

Professional Development Committee

1. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Reporting to Council, the Professional Development Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the professional development programme to support the Society's three main strategic objectives:

1. *We will enable our members to strengthen their existing relationships and gain access to new communities, unlocking the potential for knowledge exchange.*
2. *We will advance understanding of microbiology and champion the contribution made by microbiology, our members and their work in addressing global challenges.*
3. *We will reinforce the Society's long-term sustainability and resilience by diversifying income streams, increasing efficiency and ensuring robust governance.*

The Committee will provide advice and expertise on the development of the professional development programme to Council and will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of activities. The Committee will work with staff to ensure that the activities delivered are in line with the agreed strategy and budget.

The Society is committed to ensuring that its activities reflect the make-up of the membership as a whole. In particular, as an organisation that operates in the UK and Ireland, it seeks wherever possible to ensure that its Committees include individuals from both territories.

The Society encourages the expectation of at least 33% female participation and ideally 50% female participation across all Society activities. All Society meetings should be conducted in a manner that is supportive of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy statement to ensure that the entire talent pool be considered in all discussions regarding Society activities.

2. Duties

The Professional Development Committee will advise, oversee and support the implementation of the following objectives:

1. To provide opportunities for professional development for members, for example through the provision of grants, networking, skills enhancement, Society conferences and events, Champions Scheme etc.
2. To offer a range of members-only grant schemes to support professional development and promote microbiology as a career, and administer the awards through fair and transparent processes in line with the Society's policy on Equality and Diversity.
3. To promote Society membership and monitor recruitment and retention member data, identifying areas of concern and making recommendations for improvement.
4. To proactively support member engagement at the Society through the development of member engagement activities and wider promotion of clear member benefits.
5. There is close collaboration with other committees and organisations on areas of common interest.
6. The external environment is effectively monitored by staff and reported to the Committee so that changes which could impact on the strategic direction and/or activities are identified and acted on.

7. To ensure relevant advice and recommendations are properly reported to Council.

3. Meeting Schedule

The Committee will meet twice a year in March and October. In addition, it will transact its business between meetings by email and other communications to ensure sufficient reporting mechanisms to Council.

4. Membership

The membership requires a balanced portfolio of skills and knowledge to be able to fully support and engage with the remit of the Committee. The Committee comprises of:

- A Chair; ex officio a member of Council
- A Chair-Elect; nominated by the Committee and approved by Council at least a year before the end of the current Chair's term (the Chair-Elect does not have to be a current member of the Committee)
- Council representative; this may reshuffle among the Elected Members of Council each year
- Up to four Elected Members; nominations and elections are sought from the membership annually
- Up to four co-opted members who do not have to be Members of the Society but who should be chosen to include an appropriate range of skills and expertise not found among the membership; an important role of co-opted members is to provide constructive challenge
- One member of the Committee will act as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador for professional development at the Society
- One member of the Committee will act as the International Ambassador for professional development at the Society
- The Chair and Chair-Elect of the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee
- Ad hoc advisors can be requested to attend certain meetings to address specific knowledge requirements or assist in certain projects

The term of office for all positions is three years. If a current member of the Committee is nominated as Chair-Elect, their term will extend accordingly.

The following report in to the Professional Development Committee:

Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee will be comprised of early career members of the Society. The Chair and Chair-Elect of this Executive Committee will sit on the Professional Development Committee.

The Committee is supported by:

Professional Development Manager (m.fernandes@microbiologysociety.org)

Director of Strategy and Members' Programmes (s.buckman@microbiologysociety.org)

Other members of staff attend meetings as appropriate.