

## **Royal Society reveals “Arabick Roots” of British Science**

London’s Royal Society is launching an exhibition today about the enormous influence that “Arabick” scientific knowledge had on giants of British science like Edmond Halley (of “Halley’s Comet” fame), Robert Boyle and many others. The Arabick Roots exhibition is open to the public from the 5th to 10th of July 2011, free of charge, as part of the Royal Society’s “Summer of Science” celebration.

Like many of their Renaissance contemporaries, both Halley and Boyle understood Arabic and translated many scientific works into Latin. This new exhibition displays rare books, scientific instruments and correspondence, showing how science and culture from the Muslim Civilisation influenced and early Fellows of the Royal Society, many of whom eagerly pursued works in Arabic and Persian as well as communicating with their intellectual contemporaries in the Muslim world.

The word “Arabick” refers to the many languages that use Arabic script, including Farsi (Persian), Kurdish, Urdu and Ottoman Turkish.

Exhibition Curator Dr Rim Turkmani said: “This exhibition uncovers the never-before told story of the connections between the early Royal Society and contemporary and classical Arabic learning, and how they were used to solve some of the most pressing problems of the day.”

“This was a time when British society as a whole was largely ignorant of the cultural achievements of the Arabic world – yet we find that the early Royal Society’s group of ‘ingenious and curious gentlemen’ included three Fellows from the Arabic world. This forgotten history reveals a rich tradition of communication between two very different cultures, and shows that then – just like today – collaboration across linguistic and cultural boundaries can lead to great results.”

The research for Arabick Roots has been sponsored by the Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilisation (FSTC) and the exhibition curator is FSTC Fellow Dr. Rim Turkmani.

Arabick Roots is open 9am – 5pm in the week of the Royal Society’s Summer Science Exhibition (5 – 10 July, 2011). From 11th July 2011 onwards guided tours are by appointment (call +44 20 7451 2597). Entrance is free. The exhibition runs until November 2011, after which it will transfer to Doha.