

# Becoming a Trustee

of the **Microbiology Society.**



Co-opted Trustee Role Description



**MICROBIOLOGY**  
**SOCIETY**

# Welcome from the Chief Executive



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Microbiology Society.

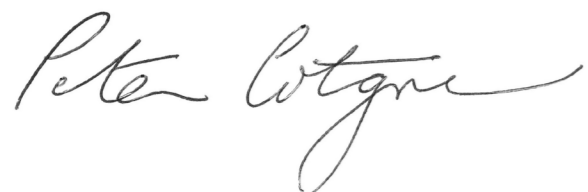
Microbes matter because they are everywhere and affect almost all aspects of our lives. The Microbiology Society matters because it is where the scientists who study those microbes come together as a community.

Recent headlines about the threat from antimicrobial resistance, the re-emergence of polio, outbreaks of bluetongue virus and bird flu in places where they were previously rare, and bacteria that can “eat” plastic show just how important it is that we understand microbes. They also illustrate the vast diversity encompassed within the field of microbiology and the wide array of fields in which microbiology can help to address the world’s challenges. Microbiologists work in universities, hospitals, private companies and government laboratories. Each employer inevitably has its own priorities, but the individual microbiologists can have a greater impact – on health, the economy, the environment and agriculture – by coming together as a community. The Microbiology Society provides a home to amplify the voice of that community as it shares its knowledge with medics, policy-makers, industrialists, the media and others so that our growing understanding of microbes can be applied in ways that bring public benefit to society as a whole.

For eighty years, the Microbiology Society has been at the centre of that vibrant community. As the world around us changes, we are seeking to bring new skills and experience to our Board of Trustees so that we can meet the strength of our ambition and take advantage of the expanding range of opportunities that the change is bringing.

Our values are constant, and we want Trustees who will work with us in welcoming and transparent ways and who will be dedicated to our aims. The work of the Board of Trustees is serious and we are ambitious and hardworking. At the same time, we pride ourselves on our reputation as a friendly, nurturing approachable community. Our members and staff regularly report strong levels of satisfaction and of feeling valued and supported. We are looking for trustees who share these values, and who want to help us support our community in building its impact.

We look forward to reading your application to become a Trustee of the Microbiology Society.



Dr Peter Cotgreave  
Chief Executive

# Who we are

The Microbiology Society is a membership charity for scientists interested in microbes, their effects and their practical uses. It has a worldwide membership based in universities, industry, hospitals, research institutes, schools, and other organisations.

Our members have a unique depth and breadth of knowledge about the discipline. The Society’s role is to help unlock and harness the potential of that knowledge. We do this by bringing together and empowering communities that shape the future of microbiology. We generate public benefit by fostering communication both among communities of microbiologists and between microbiologists and other communities who can translate that knowledge in useful ways.

Our vision is a world in which the science of microbiology provides maximum benefit to society. Our mission is to advance the understanding and impact of microbiology by connecting and empowering communities worldwide.

In the five years between 2023 and 2027, the Society’s principal goal is to strengthen our culture of being a community-driven Society by amplifying our members’ voices, wherever they are in the world, and empowering them to embed the benefits of microbiology within wider society. Our full strategy is available [here](#).

## Crucial to the Society’s success are three core values:

1. **We are welcoming** to anyone interested in microbes, their effects and their uses. Our reputation as a friendly, nurturing and approachable community, driven by the experience of a diverse set of members, is extremely important to us.
2. **We are transparent** and professional in everything we do. We believe that decisions should be informed by evidence and expertise, and that scientific methods form a robust and dependable way of developing reliable evidence.
3. **We are dedicated to our charitable aims.** We are not for profit, and strive to ensure that all our resources are applied optimally to furthering the science of microbiology and its application.



# Role profile

## Overall purpose - what is the Board of Trustees?

The 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.

From 2025, the Society is constituting a new Board of Trustees that will be comprised of the Society's three Executive Officers (President, General Secretary and Treasurer) and three elected members, plus up to three external experts. The role of the Board is to govern the organisation, provide the strategic direction of the Society and ensure its long-term financial sustainability.

Alongside the Board of Trustees, an Advisory Council comprising appointed and elected members of the Microbiology Society will be responsible for discussions about the Society's core activities and programmes such as journals and conferences. The Advisory Council must be consulted by the Trustees on important issues and will have the right to advise the Trustees on any matter it considers appropriate.

The new Board of Trustees and the Advisory Council will be led by the Chair, the President of the Microbiology Society.



**President**  
Professor Gurdyal Besra FRS  
University of Birmingham, UK



**General Secretary**  
Dr Karen Robinson  
University of Nottingham, UK



**President Elect**  
Professor Gordon Dougan FRS  
University of Cambridge, UK



**Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee**  
John Sinclair  
University of Cambridge, UK

## Main duties and responsibilities

The Trustees are the governing body of the Microbiology Society and are, collectively and personally, ultimately responsible for all the Society's activities.

