

Building Communities Committee

1. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Reporting to Council, the Building Communities Committee is responsible for driving content themes for events, journals, *Microbiology Today* and other activities 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 to Council and will be primarily responsible for overseeing the delivery of strategic objective one. The Committee will work with relevant panels, working groups and staff to ensure that activities delivered are in line with budget.

The Scientific Conferences Panel and Publishing Panel both report to the Building Communities Committee and are each chaired by one of the Committee co-Chairs. Some elected members on the Building Communities Committee may be asked to sit as supernumerary members of the Scientific Conferences Panel and Publishing Panel of the Society, in order to create an adequate link between the Committee and these bodies.

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-Chair/Chair is 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.

2. Duties

The Building Communities Committee will advise, oversee and support the implementation of the following areas, working with other Committees, Panels, Divisions, Editorial Boards and relevant staff members to:

- Identify national and international networking opportunities for our members among existing and new communities and communicate them effectively to the membership.

- Increase the involvement of groups of microbiologists who are not currently well represented in our activities, such as clinical, health-related and industrial microbiologists.
- Increase engagement and collaboration between our members and other societies, industry, funders, educators, regulators and decision makers.
- Ensure Society content covers the breadth of microbiology and is relevant to members, potential members, the wider microbiology community and other key stakeholders including students, teachers, journalists the wider public and relevant bodies and organisations.
- Ensure the Society's activities and resources are scientifically accurate and targeted to reach appropriate audiences.
- 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 February and October.

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

Between the February meeting and 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 activity Committees and the Chair of the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee. 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 activity Committees and the Chair of the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee. 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 and each to Chair either the Scientific Conferences Panel or Publishing Panel.

- Chair-Elect of the Scientific Conferences Panel; sought from the membership by an open call for expressions of interest and approved by Council. By convention, this rotates around the interests of the four Divisions and requires having served in recent year on one of the Divisions and would therefore be advertised accordingly. The Chair-Elect of the Scientific Conferences Panel will become co-Chair of the Committee.
- Chair-Elect of the Publishing Panel; 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 co-Chair's term). The Chair-Elect of the Publishing Panel will become co-Chair of the Committee.
- One elected member of Council; this may reshuffle among the Elected Members of Council each year.
- Up to 5 members elected from the membership of the Society; nominations and elections are sought from the membership annually by an open call.
- One representative from each of the Society's Divisions, typically the Chair of the Division
- The Society's Representative for the Federation of Infection Societies' (FIS)
- One representative from each of the Society-owned journals, typically the Editor-in-Chief
- One representative from the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee, who serves for two years.
- 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

The terms of office are as follows:

- Co-Chair and Chair of Publishing Panel = 3 years
- Co-Chair and Chair of Scientific Conferences Panel = 2 years
- Chair-Elect, Scientific Conferences Panel = 2 years
- Chair-Elect, Publishing Panel = 1 year
- Elected members = 3 years
- Representatives from Divisions = 2 years
- FIS Representative = 2 years
- Representatives from Society journals = 3 years
- ECM Forum Executive Committee representative = 2 years
- Co-opted external professionals and ad hoc advisors = duration as required

If a current member of the Committee is nominated as Chair-Elect, their term will extend accordingly.

Quorum:

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

The following report into the Building Communities Committee:

- Publishing Panel
- Scientific Conferences Panel

The Committee is supported by the Associate Director of Members' Programmes.

Other members of staff attend meetings as appropriate.