



The global impact of medical science:
an international strategy for
the Academy of Medical Sciences

Introducing our international goals

As a world leader in biomedical and health research with a long history of international collaboration, the UK research community must seize the substantial opportunities presented by medical science to help alleviate the global burden of ill health.

Since our inception in 1998, the Academy of Medical Sciences has become an authoritative and independent source of expertise in biomedical and health science. Our 944 elected Fellows are the UK's leading medical scientists from hospitals, general practice, academia, industry and the public services. We are now in a strong position to influence biomedical and health science policy internationally and to help strengthen international research capacity. Our Fellows' knowledge, enthusiasm and dedication to medical research internationally provide an exceptional resource for the improvement of health that will be invaluable in taking forward our first International Strategy.

Our aim is to enhance international biomedical and health research collaboration with the UK and to improve health internationally by promoting the rapid application of research. This document summarises the key objectives of the Academy's international strategy and puts international affairs at the heart of our future plans. To deliver our ambitious agenda we will need to forge strong collaborations and seek new resources from national and international partners.

1 Promote the use of research in improving health internationally

The UK biomedical and health research community can contribute much to improving health through international research. Moreover, many of the health challenges that the UK faces can only be fully addressed from an international perspective.

National academies, such as the UK Academy of Medical Sciences, help to translate advances in medical sciences into health benefits through evidence-based policy reports, workshops that bring together different sectors and lectures to disseminate scientific knowledge. Already the Academy has tackled topics such as SARS, pandemic influenza, global health diagnostics and mental health in this manner, both alone and in partnership with others.

Our goals

- Enhance the Academy's portfolio of policy work to include further projects with an explicit international health dimension.
- Disseminate the best international medical science by securing high-profile international speakers through our prestigious annual International Health Lecture.
- Promote pertinent issues in health and biomedical science internationally through symposia and workshops.
- Ensure a strong international component in the Academy's FORUM – our network of scientists from industry and academia.
- Communicate our international activities using diverse media including a dedicated international section on our website.

2 Enhance international collaboration and capacity building

Medical scientists are an invaluable national and international resource that can help solve local and global health problems and strengthen public services. Different countries can learn much from one another about building human capital; and national academies of science can play a crucial role in catalysing this process by providing direct support to researchers and using their Fellows to inspire young scientists. The Academy has recently established the Daniel Turnberg Trust Fund UK/Middle East Travel Fellowship Scheme that provides opportunities for short-term exchange of medical researchers between the UK and Middle East. Recognising that careers policy has become increasingly international in nature, we have brought together stakeholders to consider topics such as the impacts on clinical and academic medicine of the proposed European Higher Education Area set out in the Bologna process.

Our goals

- Open the Academy's unique mentoring workshops to overseas partners, and share experiences and models internationally.
- Contribute to debates on international policy relevant to biomedical careers in the UK and abroad.
- Communicate international capacity strengthening opportunities via the Academy's website.
- Assess the impact of research exchange schemes between scientists in the UK and low and middle income countries, and determine whether the Academy should establish such programmes.

3 Strengthen partnerships within the UK and internationally

External partnerships are an essential component of successful international activities. The Academy has strong links with UK organisations involved in international affairs and is a member of key fora such as the government cross-departmental group on global science and innovation. We have built links with partners from across the globe such as the InterAcademy Medical Panel and the Federation of European Medical Academies, the latter being particularly important as European governance exerts an increasing influence on medical science in the UK.

Our goals

- Engage with our sister academies in the UK and overseas through bilateral and multilateral links, and work with international cross-Academy fora to influence European and international policy.
- Build new and existing partnerships with UK government departments, funders, charities, industry and others to influence the UK's international medical science policy.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and forge new collaborations with international organisations to improve health internationally.

4 Build the Academy's position internationally

The expertise of our Fellows provides a strong foundation for the Academy to become a leading contributor to biomedical and health research internationally. Our Fellows have links with over 57 countries and many of our Fellows work overseas. Each year we elect Honorary Fellows to celebrate the best international medical science. To demonstrate the talent harboured within our Fellowship we have published a booklet to showcase the world-class research of some of our Fellows who work in resource poor settings.

In 2008 we elected our first Foreign Secretary, Professor Robert Souhami CBE FMedSci, to join the Academy's Honorary Officers. The Foreign Secretary is advised by the newly established International Committee, which considers all international biomedical and health research matters, and the Global Health Network Group, which captures the expertise of Fellows working in low- and middle-income countries.

Our goals

- Expand knowledge of international activities of the Fellowship, and establish an annual survey of new Fellows' international links.
- Recognise international success through our Ordinary and Honorary Fellowships.
- Draw upon the expertise of the International Committee and Global Health Network Group to provide strategic oversight to the Academy's international affairs.

Supporting our work

This document summarises the range of the Academy's international aspirations. A more detailed description of the Academy's international activities can be found at www.acmedsci.ac.uk. The extent to which these aspirations can be realised will be dependent on additional funding and external partnerships. We are actively seeking support from organisations and individuals to enable us to deliver this strategy, for more information please contact: laurie.smith@acmedsci.ac.uk tel: +44 (0)20 7969 5289.



The Academy of Medical Sciences promotes advances in medical science and campaigns to ensure these are converted into healthcare benefits for society. Our Fellows are the UK's leading medical scientists from hospitals, general practice, academia, industry and the public service. The Academy seeks to play a pivotal role in determining the future of medical science in the UK, and the benefits that society will enjoy in years to come. We champion the UK's strengths in medical science, promote careers and capacity building, encourage the implementation of new ideas and solutions – often through novel partnerships – and help to remove barriers to progress.

Academy of Medical Sciences

10 Carlton House Terrace

London SW1Y 5AH

Tel: +44(0)20 7969 5288

E-mail: info@acmedsci.ac.uk

Web: www.acmedsci.ac.uk www.academicmedicine.ac.uk