

# Seminar

CMWS Centre for Molecular  
Water Science

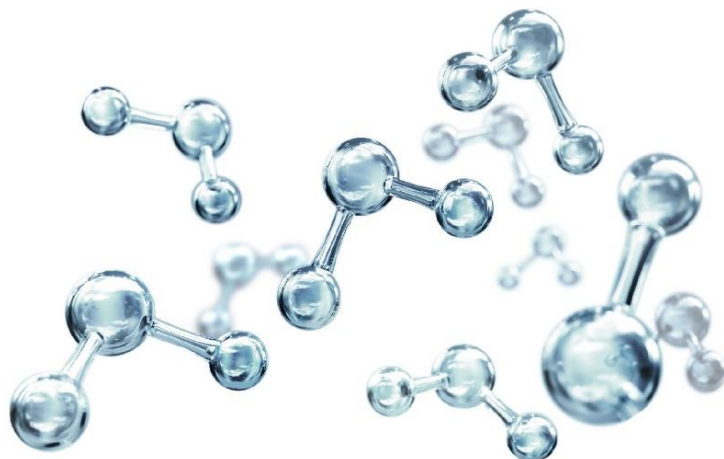
9th of December 2021  
12:00 h

Zoom Virtual Meeting:

<https://desy.zoom.us/j/84703564086>

Meeting-ID: 847 0356 4086

Password: 570173



**Philip Ball**

*Science Writer, London*

## What does water actually do in the cell?

It is commonplace to observe that water is essential for all life on Earth, but that essential role has often been portrayed as a kind of matrix or backdrop on which biochemistry happens. It has become increasingly clear over the past decade or so that water is in fact an active ingredient of cells, with a number of diverse functions that mediate the interaction of biomolecules and the transmission of biological information. I will examine some of these roles and consider what they imply for our notions of the supposed centrality of water as a solvent for all life.

*Philip Ball* is a freelance science writer. He worked previously at Nature for over 20 years, first as an editor for physical sciences (for which his brief extended from biochemistry to quantum physics and materials science) and then as a Consultant Editor. His writings on science for the popular press have covered topical issues ranging from cosmology to the future of molecular biology. Philip is the author of many popular books on science, including works on the nature of water, pattern formation in the natural world, colour in art, the science of social and political philosophy, the cognition of music, and physics in Nazi Germany. Philip has a BA in Chemistry from the University of Oxford and a PhD in Physics from the University of Bristol. – See his official website [here](#).