Open call: “Early Career Plenary Lecture for the 16th European Congress of Chemical Engineering and 9th European Congress of Applied Biotechnology”

The Early Career Chemical Engineers Section of EFCE is excited to announce an open call for early career researchers to apply for a plenary speaker position at the 16th European Congress of Chemical Engineering and 9th European Congress of Applied Biotechnology (ECCE/ECAB27), held from 12 to 16 September 2027, in Edinburgh, United Kingdom. More information about the event can be found on its website.

The selected early career plenary speaker will have the opportunity to showcase their research and work on an international platform and a diverse audience of leading academics and industrial stakeholders. This is a unique chance for emerging scientists and engineering specialists to make a visible impact in the research community, which is a significant achievement.

We are seeking candidates to deliver a lecture aligned with at least one of the main conference themes listed below.

- Energy and the Energy Transition
- Circular (Bio) Economy
- Health, Biopharma and Medicine
- Food and Drink
- Digitalisation and Data
- Skills and Future Skills
- Fundamentals of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering

Eligibility Criteria

- Early Career status, referring to candidates who have obtained their Ph.D. within the last 8 years or have less than 8 years of professional experience after completing their master's or bachelor’s degree*. We encourage academics and industry professionals to apply.
- Demonstrated expertise in at least one of the main conference themes through research, publications, or professional experience.
- Membership with any EFCE Member Society or with any EFCE Working Party or Section.
- Fluency in English, as it is the official language of the conference.

Application process

First stage: We invite early career researchers to express their interest by submitting:

1. **CV (max 3 pages)** including current position, previous professional experience, education and qualifications, EFCE affiliation status, awards and prizes and a list of up to three (3) peer-reviewed publications and three (3) invited or contributed conference presentations that are considered to be most significant. A brief justification should also be provided for each publication and conference, explaining the reason for its selection and its significance to the applicant’s research career.
2. **Tentative title** and **abstract** (300-500 words) of the talk they want to deliver.

**We are committed to a transparent and fair selection process, ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates. The eligibility period will be extended to account for any maternity or paternity leave.*

Second stage: Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit the following extra documents:

1. **A video (max 3 minutes)** briefly introducing themselves, their research in terms accessible to a wider community and explaining why they would like to represent the Early Career community as an ECCE/ECAB27 plenary speaker.
2. **A short statement (max 200 words)** describing how delivering an ECCE/ECAB27 plenary lecture would contribute to their professional development and how they hope their talk would inspire and benefit the reaction engineering community.

For both stages, kindly send all documents to Dr Theodoros Papalas (t.papalas@bham.ac.uk) and the Early Career Chemical Engineers Board (EFCE.earlycareerchemengs@gmail.com). When submitting your documents for the first stage, please also indicate which conference theme your proposed lecture aligns with.

Timeline

- Opening of the Call of Interest: 1 September 2026
- Deadline for the first round of applications: 13 November 2026
- Invitation sent to shortlisted potential speakers: 21 December 2026
- Deadline for the second round of shortlisted applications: 10 January 2027
- Final selection of the Plenary Lecturer: 29 January 2027

Evaluation process

The application documents submitted during both the first and second stages will be evaluated by reviewers from the EFCE Early Career Chemical Engineers Section, according to the evaluation criteria presented in **Table 1**. The first and second stage scores will each contribute 50% to the overall score of each candidate.
Based on this combined evaluation, the highest-ranked candidates will be forwarded to the ECCE/ECAB27 Organising Committee for final assessment. The final score will comprise 40% of the overall score (First and Second Stage) so far and 60% of the score awarded by the ECCE/ECAB27 Organising Committee.

Further details

The selected candidate will have their registration, accommodation and travel expenses covered. They will also have the opportunity to deliver up to two virtual mock plenary lectures during Summer 2027, receiving constructive feedback from members of the EFCE Early Career Chemical Engineers Section and the wider EFCE community to help refine their presentation.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria with respective weighting factors and notes

Factor	Weighting	Notes and relevant criteria
First stage		
Does the proposed topic align well with ECCE/ECAB27?	Yes/No	The proposed plenary lecture falls within at least of the topics of ECCE/ECAB27. Applications outside the scope of the conference will not proceed to full evaluation.
Originality and impact	35%	Novelty, significance and potential impact of the proposed lecture. Consider whether the work advances the proposed field and the outcomes it can have *(Title + Abstract).*
Scientific Quality and Clarity	20%	Quality, structure and clearness of the abstract, including whether the objectives, methodology, key findings and conclusions are presented in a logical and understandable manner with concise scientific English *(Abstract).*
Achievements, significance and career progression	30%	Applicant's scientific track record relative to career stage, considering publications, conference presentations, awards, invited talks and leadership skills *(CV).*
Justification of scientific contributions	15%	Candidate's ability to persuade and explain the significance, originality and impact of their selected publications and conference presentations and to justify why these best represent their research career *(CV).*
Second stage (for shortlisted candidates)		
Suitability as an Early Career representative	30%	Candidate's professionalism, enthusiasm and potential to inspire early career researchers, including how they would benefit professionally from the opportunity and use the experience to contribute to the Early Career community *(Statement + video).*
Originality and impact	40%	Ability to clearly demonstrate the novelty, broader relevance and importance of the research area and associated presentation *(Statement + video).*
Communication skills	30%	Clarity, confidence, body language and the ability to communicate complex scientific concepts to a broad chemical engineering audience *(Video).*

For any questions or concerns, please contact us at EFCE.earlycareerchemengs@gmail.com