

STRATEGY

2018 → 22

INTRODUCTION

The Society's 2018-22 strategic plan sets our direction of travel and priorities for the next five years. It is ambitious and forward-thinking, and positions us to continue to be a world-leading society for our discipline.

Our strategy defines a clear vision: to make physiology flourish. As the political, economic and societal structures in which we operate face uncertainty, it is all the more important that we have this clear strategic direction. Physiology is the science of life and all of us involved in this field owe it to future generations to ensure it continues to thrive.

For over 140 years, we have been at the forefront of the life sciences. While as an organisation we have never stood still; the pace of change in the world around us is now greater than ever and demands a step change in how we operate to meet the challenges we will face.

To achieve our strategic goals we will widen participation at our scientific conferences, ensuring excellent science and lasting impact, and make our journals flagships for physiology where any researcher is proud to publish. To ensure the continued health of the discipline, we must ensure we are meeting the needs of the next generation of physiologists. Over the lifetime of this strategic period, this generation will move from school, to university and then into early career positions. We are operating in a multi-channel world in a digital age, and must focus on the issues that matter to them and be innovative in how we communicate.

Our Members are at the heart of The Society. They are the passionate advocates for our cause and key to the success of our strategy is to inspire and empower them to engage with others about physiology.

Physiology and The Society have been at the heart of many of the great advancements over our 140 year history. This is a tremendous achievement, but we must never take our future relevance for granted. As a discipline and as an organisation, we must be clear in our mission and ready to adapt in order to achieve it. Being proud of our past while looking clearly to the future is at the core of our strategy, and how we will work with our Members, partners and the public to ensure physiology flourishes.



Dariel Burdass
Chief Executive



David Eisner
President
2016-2018



Bridget Lumb
President
2018-2020

STRATEGY 2018-22

The Physiological Society is the largest network of physiologists in Europe, bringing together scientists from over 60 countries, who study the science of –
How the whole body works in health and what goes wrong in disease.

Vision

Physiology flourishing

Purpose

To advance physiology in order to foster the understanding and improvement of life.

Overall Objective

In the next 3-5 years increase recognition that physiology is essential to solving the health challenges faced throughout life.

Values

To achieve our purpose we use three guiding principles which apply to the way we work, both internally and externally.

1. Act with integrity

- Being fair and transparent in our processes
- Taking time to listen and being respectful of different viewpoints
- Being accountable for our actions and ensuring our decisions are evidence-based

2. Be inspiring

- Expanding horizons and being open to new opportunities
- Being innovative and forward-thinking in our approach to work
- Realising potential by sharing skills, knowledge and ideas

3. Be collaborative

- Providing opportunities for networking
- Being supportive of our colleagues to deliver our vision
- Enriching physiology to enhance the future of the discipline

Strands for 2018-22

Underpinning the Vision, Purpose and the overall Objective for The Society are four distinctive but interconnecting strands. They are broad in scope but represent areas that The Society must excel in in order to achieve its Vision and Purpose.



Publications – Making our journals flagships for physiology, where any researcher is proud to publish



Meetings – Advancing physiology through our meetings: excellent science, wide and active participation, lasting impact



Engagement – Engage for success – improving our two-way commitment and communication to increase recognition of the importance of physiology



Internal Processes – Harnessing technology, working smarter, increasing transparency and improving performance to support delivery of the strategy

At the heart of this strategic plan is The Society's commitment to serving all of its Members.

PUBLICATIONS

Making our journals flagships for physiology, where any researcher is proud to publish

The strategy applies to all three journals – *The Journal of Physiology* (JP), *Experimental Physiology* (EP) and *Physiological Reports* (PR), although not always to the same degree. PR is owned and published jointly with the American Physiological Society (APS) and its strategy is set by the Joint Management Board (JMB).

We have grouped the strategic aims for The Society's journals under four headings: building the community around the journals, developing their brands (including the distinction between their editorial remits), raising physiology's standards for scientific integrity, and shaping physiology itself. Of course the journals' future will be closely tied to the future of physiological research.

