



**Note of the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Life Sciences & Soft Materials Advisory Panel  
held on 15 March 2023**

- The Chair provided an update on the report that went to Science Board in February 2022.
- The current Chair would attend their last Science Board in May. The two incoming Advisory Panel Chairs would meet with the new Science Board (Facilities and Laboratories) in Autumn 2023.
- Alan Partridge, STFC Executive Director for Large-Scale Facilities, gave a presentation on projects and investments relating to the facilities and discussed current challenges. The panel noted the overlap of dark periods across facilities which had the potential to affect the number of early career researchers with the appropriate skillset due to the lack of beamtime. One option to help would be to bring in PhD and postdoc students to undertake other activities that would provide them with hands-on experience.
- The Chair would look at putting together a document that listed how PhD and early career researchers could be supported to include factors such as career progression.
- Phillip Amison gave an update on STFC Visions, the UKRI Infrastructure Fund and the changes being made to the STFC science advisory structures. The new Science Board structures are expected to come into effect in Autumn 2023.
- A document had been circulated prior to the meeting regarding avenues for engagement between academia, industry and the facilities. Innovate UK's Analysis for Innovators Fund (A4I) was one route and ISIS had a collaborative R&D programme, which is a fast-track route for industry, but one criterion is that it must provide an economic benefit to the UK.
- BBSRC-STFC Facility Access Funding with Academic Partnership was a pilot programme to bring together facilities, academics and industry.
- Rachel Reynolds updated the panel on ESRF, Eu-XFEL, ILL, ESS and EMBL. Two impact studies were underway on ESRF and Eu-XFEL which would be shared with the panel when published. Key decisions would be made in 2024/2025 on the ILL closure that would take place in either 2030 or 2033.
- David Stuart presented an update on the progress of Diamond II. It was noted there had been issues with current fourth generation sources regarding the flux, particularly in biological and soft matter samples and the panel asked how this would be managed in Diamond-II. It was confirmed that B21 had a team developing a co-flow system which would match the width of the flow to the size of the beam and allow for flow rate adjustment.
- The Panel Chair would report to the May 2023 meeting of Science Board.