Trustees of the Microbiology Society will:

- Ensure that the Society complies with its constitution, charity law, company law and any other applicable legislation and regulations.
- Analyse and contribute positively to the strategic development of the Society, establishing clear objectives to deliver the agreed strategy and associated plans, and regularly reviewing performance against these objectives.
- Maintain the financial viability of the Society and ensure the best use of financial and other resources in pursuit of the charitable objects, including ensuring the proper investment of funds.
- Ensure that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and that the Board is kept fully informed through timely and relevant information.
- Uphold the charitable aims of the Society and ensure these are reflected in Board discussions.
- Participate fully in the work of the Board, including induction, training and performance evaluation, and ensure the corporate responsibility of the Board of Directors.
- Ensure the effective implementation of Board decisions by the Leadership Team of the Microbiology Society and hold them to account for the effective management and delivery of the Society's strategic aims and objectives.

It has been a privilege working with the Microbiology Society for the last couple of years. The Society's culture is genuinely open, inclusive and professional. Fortunately for me, this translates into engaged, considered and enjoyable discussions about risk management. This applies equally to the employees, management and academics I have worked with. I would enthusiastically recommend working in a Trustee role for the Society.

*Andrew Wilson, External Chair of the Audit, Risk and Evaluation Committee*



# The Person

The Microbiology Society is specifically looking for candidates with expertise in either of the following areas to co-opt to the Board of Trustees:

1. Experience of the academic publishing business

As the academic publishing landscapes continues to evolve, the Society is looking for a Trustee to assist in setting the strategic direction of its publishing programme, with the aim to protect existing sales revenue and ensure the Society is at the forefront of new initiatives to grow its income.

Candidates must have a demonstrable track record in the international scholarly subscription market and a deep understanding of the current issues affecting scholarly publishing. Expertise in emerging markets and Open Access publishing is advantageous.

2. Experience of charitable fundraising

In recent years the Microbiology Society has embarked on a fundraising programme, Unlocking Potential, and with the Society's 80th anniversary coming up in 2025, we are keen to develop our potential for fundraising. The Society is seeking a Trustee to assist in building an effective fundraising strategy, who can help connect us to individual philanthropists, senior corporate leaders and/or their own network, and help to lever significant income for the organisation.

Candidates must have significant experience of the charitable fundraising environment and knowledge of fundraising best practice at strategic and operational levels.

All candidates will also need to show:

- Strategic thinking skills and the ability to process a range of information, participate in discussion, and constructively challenge where necessary.
- Knowledge and understanding of overseeing budgeting and financial performance.
- A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time commitment and to respond to tight deadlines where necessary.
- Ability to communicate with tact and diplomacy and foster a welcoming and collaborative environment, with experience of participating in committee or equivalent leadership meetings.
- An ability to act with impartiality, to make sound judgements and a willingness to accept collective responsibility for Board decisions.
- A willingness to act in the overall best interest of the Society, without conflict of interest and conflict of loyalty.

# Terms of appointment

## Terms

The Trustee will be appointed to serve for a period of one term (up to three years), after which they will be eligible for re-appointment again for a second consecutive term.

## Remuneration

The role of Trustee is a voluntary role and therefore unpaid. The Society will reimburse all out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred by the post holder during the course of their duties.

## Location

Flexible, with travel to the Microbiology Society office in London required at least twice a year.

## Time commitment

The Board of Trustees meets for formal meetings four times each year, twice in person and twice online. At its meetings, the Board receives reports, undertakes discussions and takes collective decisions on a range of matters that have been presented via formal Board papers which are distributed one week prior to the meeting date. Trustees are expected to have read the papers and come prepared to participate in discussion where relevant.

The Board of Trustees will also conduct business via email as necessary in between meetings.

# How to apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please email the following to [appointments@microbiologysociety.org](mailto:appointments@microbiologysociety.org)

- Your CV (no more than three sides)
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that answers the following questions:
  - o Why do you want to be a trustee of the Microbiology Society?
  - o How do your skills and expertise align with the role profile and candidate description detailed in this information pack.

Closing date: **Monday 4 November 2024**

Preliminary interviews from week commencing **18 November 2024**

Final Panel interviews: **January 2025**

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Microbiology Society  @microbiosoc  @microbiosoc  @MicrobiologySocietyOrg1945  Microbiology Society

**Microbiology Society, 14–16 Meredith Street, London, EC1R 0AB, UK**  
**+44 (0)20 3034 4870    [microbiologysociety.org](https://microbiologysociety.org)**