

Microbiology Society Terms of Reference – Virology Division

1. General

1.1 Council and Committees

The Microbiology Society is both a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, first incorporated in 1972. Members of Council bear the legal responsibilities of Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company.

The business of Council is facilitated by a number of committees. These committees are chaired by a member of Council and will normally include one or more elected members as well as respective members of Society staff.

The current Council Committees are as follows:

- Communications
- Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive
- Finance & Operations
- Policy
- Professional Development
- Publishing
- Scientific Conferences

The remit of the Scientific Conferences Committee (SCC) is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the scientific conferences programme to support the Society's three main strategic objectives, ensuring the delivery of conferences that are appealing to the membership. SCC also coordinates the activities of the Microbiology Society Divisions covering Virology, Eukaryotic and Prokaryotic microbiology, and the Irish Division.

1.2 Divisions

The Society's conference and events programme is planned by SCC and the Divisions, with input from the wider membership. The Divisions aim to promote microbiology in its widest context. They provide a scientific focus for a subject that has often been fragmented over a range of different subject areas, scientific groups and societies.

2. Virology Division

2.1 Background

The Virology Division aims to promote all aspects of virology research and innovation, encompassing viruses from mammalian through to plant, insect and bacterial hosts. The Division is made up of members with expertise in structural, molecular, cell biological, evolutionary and host interactions, together with clinical and translational aspects of virology, to provide a comprehensive representation of current interests within the virology community.

2.2 Composition

The Virology Division is typically comprised of:

- Chair
- Chair-Elect
- Up to ten Ordinary members
- Two additional members co-opted from Clinical Virology Network
- One Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Representative

Prospective applicants should contact the Chair / Chair-elect ahead of standing.

All efforts should be made to ensure equal gender balance on the Division in line with Society policies.

2.3 Terms of Office

The term of office of Ordinary members will be three calendar years. Members will also be invited to attend the first meeting held after the end of their term to assist with programme planning for the following year's Annual Conference. Members who miss two consecutive meetings/events without satisfactory explanations, or who are otherwise unable to commit to the activities of the Division, will be asked by the Chair to consider their position and may be stepped down by the Chair.

The term of office of the Chair and Chair-Elect is two years from the time of appointment to that role.

2.4 Division meetings

The Virology Division meet in person in January each year when all Divisions meet to discuss the forthcoming Annual Conference arrangements/abstract selection and put forward ideas for the following year, plus any other business related to SCC including proposals for Focused Meetings and Society-Supported Conference Grants.

The Division usually hold a second meeting in May of each year with email communication between meetings.

2.5 Division roles

2.5.1 Chair

The role of the Chair is as follows, in addition to those of Ordinary members:

- Represent the Division on the Scientific Conferences Committee (three x 1-day meetings in London per year, typically January, July and October)
- Communicate between SCC/Society staff and Division members
- Galvanise Division members into action for required deadlines
- Be prepared for Division meetings to lead discussion and draw out actions with specific people assigned
- Organise twice-yearly Division meetings (timeslot/agenda/minutes/action log)
- Oversee Division symposia at conferences and ensure smooth delivery
- Oversee Young Microbiologist of the Year judging
- Copy in Chair-Elect
- Liaise with the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum
- Identify and canvas for new Division members, welcome them once appointed and outline role/expectations

2.5.2 Chair-Elect

The role of the Chair-Elect is as follows, in addition to those of Ordinary members:

- Assist and serve as deputy to the Chair
- Represent the Division on the Scientific Conferences Committee (three x 1-day meetings in London per year, typically January, July and October)

2.5.3 Ordinary members

The role of Ordinary members is as follows:

- Attend twice-yearly Division meetings (January and May)
- Attend the Annual Conference
- Suggest topics and speakers for symposia
- Assist in the organisation and chairing of symposia and workshops at the Annual Conference
- Select suitable abstracts for presentation at Annual Conference
- Make themselves available from time-to-time to assist the Society with other relevant business: for example, review student grant applications, contribute to policy committees, judge posters and the Young Microbiologist of the Year competition.
- Assist with the general business of the Virology Division
- Promote and advocate for the Microbiology Society, including recruitment of new members and encouraging their involvement at annual conferences and focus meeting
- Suggest and nominate individuals for Society Prizes

2.6 Appointment of new Chair

The Chair-Elect is appointed by the Scientific Conferences Committee, ordinarily acting on the recommendation of a nominations committee comprising the current Chair and Chair-Elect. This nomination is typically ratified at the July Scientific Conferences Committee meeting in the year preceding appointment. At Division meetings, the Chair will keep members informed of the terms of the current Chair/Chair-Elect and invite members to suggest names of possible successors to the nominations committee. Members, at meetings or privately, may also indicate a personal interest in the position to the nominations committee. The nominations committee may also canvas prospective candidates more broadly. Following these consultations, the nominations committee will consider the following criteria prior to making a recommendation to SCC.

2.6.1 Qualifications of a Chair/Chair-Elect

- Strong track record and profile in UK virology
- Demonstrated commitment to the function of the Virology Division and the Microbiology Society
- Sufficient management experience and interpersonal skills
- Capacity and willingness to serve in this role

2.7 Election of new members

Elections will be held annually by the Society to replace retiring members. The Chair and Chair-Elect will consult to ensure that vacancies are either open or restricted to areas that need to be filled to maintain the diversity of the Division. If only one nomination is received, no election will be required. Where multiple nominations are received for vacancies, in the first instance the Division Chair and Chair-Elect will review nominations to redistribute among other areas if appropriate.

In cases where a Division vacancy is not filled through the elections process, the Chair and Chair-Elect may seek to co-opt a member to address that deficiency.

The ECM Forum representative is elected by the ECM Forum Executive Committee and appointed to the Division.

2.7.1 Desired qualification and experience of new Division members

- Possess a track record in virology
- Prepared to commit time and motivated to do so
- Organisational ability
- Interpersonal skills to encourage participation from invited speakers and work productively with Society staff
- Capable to critically assess scientific contributions (abstracts and symposia topics, judge posters)

3. Review

These Terms of Reference of the Virology Division should be reviewed and renewed or updated at least every two years.