1. Building the community

Objectives

- ➔ Give the journals a personal face and reinforce the relationship with authors, editors and reviewers. Improve cooperation between the journals.
- ➔ Offer best-of-breed author and reader resources and services, differentiating between e.g. career stages if suitable.
- ➔ Commission strategically valuable content through e.g. symposium support, features and reviews. In particular concentrate commissioning on new directions in physiology and on interdisciplinary research.
- ➔ Develop the journals' own social-media community, independent of Wiley's.
- ➔ Expand conference attendance, engaging with new societies and communities, for instance exercise and work physiology for EP, non-mammalian models for JP.
- ➔ Be inclusive, international and representative: the editorial team, the reviewer pool and the journals' community activities.
- ➔ Encourage and support scientists in developing, emerging and growing economies but by raising the standard of the science not lowering the standards of the journals.
- ➔ Improve discoverability of content.
- ➔ Enhance impact and accessibility of content.

2. Developing the brands

Objectives

- ➔ Highlight ties to The Society, especially EP's. JP is a very strong international brand in its own right, so the relationship is different.
- ➔ Define the editorial remits of JP, EP and PR, with some degree of niche separation.
- ➔ Provide a good home for any excellent research article in physiology.

- ➔ Try out a more clinical scope for PR.
- ➔ Look for "brand extension" opportunities.
- ➔ Strike the right balance between highlighting JP's distinguished history (44 Nobel Prize winners) and making it dynamic.

3. Raising the bar for scientific integrity

Objectives

- ➔ Raise further the current high standards of peer review, publication ethics and animal ethics.
- ➔ Promote best practice in statistical analysis and reporting.
- ➔ Promote transparency, openness, and data-sharing.
- ➔ Comply with or exceed funders' mandates with regard to Open Access and accessibility of research.
- ➔ Raise the standard of the articles we publish.
- ➔ Encourage the use of and promote all metrics to mark the journals' success – and not overly promote the Impact Factor.

4. Shaping physiology

Objectives

- ➔ Make sure we don't miss the next 'big thing'.
- ➔ Publish research from outside conventional physiology (e.g. using non-mammalian models or in systems biology and metabolomics) and from areas where physiology intersects with other disciplines e.g. brain-machine interface, tissue and organ regeneration and functional genomics.
- ➔ Encourage submissions to JP from across the whole of physiology, reclaiming areas where it has had less presence in recent years: exercise, GI, renal, metabolism and epithelial membrane transport.
- ➔ Become a home for interdisciplinary research involving physiology.

MEETINGS

Advancing physiology through our meetings: excellent science, wide and active participation, lasting impact

Researchers go to scientific meetings to present new work and get feedback on it from their peers, to make connections with other scientists, to learn about new research, techniques and ideas, and to catch up with friends and colleagues. Meetings also have a role in setting the direction of research, particularly by highlighting hot topics.

Through its programme of meetings The Society showcases physiological research, spotlights new areas of discovery, delivers training for Early Career Researchers and provides an opportunity for physiologists to interact.

1. Developing a dynamic portfolio of meetings that fulfil the needs of physiologists throughout their careers

Objectives

- ➔ The Main Meeting is The Society's flagship event. Continue to develop this so that it is more international in scope, provides a platform for dissemination of high quality research and appeals to the broadest physiology community. Deliver an enhanced programme.
- ➔ Outside the Main Meeting provide a range of types of scientific meeting that support knowledge exchange and networking and meet the needs of today's researchers – both Members and the wider community.
- ➔ Research opportunities for new styles of meeting ensuring that decisions are evidence-based.
- ➔ Ensure there is geographical spread to the meetings we deliver.
- ➔ Make a success of Europhysiology 2018. Evaluate it and learn from it, particularly as a model for future collaborations.

2. Planning and organising excellent meetings that materially advance physiology

Objectives

- ➔ Ensure excellence in all of the programmes and content we offer by setting rigorous processes for selection.
- ➔ Review the role of the Theme Leads and Meetings Committee to ensure that we are using the right group to decide on programmes and content.
- ➔ Increase involvement of sub disciplines of physiology that are not well represented at our meetings.

- ➔ Play a leadership role in developing strategic partnerships that advance the knowledge and understanding of physiology.
- ➔ Coordinate with The Society's other activities.
- ➔ Work with relevant Committees to agree a sustainable business model for our meetings programme.
- ➔ Develop a more informed marketing and communications campaign to promote the meetings in a more successful manner.

