## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (INC THE STRATEGIC REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### STRUCTURE, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Up to and including the year ended 31 March 2024, the Board of Trustees consisted of up to sixteen individuals who acted as trustees and directors and are all guarantors of the charitable company, of an amount not exceeding £1, during the period of their appointment and for a year after resignation.

The following were members of the Board of Trustees during the year:

Prof Peter Rigby FRS — resigned 1 September 2023

Mr Graham Allen

Mr Geoff Braham - resigned 27 November 2023

Dr James Briscoe FRS Prof Gordon Brown FRS

Dr Lynne Gailey — resigned 27 November 2023
Prof Petra Hajkova # — appointed 1 October 2023
Prof Nic Jones — resigned 1 September 2023
Prof Paul Lehner FRS — appointed 1 October 2023
Mr Timothy Livett # — appointed 27 November 2023
Mr John Macy — appointed 27 November 2023
Prof Peter Parker FRS — resigned 27 November 2023

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COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 172(1) OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2006 (CONTINUED)

This followed the launch of the first phase of Babraham Boost, the Institute's benefits platform which provides discount shopping vouchers for staff, thus assisting with financial wellbeing particularly during the cost of living crisis. The platform also contains a wealth of wellbeing information and support and is intended to be the centralised repository for all of the

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#### **INSTITUTE OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)**

The Institute's research groups are structured so they can share resources, techniques and skills. Each Group Leader runs their own group and is expected to create, lead, maintain and develop an internationally competitive programme of innovative research.

Each ISP Lead is responsible for leading and co-ordinating a cohesive programme of research that contributes to the Institute's mission of understanding and helping to improve lifelong health. This involves coordinating and uniting the goals of several groups and ensuring appropriate annual reporting to the UKRI-BBSRC.

Each Group Leader is expected to raise additional funds for their research over and above the UKRI-BBSRCcore ISPG funding, not only to support the critical mass of researchers needed, but also to form strong strategic partnerships with other funders (often from the medical charity sector or the biotech/pharma industry) that are interested in the translation of Babraham Institute science into technologies and discoveries with high impact for the benefit of lifelong health and wellbeing.

During 2023 a number of Group Leaders were successful in securing new funding from a range of grant funders. These included, Dr Hayley Sharpe (Sgnalling research programme) who was awarded an ERC Consolidatory Grant (<a href="https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/11/hayley-sharpe-receives-erc-consolidator-grant">https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/11/hayley-sharpe-receives-erc-consolidator-grant</a>), Dr Martin Turner (Head of the Immunology research programme) who received a Wellcome Discovery Award, and Dr Michelle Linterman (Immunology) who as part of the new Ageing Quster of the MRC National Mouse Genetics Network, joined the GSK Immunology Network as an academic partner in the UKRI-funded IMMPROVE (Immune Memory and Mechanisms of Protection from Vaccines) project.

The overall science direction of the Institute is determined by the Babraham Executive Committee (BEC, the senior executive committee responsible for the running of the Institute); additionally, the Science Policy Committee (SPoC, a subcommittee of BEC with additional membership from amon

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#### **INSTITUTE OBJECTIVES (CONTINUED)**

To provide a unique and highly successful environment, establishing Babraham Research Campus as the leading campus for bioscience start-up and developing biomedical companies and for supporting the development and growth of those organisations.

#### **INSTITUTE REMIT**

- The Babraham Institute is an independent charitable life sciences Institute, strategically funded by the UKRI-BBSRC, carrying out world-leading innovative research and advanced training with relevance to the biological, biotechnological, biomedical, pharmaceutical and health research and user communities.
- The Institute's research focuses on determining the mechanisms whereby cell signalling and gene regulation control normal cellular processes and functions underpinning ageing, development and the maintenance of health and wellbeing.
- The advances made due to the Institute's research are publicly available and the Institute actively seeks partnership and knowledge exchange with relevant companies and with clinical and other researchers to ensure effective application of its research.
- To be an active participant of the Babraham Research Campus by supporting early-stage bioscience enterprise through collaboration and providing access to state-of-the-art equipment.

As part of the UK Science Base, the Institute contributes to the economic growth, quality of life and public engagement objectives of government. Our contribution is key in driving BBSRC's strategic research priorities around an integrated understanding of health, developing and applying transformative technologies and advancing our understanding of the rules of life. Our research aligns with the aspirations and vision of the BBSRC Strategic Delivery Plan (2022-2025) 1 and BBSRC Forward Look for UK Bioscience 2 which highlight ageing as a strategic challenge. Smilarly, our research also closely aligns with the healthcare challenge of ageing and the ambition to understand the pathways associated with multi-system ageing in order to develop new diagnostics and therapies as outlined in the UK Government's Life Science Vision, in addition to our work being of relevance to some of the Vision's other challenge areas.

