Biomedical Research Foundation**.




The following BSI gold corporate members have also kindly supported our coronavirus activities: **10X Genomics, Fluidigm, Miltenyi Biotec and NanoString.**



The British Society for Immunology's mission is to promote excellence in immunological research, scholarship and clinical practice in order to improve human and animal health.

Our grateful thanks to all the partner organisations we have worked with us throughout the year to deliver our mission including:

Abbvie	Hackney GP Confederation
Academy of Medical Sciences	International Union of Immunological Societies
All Party Parliamentary Group on Vaccinations for All	International Veterinary Vaccinology Network
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry	JDRF
Association of Clinical Pathologists	Medical Research Council
Association of Medical Research Charities	MS Society
Australian and New Zealand Society for Immunology	National Cancer Research Institute
BactiVac Vaccine Network	Public Health England
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Royal Society of Biology
BioIndustry Association	Science Media Centre
Campaign for Science and Engineering	Spanish Society for Immunology
Collaboration Company	The Physiological Society
European Federation of Immunological Societies	UK Primary Immunodeficiency Network
Federation of Clinical Immunological Societies	Understanding Animal Research
GAVI	Versus Arthritis

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