**Europe’s First Ever Conference for Minoritised Life Scientists Set for Spring 2025**

A unique group of life science professionals and advocates has come together to launch the Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum, the first major conference in Europe dedicated to supporting and showcasing the contributions of marginalised and underrepresented communities in the life sciences.

Taking place at the ICC Birmingham in Spring 2025, the Future Forum will offer over 200 hours of inspiring talks, workshops, and mentoring sessions. The event is designed for life scientists at all career stages from undergraduate students to early-career researchers and senior academics, aiming to build a vibrant and supportive environment for professional development and networking.

The forum comes at a critical time for the sector. Despite increasing diversity among students entering higher education, Black scientists still make up just 0.8% of all professors in the UK, according to the latest figures. Only 2.9% of Black academics are in research-focused roles, with many citing unconscious bias (54%) and unclear promotion pathways (52%) as major barriers to career progression. In addition, 42% of Black early-career academics (ECAs) report not feeling comfortable reporting incidents of bullying or harassment at their institutions.

Beyond the statistics, minoritised scientists frequently report feeling invisible within academia, often missing out on opportunities for collaboration and career progression due to microaggressions and lack of mentoring. For undergraduate students, the lack of visible role models and a clear pathway into academia can make the goal of a research career seem unattainable. The Future Forum aims to address these systemic barriers by providing a platform for visibility, mentorship, and professional growth, helping to bridge the gap between students and established academics.

Professor Emmanuel Adukwu, Chair of the Future Forum Steering Committee, expressed his excitement for the event:

“The underrepresentation of minoritised scientists in senior roles is a major concern for the future of UK science. While efforts have been made to tackle these inequalities, we must create spaces that build genuine connections, mentorship, and opportunities for collaboration across all career stages. This forum is not just about sharing research; it’s about creating a lasting impact that helps marginalised and underrepresented scientists thrive in academia and beyond.”

The three-day event will feature talks, networking sessions, and workshops led by scientists from a range of disciplines. Delegates will have the opportunity to showcase their research, engage in structured networking, take part in career development workshops, and find mentorship from experienced professionals. Additionally, the forum will serve as a space for open discussions on challenges such as unconscious bias, lack of institutional support, and career progression barriers.

The Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum Steering Committee is currently seeking sponsors, exhibitors, and life scientists interested in delivering talks, leading workshops, or mentoring attendees. To find out more and sign up for updates, visit the Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum website: www.mlsfutureforum.com.

Notes to Editors

**About the Medical Research Council (MRC)**

The Medical Research Council (MRC) is at the forefront of funding research to prevent illness, develop new therapies, and improve human health. With a focus on biomedical research, MRC supports projects ranging from lab-based studies to clinical trials across all major disease areas. It works closely with the NHS and UK health departments to ensure that its research translates into meaningful improvements in clinical practice and public health. As a major funder for the Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum, MRC is committed to advancing equality and diversity in scientific research and promoting careers in life sciences for underrepresented communities.

**About Applied Microbiology International (AMI)**

AMI, a globally recognised leader in microbiology, is a strategic partner in delivering the Minoritised Life Scientists Future Forum. With a mission to advance applied microbiology and cultivate a diverse, inclusive scientific community, AMI serves microbiologists across academia, industry, and research institutes worldwide. In partnership with Oxford University Press, AMI publishes three leading scientific journals and the industry magazine The Microbiologist, amplifying the voices of scientists and driving innovation within the field.

For more information or to arrange interviews with members of the steering committee, contact **Linda Stewart** at **press@mlsfutureforum.com.**