The Royal Society is an independent scientific academy founded in 1660 and self-governing under Royal Charter. The society has three roles, as the scientific academy of the United Kingdom, as a learned society, and as a funding body.

Objectives of the Royal Society are to:
- recognise excellence in science
- support leading-edge scientific research and its applications
- stimulate international interaction
- further the role of science, engineering and technology in society
- promote the public’s understanding of science
- provide independent authoritative advice on matters relating to science, engineering and technology
- encourage research into the history of science

For further information on the Society’s activities, please contact the following departments on the extensions listed by dialing +44 (020) 7839 5561, or visit the Society’s Web site (www.royalsociety.org).

Research Support (UK grants and fellowships)
Research grants: 2539

Conference grants: 2540

Science Advice
General enquiries: 2583

Science Communication
General enquiries: 2527

International Exchanges (for grants enabling research visits between the UK and most other counties) (except the USA)
General enquiries: 2535

Library and Information Services
Library/archives enquiries: 2606

Cover image: insect-trapping pitcher of Nepenthes rafflesii. The microstructured surface of the pitcher rim (background) is extremely slippery when wet but it is perfectly harmless at other times. (See pages 259-265; photographer/originator: Ulrike Bauer, Holger F. Bohn and Walter Federle.)