#### INSTITUTE CULTURE CONSULTATION

In 2023/24 Babraham Institute undertook an Institute Oulture Consultation. This project aimed to review, redefine and update the Institute's Strategy. The goal, in alignment with the UKRI-BBSRC Institute Strategy, was to embed team science at the Institute. Working with Organisation Effectiveness Cambridge (OECam) a range of focus groups, workshops and online engagement sessions were undertaken to gather staff feedback from across the institute, engaging 40% of staff. The exercise was wide ranging, looking at the Institute structures and ways of working and how they enable the Institute to achieve a stronger implementation of its strategy across the three ISPGs and the Institute as a whole.

### **BABRAHAM GROUP BUSINESS OBJECTIVES**

Delivery of World Class science, within the Institute's remit

- ∉ International leadership
- Synergistic and nationally strategic research

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## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (INC THE STRATEGIC REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### **EMPLOYEES**

During the year the Babraham Group has continued to provide employees with relevant information and to seek their views on matters of common concern through groups, committees, staff updates, engagement surveys, through line managers and through an Institute Culture Consultation project. Priority is given to ensuring that employees are aware of all significant matters affecting the group's position and any significant organisational changes.

Information continues to be published regularly in the Institute-wide monthly newsletter and this is now an established part of the Institute's internal communication mechanisms. The newsletter has been successful in engaging the Institute community with recognition initiatives (such as Staff Recognition Awards and the Institute's Annual Prizes), personnel changes, and news and updates from teams across the Institute.

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### **EMPLOYEES (CONTINUED)**

Progress is being made towards meeting the objectives of the 2021-24 Action Plan, with a new 3-year plan being developed in 2024.

Remuneration of key management personnel is set annually by the Senior Remuneration Committee which comprises the Institute Chair and Deputy Chair along with at least one other trustee. The Committee is chaired by the trustee appointed to oversee HR matters on behalf of the Board.

#### SUMMARY PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The charitable purpose of the Institute is to advance education, specifically to increase public learning and knowledge in the field of biological and biomedical sciences and also to provide training leading to a higher degree (PhD) in research techniques and provide a 5.5 (in7a.0051 Tc0 Tw(s)Tj-50.286 -1.2288 TD.0002 Tc-.04b7(e)4 (1)--tune)8.13 Tc0 T.7 (chni)eoT.7 (chni)8(j)-ing neec9 C

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES (INC THE STRATEGIC REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

#### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

As in past years, identifying, applying and securing new external funding sources remains a high priority of the Institute. Notable successes this year, and indicators of the quality of the Institute's research, are the award of prestigious Wellcome Discovery grants to Dr Peter Rugg-Gunn, Dr Della David and Dr Martin Turner. (<a href="https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/02/dr-della-david-and-dr-peter-rugg-gunn-receive-wellcome-discovery-awards">https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/02/dr-della-david-and-dr-peter-rugg-gunn-receive-wellcome-discovery-awards</a>) and (<a href="https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/11/martin-turner-receives-wellcome-discovery-awards">https://www.babraham.ac.uk/news/2023/11/martin-turner-receives-wellcome-discovery-awards</a>) and Hayley Sharpe's UKRI-BBSRC and ERC Consolidator Award.

### **Public Engagement**

#### Overview

The Institute's vision is of an open, transparent and accountable organisation that is leading in its contribution of science to culture, society, economic development and growth. Public engagement at the Institute is embedded within its research and supports interactions between researchers and a variety of public groups. The Institute has a core Public Engagement Team that supports a varied and dynamic programme to help researchers engage with students, teachers, community groups, family and adult audiences. This support includes: operating a core programme of engagement opportunities, providing training in public engagement, administering internal public engagement seed funding, and providing expertise to shape external grants applications. The Institute's engagement programme has continued to enable societal impact of the Institute's research. The figures below highlight the Institute's commitment to these activities.