3. Upgrading the experience for attendees and speakers

Objectives

- ➔ Be innovative in our approach to meetings.
- ➔ Add professional development and networking opportunities, and draw on the experience and skills of our speakers.
- ➔ Introduce more audience participation.
- ➔ Improve the quality of lectures and posters.
- ➔ Explore new opportunities for speakers to engage with the attendees.
- ➔ Find new ways to attract more Principal Investigators at the peak of their research careers.

4. Evaluating impact

Objectives

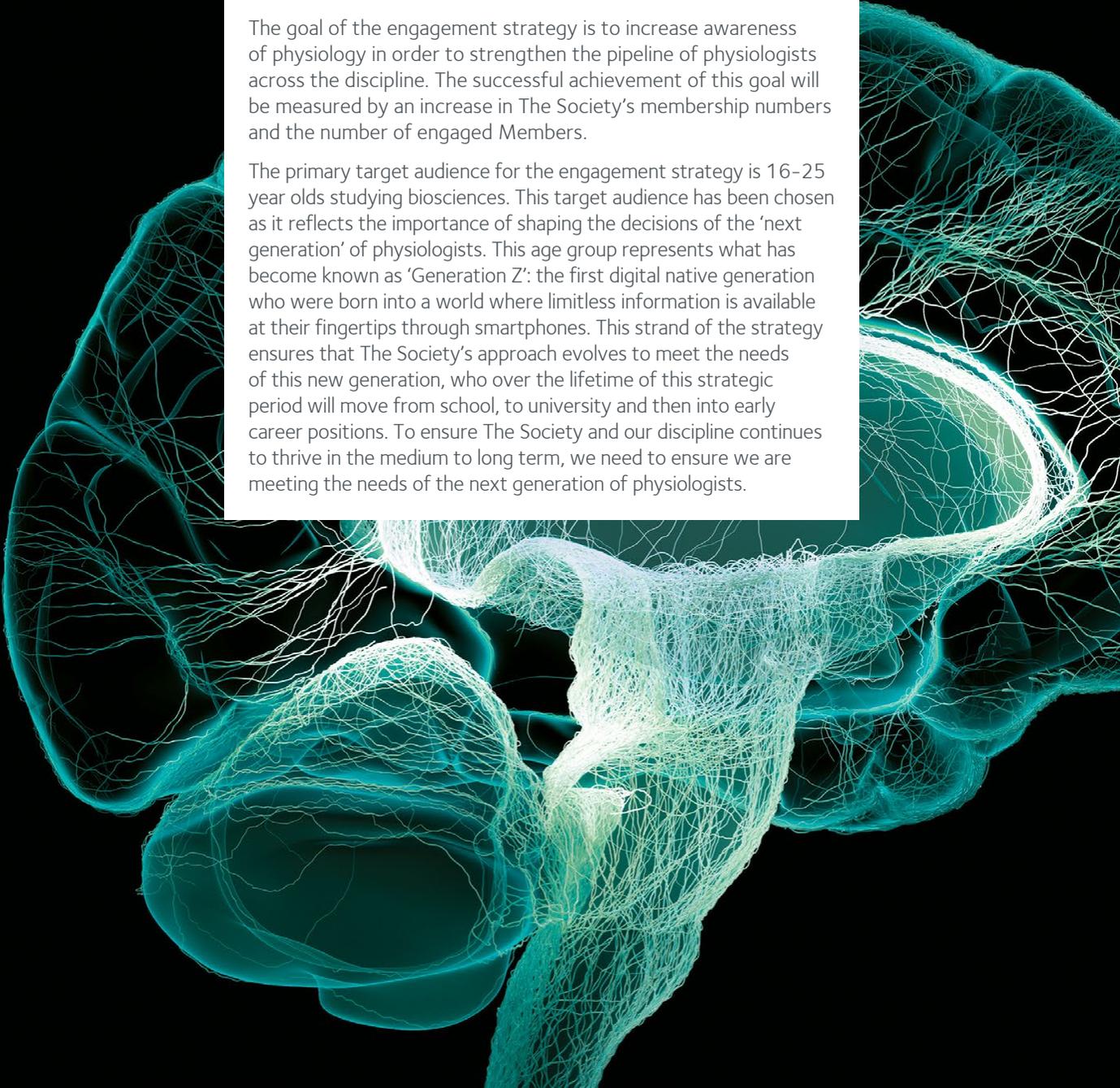
- ➔ Use evidence-based quantitative and qualitative research as the basis for future decisions.
- ➔ Ensure evaluation is embedded into our programmes.
- ➔ Consider the use of technology to increase access to the content of the meeting while assessing if this would have negative impacts on the number of attendees and networking opportunities.

