

A publisher with a charitable heart

John Gurdon and O. Claire Moulton

The Company sees its journals as a core service provided for the advancement and promotion of biological research

There's something special about working for a charitable organisation. As with any job, there is the satisfaction of setting and maintaining the highest standards of professionalism, but in addition there's the knowledge that the fruits of our labour help feed the community in which we work.

And so it is for The Company of Biologists. Publishing is at the core of the Company's activities, and we are extremely proud of the high-quality journals we produce. As well as the direct benefit they provide to the research community, these journals yield income that, alongside a long-term policy of careful investment, is used to support a range of scientific activities, including scientific societies, Travelling Fellowships, and grants for scientific meetings, young scientists and special projects. Under the guidance of our Grants Committee, comprising a group of our Company Directors, this charitable giving is aimed at the advancement and promotion of biological research.

Company Directors act as trustees and are active biologists, librarians or computer scientists, whose expertise and commitment is invaluable for the running of the Company. The Company's charitable status has the condition that none of the Directors receives any remuneration for their services, so Directors give their time and expertise as part of their contribution to the scientific community. Many of them have an ongoing relationship with The Company of Biologists and say they particularly value the fundamental character and spirit of the Company and the way it works.



Some of these principles are represented in the Company seal, which features two Egyptian symbols that also appear in the Company's more modern logo. The well-known Ankh is the Egyptian hieroglyph for life – an appropriate symbol for an organisation dedicated to supporting the life sciences. The feather represents the goddess Maat and is generally seen as the symbol for truth, balance and order – Maat weighed souls against her feather to determine whether they would reach the paradise of the afterlife. Perhaps this underlines the high standards of behaviour that the Company strives to maintain in all its dealings, both as a publisher through its interactions with authors, referees and readers, and, as a charity, with the weighty decisions that have to be made about how best to allocate funds.

John Gurdon is Chairman of the Board of Directors at The Company of Biologists.
Claire Moulton is Publisher of The Company of Biologists.

Sir John Gurdon is the Chairman of the Board of Directors and Claire Moulton is the Publisher of the Company of Biologists. Gurdon is a developmental biologist best known for his pioneering work in nuclear transplantation and cloning. Here they explain the history of the Company, and its publishing and charitable activities.

COB Directors

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Dr Kate Storey – School of Life Sciences, University of Dundee

A strong history

Throughout its history, the Company has been able to build on its reputation for quality to expand its collection of journals. Established in 1925 through the inspiration of G. P. Bidder, the company initially focused on *The British Journal of Experimental Biology* (now simply *The Journal of Experimental Biology*). Such was its success that, in 1946, the *Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science* was gifted to the Company, and was later relaunched as *Journal of Cell Science*. In 1953, the Company accepted the gift of a third journal, the *Journal of Embryology and Experimental Morphology*, and this was relaunched in 1987 as *Development*. And now the Company is delighted to be launching ***Disease Models & Mechanisms*** to reflect the increasing importance of model organisms in the understanding of human disease. The close relationship between the Company and the scientific community has always enabled the journals to move with the science and to embrace changes in their fields, and we hope that this will continue to be the case for a long time to come.

Alongside the growth of its publishing activities, the Company has been able to develop its charitable giving. Over the past 15 years alone, the Company donated in excess of \$8 million/£4 million to charitable works.

Quality journals with author-friendly policies

DMM joins *Development*, *Journal of Cell Science* and *The Journal of Experimental Biology* in publishing high-quality content for the international research community, and will also report on research that more directly relates to human disease and the clinical community. Each journal is handled by a dedicated editorial team and printed in-house to ensure quality, accuracy and speed of publication as well as a personal, friendly service for authors themselves.

Furthermore, the Company is committed to the widest possible dissemination of the research it publishes. We have digital archives (going back as far as 1853), which make a wealth of classic material accessible to everyone in perpetuity, and all new articles are made freely available online to everyone after 6 months without restriction. In addition, during the launch year of **DMM**, we will make all of its articles freely available both on the journal website and within PubMed Central for immediate access by readers.