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Visitors to site	285	394	0\	0^
Outreach Events*	26	33	28	12
Total Public Audience Engaged	1,326	3,201	3,894	2,142
Proportion of audience being				
from areas of high deprivation	63.4%	52%	25.7%	24.9%
Website visits				

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#### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Public Engagement (continued)

### **Partnerships**

We have also continued to build links with education sector partners such as the Youth STEMM award and T-level training providers to allow for more measurable impact of our work, whilst supporting non-traditional routes into science careers. Our move to operate student placements through the In2STEM (further education student focused) and In2Research (undergraduate student focused) programmes have enabled more equitable access to research experience at the Institute and we have seen great successes in these programmes with clear impacts on participants next step career destinations. Both these programmes are operated by the In2Science charity. Their work to build long-term partnerships with students from low-income backgrounds provides a route to directly engage and recruit students to the programmes.

To date, there have been 28 students take part in the Research Access Programme with 9 of them having gone on to apply for PhDs. Others have gone on to pursue other next steps such as: master's degrees, patent law, and scientific editing. Many have cited the programme as a key enabler of their next steps, with one student from last year saying: "I feel like I have learnt more in these 8 weeks than in four years of university, I feel like much more of a scientist." This programme is continually evaluated to ensure students are receiving the best support and experience possible.

#### **School Audiences**

The schools' programme has been highly successful over the last year, with a particular highlight being the marking of the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Schools' Day. This year we had over 200 students from 35 schools across the UK visiting the Institute to take part in hands-on practical projects. Almost all Institute research groups took part in hosting groups and we facilitated campus company involvement with Cancer Research Horizons and Sanofi also hosting students. The event received very positive feedback from students and teachers and also received good media coverage in the Cambridge Independent newspaper and on ITV Anglian News, highlighting the type of projects undertaken and the impact of the event on participants and our researchers. This year around 40% of students in attendance were from schools in traditionally underserved areas, up from 25% in 2023 and 8% in 2020.

Beyond this, relationships have been developed with more schools in these priority areas through our 'BioInspire' programme. This programme offers regular opportunities for staff to engage students and build deeper relationships with a small number of schools in our priority areas. We also sponsor these students to undertake the Youth STEMM Award which gives formal recognition of their extra curriculum engagement and enables our work to have a tangible positive impact on their post-education choices (for example the award is now recognised on UCAS applications). This year we expanded the 'BioInspire' programme to also include an online virtual cohort to enable students further from the Institute to engage.

## **Community Audiences**

There has also been success in the community engagement programmes with a hybrid programme of in-person and online events. Events such as the Cambridge Festival have showcased Institute research whilst events focused in our local area have strengthened understanding and support for the Institute and campus. The team have also continued to engage on often controversial work such as that of the Biological Support Unit, through events such as our Science Spotlight events which provide the opportunity for audiences to virtually tour the facility and see behind the otherwise closed doors. This work continues to dispel misconceptions around Institute work and contribute to our commitment to openness in animal research.

Our public engagement work has also contributed to important national conversations and influenced science policy. Over the past 18 months the Institute led a public dialogue project to better understand public views on research involving the use of human embryos and the regulations governing this work. This project, funded through a Wellcome Enrichment Grant to the Human Developmental Biology Initiative and receiving matched funding through the UKRI Sciencewise programme, brought together the general public, people with experience of health-related impacts of the research, policy makers (such as the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority - HFEA), scientists, and bioethicists.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

**Public Engagement (continued)** 

A series of discursive workshops facilitated discussions to help the public participants provide informed views on a range of

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## SUSTAINABILITY (CONTINUED)

2023/24 Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report (SECR) outcomes - Emissions Data

Greenhouse Gas Emission	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	
	Total Gross Emissions	6,019	5,597	6,317

Scope Emissions Indicators (tCO2e)

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## SUSTAINABILITY (CONTINUED)

Proposed Targets for 2024/25 - Net Zero Carbon

The Institute together with BROL have engaged with consultants to create a report on the mechanical and electrical infrastructure serving the Babraham Research Campus. This report has now been completed and approved and will form the basis of the Institute's net zero strategy including a timeline for specific projects.

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# RISK MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Risk Area	Description of Risk		Risk Management		
Business Sustainability	The Institute having to manage the loss or reduction of UKRI-BBSRC funding. The inability for the institute to remain	Annual budget setting and monitoring to ensure effective use of resources. Defined policy and procedure to spend Institut reserves and effective investment of reserves under the Treasury Management Policy.			
	financially viable, managing energy price increases, insufficient capital budget and failures to secure enough competitive grant income. A lack of technological investment at the institute to enable research.	∉	Participating in a UKRI388 WKRT6rticipa3dge)6.6widitute	hav3e	

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# RISK MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Risk Area	Description of Risk	Risk Management	
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