

## Scientific Conferences Committee

### 1. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Reporting to Council, the Scientific Conferences Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the scientific conferences programme 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, by using its knowledge and expertise, will ensure the delivery of conferences and conference programmes that are appealing to the membership. In so doing, the committee will fulfil the stated strategic aims of the Society. The Committee will work with staff to ensure that the conference activities delivered are in line with the agreed strategy and budget.

*The Society is committed to ensuring that its activities reflect the make-up of the membership as a whole. In particular, as an organisation that operates in the UK and Ireland, it seeks wherever possible to ensure that its Committees include individuals from both territories.*

*The Society encourages the expectation of at least 33% female participation and ideally 50% female participation across all Society activities. All Society meetings should be conducted in a manner that is supportive of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy statement to ensure that the entire talent pool be considered in all discussions regarding Society activities.*

### 2. Duties

**The Scientific Conferences Committee will advise, oversee and support the implementation of the following objectives:**

1. Identify a diverse portfolio of annual conferences and events through which the Society can deliver on its strategic objectives.
2. Produce and agree the scientific content for the Annual Conference as planned by the Society's Divisions, which includes consideration towards membership suggestions to cover the breadth of microbiology while ensuring the speaker line up is in line with the Society's policy on Equality and Diversity
3. Assess the proposals for scientific meetings to ensure the highest level of microbiological science is covered through fair and transparent processes and in line with the Society's policy on Equality and Diversity.
4. Assess and award Society Supported Conference Grants to external microbiology meetings hosted by members through a fair and transparent process ensuring allocations of funds are fully considered and meeting structures are in line with the Society's policy on Equality and Diversity.
5. Pro-actively promote all Society events, encouraging members to submit meeting proposals, register, submit abstracts and apply for grants.

6. Maintain close collaboration with other committees and organisations on areas of common interest.
7. Ensure the external environment is effectively monitored by staff and reported to the Committee so that changes which could impact on the strategic direction and/or activities are identified and acted on.
8. Ensure relevant advice and recommendations are properly reported to Council.

### 3. Meeting Schedule

The Committee will meet three times a year in January, July and October. In addition, it will transact its business between meetings by email and other communications to ensure sufficient reporting mechanisms to Council.

So far as possible, the Chair should only allow meetings to be convened if at least one Division representative from each Division is present.

### 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:

- A Chair; ex officio a member of Council
- A Chair-Elect; nominated by the Committee and approved by Council (the Chair-Elect does not have to be a current member of the Committee)\*
- Council representative; this may reshuffle among the Elected Members of Council each year
- The Chair and Chair-Elect of each Division (Eukaryotic, Prokaryotic, Virology and Irish)
- A Chair and Chair-Elect for FIS
- One member of the Committee will act as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador for conferences at the Society
- One member of the Committee will act as the International Ambassador for conferences at the Society
- The relevant representative from the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee is invited to be in attendance
- Up to four co-opted members who do not have to be Members of the Society but who should be chosen to include an appropriate range of skills and expertise not found among the membership; 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 Chair-Elect will serve in office for two years.

If a current member of the Committee is nominated as Chair-Elect, their term will extend accordingly – in this case for a further two years.

The term of office for all positions is two years.

**The following report in to the Scientific Conferences Committee:**

**Eukaryotic Division**

**Prokaryotic Division**

**Virology Division**

**Irish Division**

**FIS Representatives**

Chairs and Chairs-Elect of Divisions and FIS are appointed under a separate process.

The Committee is supported by:

Head of Conference and Events ([l.crick@microbiologysociety.org](mailto:l.crick@microbiologysociety.org))

Director of Strategy and Members' Programmes ([s.buckman@microbiologysociety.org](mailto:s.buckman@microbiologysociety.org))

Other members of staff attend meetings as appropriate.