

Appointed Member of Advisory Council and Members Panel co-Chair Role Description

Background:

The Advisory Council, reports directly to the Board of Trustees and is responsible for delivering active engagement and insights on behalf of the microbiology community. It includes the co-Chairs from the five strategic Committees of the Society. The Members Panel contributes to the delivery of the Society's strategic objectives by bringing the perspectives of historically marginalised communities to the Society's efforts.

Time commitment: In total, the time commitment is approximately between 10-15 days per year, including meetings.

Advisory Council meets twice a year in July and December. The Panel will meet virtually or in-person at least twice a year in April and September to facilitate discussion, however will primarily function on an *ad hoc* basis over email.

Meetings are typically a mix of remote and in person and approximately 2–3 hours in length. In person meetings are usually held at the Society offices in London. Papers are circulated a week before the meeting and members are expected to read them ahead of the meeting and come prepared to participate in discussions.

Remuneration: The role of an Appointed Member of Advisory Council and co-Chair of a Committee is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, however, reasonable out of pocket expenses for travel/accommodation are reimbursed for in-person meetings.

Term and process: This role is for three years from January 2026 – December 2028. The co-Chair of the Members Panel is appointed by an Appointments Panel comprised of the two co-Chairs of the Members Panel, the General Secretary and one representative from the Members Panel whose term on the Panel is ending at the end of the year.

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 applications from across the full breadth of the membership and are particularly keen to receive applications from members from historically marginalised backgrounds. We look forward to hearing from you.

1. What is Advisory Council?

Working with the Society's staff, the Advisory Council is responsible for delivering active engagement and insights on behalf of the microbiology community. The Advisory Council reports to the Board of Trustees who bear the legal responsibilities of Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company. The governing document for the Advisory Council is the Society's Bye-Laws. The Advisory Council of the Society consists of up to 20 members. Of these, seven representatives are elected by the membership of the Society, two are elected by the Early Career Forum, eight are appointed as co-Chairs of our Committees, and three are

appointed as Executive Officers: the President, General Secretary and Treasurer, who also sit on the Society's Board of Trustees.

2. What is the Members Panel?

Reporting to Advisory Council, the Members Panel ensures that the Society is welcoming across all of its activities and that matters related to equality, diversity and inclusion receive due consideration at the highest level of Society governance and across 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.*

Further detail on the work of the panel can be found in its Terms of Reference.

3. Co-Chair duties

The Chairs of the Panel will maintain close and regular contact with the relevant staff of the Society and report to Advisory Council at meetings to keep them abreast of activities of the Panel as and when appropriate. As the Committees and the Members Panel have wide remits, each will have two co-Chairs. Co-Chairing is designed to ensure that the work is spread fairly and realistically. Co-Chairing should also ensure that if there were a particularly inconvenient time for one co-Chair, it would not necessarily preclude the Committee or Panel from meeting.

3.1 Co-Chair duties

- The co-Chairs will be responsible for the leadership of the Panel; ensuring that the necessary business of the Panel is carried out effectively in pursuit of the Society's mission and strategic aims.
- The co-Chairs will ensure that the Panel acts in accordance with its own Terms of Reference, the Society's Articles of Association and Bye-laws, 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 Panel, to ensure it can meet its strategic responsibilities and to ensure representation across all microbiological communities.
- The co-Chairs will engage Advisory Council with the activities of the Panel.
- The co-Chairs will lead by example to draw together Committees and Panels, 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.

4. Qualities of a co-Chair of Members Panel

- A member with an understanding of the range of different needs and challenges affecting members and the microbiology community.
- Enthusiastic about inclusion, with the willingness and ability to devote the necessary time commitment to the Panel and Advisory Council business and to respond to tight deadlines where necessary.
- Keen to share ideas for helping the Society to be welcoming to anyone interested in microbes, their effects and their uses.
- Ability to communicate with tact and diplomacy and foster a welcoming and collaborative environment.
- Be an active listener with ability to summarise discussions concisely.
- An ability to process a range of information, participate in discussion and a willingness to constructively challenge 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 and to make sound judgement.
- An excellent facilitator with the ability to bring people along with them and effect change.