

Elected Member of Council and Early Career Forum Executive Committee co-Chair Role Description

Key facts:

Background: Microbiology Society is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity. It is governed by a Board of Trustees who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006. The Board of Trustees operates in compliance with the Society's Articles of Association and Charity Commission guidance on good governance.

Time commitment: Council meets for formal meetings in person three times each year. In person meetings usually take place at the Microbiology Society offices in London. Formal papers are circulated to all Council members one week before each meeting and Council members are expected to read the papers and come prepared to participate in discussion where relevant. Committees meet between 2–4 times per year with a similar mixture of in-person and virtual meetings. There may be other ad hoc business that takes place between meetings. In total, the time commitment is approximately 12–15 days per year, including meetings.

Remuneration: The role of an Elected Member of Council and Committee co-Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel may be claimed.

Term and process: The co-Chair of the Early Career Forum Executive Committee is elected by the membership of the Forum following a call for nominations from the Early Career Forum. They serve for six months as co-Chair-elect before taking office as co-Chair for a further two years, serving a total of 2.5 years.

1. What is Council?

The Council is comprised from the Society membership, provides the strategic direction of the Society and is responsible for its governance and financial sustainability. Members of Council bear the legal responsibilities of Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company and take a variety of important strategic and legal decisions on how the Society deploys its assets and supports its membership.

2. What is the Early Career Forum Executive Committee?

The role of the Executive Committee is to work together to ensure that the views of the Early Career Forum (the 'Forum') are considered across all streams of the Society's work 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.*

3. Why join Council as the co-Chair of the Early Career Forum Executive Committee?

Serving on Council offers both personal and professional development, a chance to contribute to a Society that supports your career and an opportunity to help enhance the activities that we offer, not to mention making friends and having fun.

The Composition of Council includes the Chairs of the Committees of the Council. These are: Audit, Risk and Evaluation; Early Career Forum Executive; Finance; Building Communities; Impact and Influence; and Sustainability.

The Society is committed to creating an inclusive culture, which requires a governance structure that fully reflects both its membership and the global microbiology community. We welcome nominations from across the full breadth of the membership and are particularly keen to receive nominations from members from historically marginalised backgrounds. We look forward to hearing from you.

4. What is involved?

Council meets for formal meetings three times each year. At its meetings, Council receive reports, undertake discussions and take collective decisions on a range of matters that have been presented via formal Council papers which are distributed one week prior to the meeting date. Council members are expected to have read the papers and come prepared to participate in discussion where relevant.

The Chairs of Committees will maintain close and regular contact with the relevant staff of the Society and report to Council at quarterly Council meetings to keep them abreast of activities of the Committee as and when appropriate. As the Building Communities, Early Career Forum Executive, Impact and Influence, and Sustainability Committees have wide remits, each has two co-Chairs. Co-Chairing is designed to ensure that the work is spread fairly and realistically; for example, co-Chairs may wish to split Chairing duties by dividing the agenda of meetings between them or perhaps take it in turns to prepare and chair each meeting. Co-Chairing should also ensure that if there were a particularly inconvenient time for one co-Chair, it would not necessarily preclude the Committee from meeting.

Twice a year, 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, the co-Chairs of the Early Career Forum Executive Committee and the co-Chairs of 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 and present an annual report of Committee business to the December meeting of Council.

5. Trustee duties

5.1 Statutory duties

Trustees and Directors of the Company are collectively responsible for:

- setting and overseeing delivery of the Society strategy in furtherance of our aims, vision and mission and in the best interest of our members,
- ensuring compliance with the Articles of Association, Charity and Company Law and governance best practice to effectively deploy their duties, and
- ensuring the Society's resources are managed responsibly and ensuring the financial sustainability of the Society.

5.2 Co-Chair duties

- The co-Chairs will be responsible for the leadership of the Committee; ensuring that the necessary business of the Committee is carried out effectively in pursuit of the Society's mission and strategic aims.
- The co-Chairs will ensure that the Committee acts in accordance with its own Terms of Reference, the Society's Articles of Association, Equality and Diversity statement and all internal policies.
- The co-Chairs will ensure that all members are clear on the business to be transacted, encourage contribution and input from all utilising the relevant skills and expertise of members as appropriate, and guide towards clear decision making and action.
- The co-Chairs will actively listen and effectively summarise the views of the group, acting as a democratic mediator if required, build consensus and ensure collective responsibility.
- The co-Chairs will identify skills and knowledge needs/gaps within the Committee, to ensure it can meet its strategic responsibilities and to ensure representation across all microbiological communities.
- The co-Chairs will engage Council with the activities of the Committee and influence decision making to drive forward Committee objectives.
- The co-Chairs will lead by example to draw together Committees, Divisions, Editorial Boards and relevant staff members to advance understanding of microbiology and champion the contribution made by microbiology, our members and their work in addressing global challenges.
- The co-Chairs will be a key representative for the Society to raise the profile of microbiology and our members and increase the influence of the Society with the public, policy-makers and other stakeholders.
- The co-Chairs will provide a key point of contact for other societies, industry, funders, educators, regulators and decision makers who may wish to engage with the Society.

The co-Chairs will also provide inspirational leadership to drive forward the work of the Forum including:

- Providing strategic input into the development of programmes and activities across all communities to ensure they meet the needs of Forum members.

- Acting as figurehead for the Forum, facilitating and leading activities.
- Acting as an ambassador for Society early career members at the EC Summer Conference and other Society events.
- Liaising with relevant staff, particularly in relation to strategy, planning and implementation of activities relevant to the Forum.

6. Qualities of a trustee and co-Chair of a Committee

Essential

- Understanding of the range of different needs and challenges affecting early career members and the microbiology community
- An ability to process a range of information, participate in discussion and a willingness to constructively challenge where necessary, including being comfortable voicing their opinions among more senior colleagues that would be present on Council
- A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time commitment, both to Committee and Council business and to respond to tight deadlines where necessary
- Experience of participating in Committee or equivalent leadership meetings, this may be through membership of a Microbiology Society Committee or other similar body within an alternative organisation.
- Demonstrable commitment to the Microbiology Society activities, this may be through a number of years membership and/or involvement in other Society activities
- An ability to act with impartiality, to make sound judgement and willingness to accept collective responsibility for Council decisions
- Willingness to act in the overall best interest of the Society, without conflict of interest and conflict of loyalty
- Ability to communicate with tact and diplomacy and foster a welcoming and collaborative environment

Desirable

- Prior experience of sitting on a committee/board either within the Society, another society or at an organisational level.
- Be at an appropriate career stage and have the required capacity to fulfil every aspect of the role due to its significant time commitment.