ENGAGEMENT

Engage for success – improving our two-way commitment and communication to increase recognition of the importance of physiology

The goal of the engagement strategy is to increase awareness of physiology in order to strengthen the pipeline of physiologists across the discipline. The successful achievement of this goal will be measured by an increase in The Society's membership numbers and the number of engaged Members.

The primary target audience for the engagement strategy is 16-25 year olds studying biosciences. This target audience has been chosen as it reflects the importance of shaping the decisions of the 'next generation' of physiologists. This age group represents what has become known as 'Generation Z': the first digital native generation who were born into a world where limitless information is available at their fingertips through smartphones. This strand of the strategy ensures that The Society's approach evolves to meet the needs of this new generation, who over the lifetime of this strategic period will move from school, to university and then into early career positions. To ensure The Society and our discipline continues to thrive in the medium to long term, we need to ensure we are meeting the needs of the next generation of physiologists.



The broad age group of 16-25 encompasses three key decision points we are focused on influencing:

|  Transition point |  Decision |
|---|--|
| Transition from Post 16 to Higher Education | Undergraduate (or equivalent) subject choice |
| Choice of modules and final degree (or equivalent) | Specialise in particular areas of biology (physiology or related) |
| Post degree/early career | Career or further research after completing first degree |

1. Increasing the level of engagement of our Members and the number delivering engagement activities

Objectives

- ➔ Improve our membership benefits by understanding what current and prospective Members value from a membership organisation.
- ➔ Increase the breadth of our membership from sub disciplines and institutions currently underrepresented in The Society.
- ➔ Increase Member engagement with The Society by developing a tailored membership engagement programme.
- ➔ Increase the number of our Members carrying out public engagement with our target audience by raising awareness of the importance of this and providing necessary support mechanisms.

2. Increasing the number of young people choosing to study physiology-based courses through traditional routes and emerging educational options

Objectives

- ➔ Increase collaboration with existing networks within universities to showcase careers in physiology.
- ➔ Highlight careers prospects to prospective undergraduate students at University Open Days and relevant careers events.
- ➔ Increase the number of Member spotlights to highlight the different opportunities that a career in physiology can offer.

3. Developing a policy and funding environment favourable to physiology

Objectives

- ➔ Understand the stakeholder landscape and improve targeted stakeholder engagement in order to increase the influence of physiology on policy decision making.
- ➔ Deliver the policy project on lifelong health to produce achievable recommendations that will increase the recognition of the role of physiology in solving the health challenges faced throughout life.
- ➔ Increase Member engagement with our policy work – in particular with our target audience – to ensure the voice of physiology is heard in the policy arena.
- ➔ Ensure the requirements and interests of physiological research are protected within legislative, regulatory and broader policy environment by responding to the most appropriate consultations.

