

Members Panel

1. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Feeding into the General Secretary's Group, which is the formal mechanism by which a single coherent report on EDI issues is presented to Council, the Members Panel is responsible for providing input to Society activities which focus on membership engagement and inclusion in support of 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 Panel will provide advice and expertise to Council, via the General Secretary's Group, regarding the engagement and inclusion of all members, including all minoritised and underrepresented backgrounds. In addition to formally meeting virtually and/or in-person, the Panel will work over email to provide advice.

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 Panel meetings, all Panel members agree to respect other members' opinions and give all present a chance to contribute. The Chair is responsible for running the meeting, please support them to keep to time. Certain topics discussed will be confidential, therefore Panel members are asked to be mindful not to repeat such information outside of the meeting.

2. Duties

The Members Panel will advise and support the implementation of the following:

1. Fair and transparent processes in line with the Society's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Proactive support for engagement of the full breadth of members at the Society through consultation on the development of activities and wider promotion of Society benefits, with the aim to develop, expand and strengthen the networks available to our members so that they can generate new knowledge about microbes and ensure that it is shared with other communities.
 - Review of the Society's annual equality, diversity and inclusion data, to include identifying areas of concern and making recommendations for improvement.
 - The proper reporting of relevant advice and recommendations to the General Secretary's Group and holding the Society to account on progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

3. Meeting schedule

The group will meet virtually or in-person at least once a year to facilitate discussion however will primarily function on an *ad hoc* basis over email. It is expected that Panel members should not be required for more than one activity (email or meeting) per month, although some points in the year may be busier than others.

Between March 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. The Members Panel will contribute to this process by bringing the perspective of a diverse range of members to the table.

Panel members will also be circulated relevant opportunities to represent the Society at networking events and conferences in order to support their Panel work and personal professional development.

4. Membership

The membership requires a balanced portfolio of skills, knowledge and personal backgrounds to be able to fully support and engage with the remit of the Panel. The Panel comprises of:

- A Chair, who will attend an annual meeting of the General Secretary's Group and be invited to attend Council as appropriate.
- up to 15 participants from different personal backgrounds, scientific expertise and work experience. Membership is actively sought from members from underrepresented groups.
- Ad hoc advisors can be requested to attend certain meetings to address specific knowledge requirements or assist in certain projects.

Unless otherwise stated, the term of office for all positions is three years. If a current member of the Panel is nominated as Chair-Elect, their term will extend accordingly.

Quorum:

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

The Panel is supported by the Chief Programmes Officer and Director of Strategy and Head of Membership and Professional Development.

Other members of staff attend virtual meetings as appropriate.