As participants in the United Nation's HINARI and OARE initiatives, we make all our online articles freely available to users in developing countries immediately on publication. Librarians are free to use our material to create student's course packs at no charge.

The Company was an early adopter of the contractual principle that authors should retain copyright in their own works. Our contract with authors leaves them free to disseminate their work in a wide variety of ways including posting it on their own websites, reusing it in other publications and storing it in institutional repositories, so offering unrestricted access to many different communities.

To support the launch of *DMM* and the communication of the work published within it, the Company will be making available Research Presentation Grants to first authors of papers submitted during 2008 and published in *DMM*. These grants will provide support to travel to a major scientific meeting to discuss the results of their *DMM* papers either in presentations or posters.

Charitable activities

The Company sees its journals as a core service provided for the advancement and promotion of biological research. In addition, as a not-for-profit publisher, the Company can use its subscription revenue to support its charitable remit.

Supporting societies

The Company provides grants to many scientific societies, large and small. Three societies are funded by the Company on a regular basis: British Society of Cell Biology (BSCB), British Society of Developmental Biology (BSDB) and Society of Experimental Biology (SEB). These societies, in turn, use part of our funding to provide travel grants to support postgraduates and junior postdocs who wish to attend their conferences.

Travelling Fellowships

Much of our charitable giving is focused on helping young scientists gain a wider appreciation of the work done in other countries through the many Travelling Fellowships we offer each year. Each of the Company's journals provide Travelling Fellowships to postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows and these are put towards the cost of collaborative visits to other research laboratories. Applications are now welcome for Travelling Fellowships from *DMM*. Applicants should be using model organisms to understand, treat or diagnose human disease and preference will be given to facilitating collaborations between basic researchers and clinical scientists.

Grants for scientific meetings, young scientists and special projects

The Company considers funding requests from the organizers of a range of charitable activities including (but not limited to): meetings, workshops, conferences and summer schools in the fields covered by our journals; support of young scientists; funding for plenary or keynote speakers attending meetings; selected educational initiatives; and prizes for conference presentations by junior scientists.

We are careful to ensure that a significant proportion of our charitable giving each year is reserved for initiatives that aim to educate and excite the public about biology. For example, the Company is a major contributor to the Darwin 2009 Festival, an event designed to celebrate his work and explain its relevance today. We also create a range of free educational materials such as *Highlights* and *Classic Articles* booklets that provide an easily understood summary of the important breakthroughs described in full research articles for the benefit of school students and interested general readers.

The Company also currently manages the Peter Baker Memorial Fund and Philip Godfrey Memorial Fund.

For more information on any of our charitable activities – or to apply for funding – please see our website at www.biologists.org.

Examples of recent grants awarded

The Molecular and Cellular Basis of Regeneration and Tissue Repair – EMBO workshop
 10th International Conference on Limb Development and Regeneration – Spanish National Cardiovascular Research Centre
 Model Organisms & Stem Cells in Development, Regeneration & Disease – National Centre for Biological Sciences, Tata Institute
 Cartilage Metabolism and Cell Based Therapies for Tissue Regeneration – British Society for Matrix Biology
 Cell Biology of the Neuron – Gordon Research Conference
 Fibroblast Growth Factors in Development & Disease – Gordon Research Conference
 The Nucleolus & Disease – University of Leeds
 International Workshop on Cancer Stem Cells – SEMM Foundations
 Model Organisms to Human Biology – Genetics Society of America
 Pancreatic β Cell – Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
 Wnt/ β -catenin Signalling in Development & Disease – Keystone Symposia
 Obesity, Energy Balance & Disease – FASEB meeting
 Autophagy in Stress, Development & Disease – Gordon Research Conference
 Role & Control of GATA Factors in Tissue Development & Disease – EMBO workshop
 Mammalian Genetics, Development & Disease – Cardiff University
 Insights into Osteoarthritis – British Society for Matrix Biology
 ESCRTs – from Cell Biology to Pathogenesis – The Biochemical Society
 The Kidney: Development, Repair and Regeneration – KIDSTEM Research Training Network