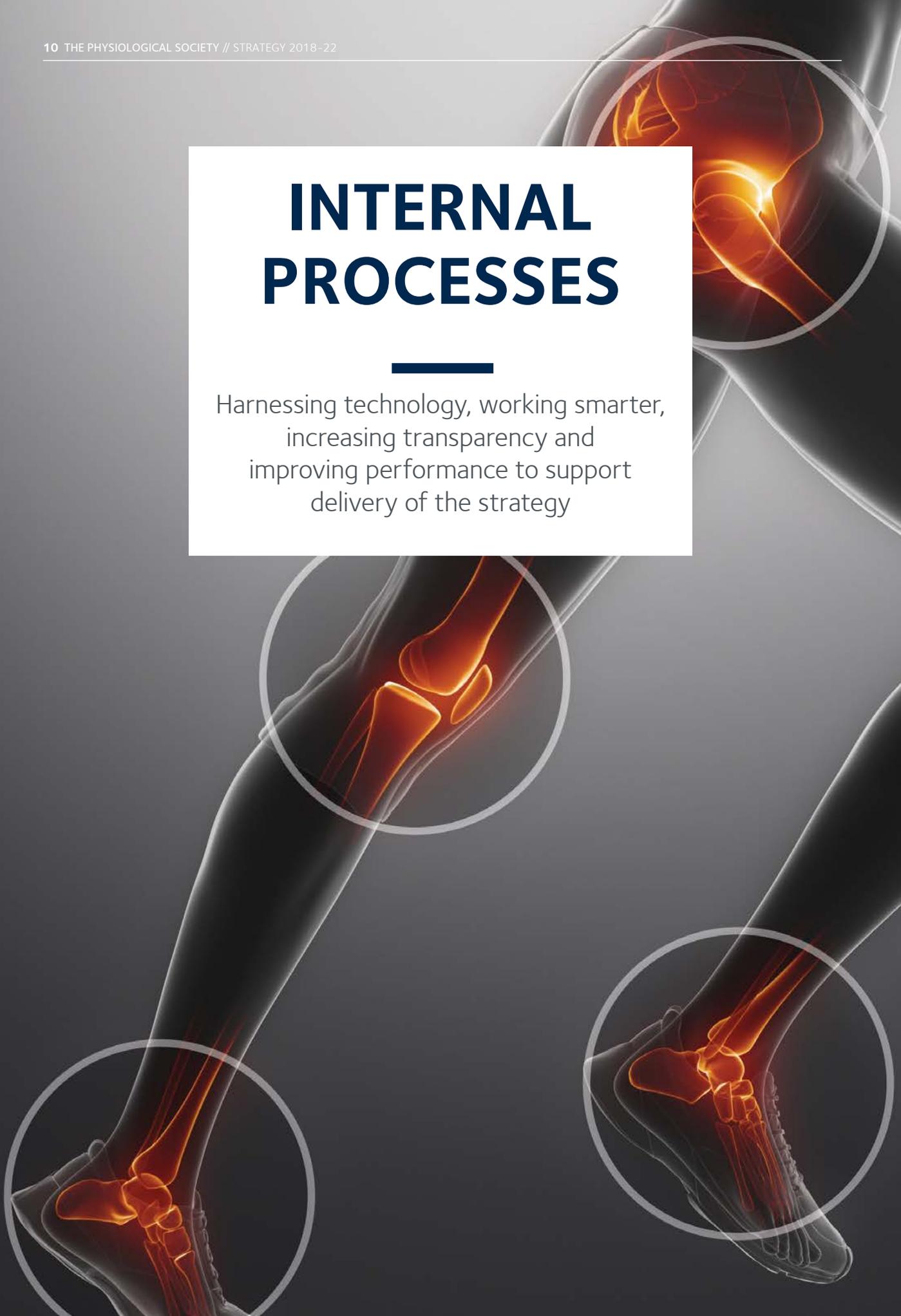
4. Increasing the understanding of physiology among our target audience and increase the visibility of physiological research in the media – in particular, the importance of physiology to lifelong health

Objectives

- ➔ Increase the number of publicly accessible communication outputs to make physiology relevant to our target audience using a digital-first approach.
- ➔ Develop a proactive press approach in order to increase the link between health stories and the role of physiological research.
- ➔ Ensure scientific integrity in our communications by drawing on the work of our Members and content from our journals.
- ➔ Develop our social media and digital presence focused on our target audience.

INTERNAL PROCESSES

Harnessing technology, working smarter,
increasing transparency and
improving performance to support
delivery of the strategy





1. Developing the organisation and infrastructure

Objectives

- ➔ Optimise the implementation of advances in technology to support the goals of the strategic plan.
- ➔ Strengthen support and professional development for all staff and improve the culture and working environment.
- ➔ Further develop our business model so that operational and financial planning supports the strategic goals of The Society and we are able to capitalise on new opportunities.
- ➔ Set aside money to pump-prime initiatives that could generate new income streams.

2. Developing a high-performance board

Objective

- ➔ Achieve a successful Governance Review so that the resulting structures and processes reflect best practice and underpin the successful delivery of the strategy.

3. Improving inclusion

Objectives

- ➔ Develop transparent and well-communicated procedures which promote and facilitate Member engagement with The Society.
- ➔ Move to a position where there is an expectation of 33% female participation and ideally gender equality across all our activities.

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