

# Sustainability Committee

## 1. Terms of Reference

**Purpose:** Reporting to Council, the Sustainability Committee is responsible for developing the future leadership of the Society and for ensuring the long-term viability of our operations to support the Society's three main strategic objectives:

- 1. Through a better understanding of the diversity of our members, we will enable them to strengthen their existing relationships and gain access to new communities, unlocking the potential for international collaboration and global knowledge exchange.*
- 2. By harnessing local knowledge for worldwide impact, we will advance understanding of microbiology and champion the contribution made by microbiology, our members and their work in addressing global challenges.*
- 3. By recognising global differences in accessing opportunities at the Microbiology Society, we will build on existing strong financial and governance foundations to reinforce long-term sustainability and resilience through diversifying income streams, increasing efficiency and ensuring robust mechanisms for decision-making, monitoring and evaluation.*

The Committee will provide advice and expertise to Council and will be specifically responsible for overseeing the delivery of strategic objective three. The Committee will work with relevant working groups and staff to ensure that activities delivered are in line with budget.

The Society is committed to creating an inclusive culture that supports equality and diversity and fully reflects both its membership and the global microbiology community across all protected characteristics. The Society seeks to actively encourage all practices that reflect a diverse society.

By participating in Committee meetings, all Committee members agree to respect other members' opinions and give all present a chance to contribute. The co-Chairs are responsible for running the meeting, please support them to keep to time. Certain topics discussed will be confidential, therefore Committee members are asked to be mindful not to repeat such information outside of the meeting.

Although not similarly embedded at this time, the Society also considers equality of the remaining protected characteristics to be important.

## 2. Duties

**The Sustainability Committee will advise, oversee and support the implementation of the following:**

- Increase the emphasis on placing members at the heart of Society activities and growing future leaders, including:

- providing opportunities for professional development for members, for example through the provision of grants, networking, or skills enhancement, and
- offering a range of members-only grant schemes to support professional development and promote microbiology as a career, administering the awards through fair and transparent processes in line with the Society's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Proactively support member engagement at the Society through the development of member engagement activities and wider promotion of clear member benefits, including identifying areas of concern in recruitment and retention member data and making recommendations for improvement.
- Work with relevant staff members and external bodies as needed to devise a professional development programme that is relevant for Society staff, both to encourage the next generation of staff leaders and to enhance the reputation of the Society as an employer.
- Working with relevant Committees and staff, increase opportunities for generating income from a range of commercial and philanthropic sources.
- Working with relevant Committees and staff, identify opportunities to maximise cost savings and efficiencies.
- Ensure the external environment is effectively monitored by staff and reported to the relevant Committees, so that changes that could affect the Society's strategic direction and/or activities are identified and acted on.
- Ensure there is close collaboration with other Committees and organisations on areas of common interest.
- Ensure relevant advice and recommendations are properly reported to Council.

### 3. Meeting schedule

The Committee will meet twice a year in May and October.

The October meeting will be held jointly between all three of the Society's Strategic Committees.

Between the May meeting and the end of June, the General Secretary will Chair a meeting of the General Secretary's Group, which consists of the two co-Chairs from each of the Committees and the Members Panel. Members of the General Secretary's Group will be required to report back on their respective Committees, feed into budget proposals and produce a single Equality Diversity and Inclusion report for consideration at the July meeting of Council.

Between October and December, the General Secretary will Chair a meeting of the General Secretary's Group, which consists of the two co-Chairs from each of the Committees and the Members Panel. Members of the General Secretary's Group will be required to report back on their respective Committees and present an annual report of Committee business to the December meeting of Council.

In addition, the Committee 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:

- Two co-Chairs; *ex officio* members of Council.
- A Chair-Elect; sought from the membership by an open call for expressions of interest 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).
- One elected member of Council; this may reshuffle among the Elected Members of Council each year.
- Up to 11 members elected from the membership of the Society; nominations and elections are sought from the membership annually.
- Two representatives from the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee, who serve for two years.
- One representative from the Members Panel.
- One (or more) co-opted external professionals with relevant expertise; an important role of co-opted members is to provide constructive challenge.
- Ad hoc advisors can be requested to attend certain meetings to address specific knowledge requirements or assist in certain projects.

Unless otherwise stated, 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.

### **Quorum:**

One Chair and seven members of the Committee must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid.

The Committee is supported by the Head of Marketing and Development.

Other members of staff attend meetings as appropriate.