

Elected Member of Council 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. Elected Members of Council also sit on one of the Society's Committees. These 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 10–12 days per year, including meetings.

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

Term and process: Council determines the procedure for the election of elected members by the membership. Currently, candidates for election can be self-nominated or nominated by another member or members of the Society following a call for nominations by the Society. They are elected by the eligible voting members of the Society, but elections must be ratified by Council, which has a duty only to appoint appropriate Trustees and Directors. Elected members serve for three 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. Why join Council?

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 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.

3. What is involved?

Council meets for formal meetings three times each year. At its meetings, Council receives reports, undertakes discussions and takes 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.

In addition, Elected Members also have an important role to play in several of the Committees that influence different aspects of Microbiology Society business, such as Audit, Risk and Evaluation, Building Communities, Finance, Impact and Influence and Sustainability. These Committee meetings take place in addition to the formal Council meetings and meet between two and four times per year. The terms of reference for the Committees are [here](#).

4. Trustee duties

4.1 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. Qualities of a trustee

- Understanding of the range of different needs and challenges affecting members and the microbiology community.
- An ability to process a range of information, participate in discussion and a willingness to constructively challenge where necessary.
- 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.