



Chair of the Board of Trustees Recruitment pack

Setting the standards for professional scientists, for a better future for all

Welcome from the Chair of the Board, Adam Donnan



Thank you for your interest in becoming the Chair of the Board of the Science Council. I have led the Science Council Board for the past three years, having previously served as a trustee. I will be stepping down in September 2024 after seven enjoyable years on the Board and we are now looking to recruit my successor.

Recent crises have revealed systemic weakness that we need to solve to achieve energy and food security, tackle poor health and inequality, build resilience to climate shocks, and reverse the decline in biodiversity. Science and scientists have a key role to play in helping society meet these challenges, and I believe that Science Council plays a unique and valuable role in ensuring public trust and confidence in the scientific workforce and transparency in the process of science.

We are looking for a Chair who is passionate about science and promoting trust in the profession and work closely with trustees and our Chief Executive to lead the organisation. The next Chair will have strategic leadership experience to drive and support our development and growth over the next few years, so that we can become more impactful and generate additional revenue. Our current strategy runs until 2025, and the next Chair will play a key role in shaping the Science Council's future. The new Chair will bring a strong understanding and knowledge of good governance and will be adept at leading and building inclusive, collaborative teams and cultures.

There is an excellent governance culture at the Science Council, with a diverse mix of committed trustees, ably supported by the Science Council staff. This is your opportunity to lead the Board of a small, ambitious and well-run organisation, and one that is looking to grow a vibrant and diverse professional body community, harnessing its collective expertise in the pursuit of professional excellence and public benefit. I would encourage all members of the Science Council community to consider putting themselves forward for the role.

With a new CEO recruited last year, the Board has decided that next Chair should come from within our community, meaning that they must be an employee or a member of one of our Member Bodies (a list of which can be found on our [website](#)). With this qualification, we welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. If you share our mission and values, and have sufficient time to devote to our work, we want to hear from you.

This information pack provides you with information about the Science Council and will assist you in mapping your suitability for the role. The pack also provides details on the application process and contact details should you have any further queries.

Adam Donnan, Chair of the Board of Trustees

About us

Who are we?

The Science Council evolved over 20 years ago from an informal network of professional science bodies to a membership organisation of over 30 professional bodies and learned societies from across the scientific disciplines. We provide the quality assurance system for those working in science, setting the standards for professional registration for scientists and science technicians across all scientific disciplines. Through our Licensed Bodies we admit scientists and science technicians who meet our competence and conduct requirements and commit to Continuing Professional Development to our registers. Those scientists who reach the required standards are recognised by the following designations Chartered Scientist, Chartered Science Teacher, Registered Scientist, or Registered Science Technician.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to strengthen the collective impact of the science community for public benefit. We do this by connecting the science professions to foster knowledge exchange and, through our professional registers, offer interdisciplinary recognition for scientists across the world. Through our collective drive to uphold interdisciplinary standards we inspire and empower the science workforce to strive towards professional excellence. Our ambition is to see a diverse and growing science profession that is trusted, respected and is equipped to deliver national ambitions

Our values and guiding principles

We are **Inclusive** of all disciplines of science and all types of scientists, including science technicians and science teachers

We are **Informed** by evidence and research and by different perspectives.

We are **Positive** and balanced in our promotion of the contribution of scientists and science technicians to society and of our members, registrants and the science workforce as a whole.

We are **Collaborative** in our approach to debate and discussion and in our attitude to conversation in general

CSci
Chartered
Scientist

CSciTeach
Chartered
Science Teacher

RSci
Registered
Scientist

RSciTech
Registered
Science Technician

Strategy 2022-2025

As a charity, the Science Council is committed to delivering public benefit by advancing the profession of science and the profile of the scientific workforce. Building on the foundations of our previous strategy, our current strategy sets out the direction of the Science Council for the period 2022-2025 to deliver that benefit, focusing on four core objectives.

1. Registration & Licensing: maintaining and improving professionalism in the science workforce through professional registration.
2. Membership & Community: bringing our members together to facilitate knowledge exchange and identify areas of common interest.
3. Policy & Influence: developing our role as a collective voice for our diverse membership on issues that impact the sector.
4. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: supporting members to share good practice and learn from one another.

Further information, including the **Science Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2025** and the latest **Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements** are available on the Science Council's website www.sciencecouncil.org.

Challenges for 2024 and beyond

Our long-term financial sustainability continues to be a live issue for the Board. As ever, we are committed to upholding professional standards in science and, together with our Members, continue to promote registration and speak widely of its purpose and value. We will continue to focus on delivering activities that add value for Members, Registrants and the wider science community, and investing in activities that promote the value of registration and further our Charitable Objects. Investing resources in policy, events and marketing activities over the past three years has done much to raise our profile and standing within the sector and beyond, and increased engagement and collaboration with Members.

These activities continue to be funded through the use surplus free reserves, and while we are looking at options to diversify our income streams to support our long-term financial viability, we also need to think creatively about how we can make our registers more attractive to the current and future scientific workforce. The next Chair of the Board will play a crucial role in the coming years in helping to shape our strategic plans, ensuring that our financial resources meet present and future needs.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees set the direction for the charity, so it operates within its objects and delivers public benefit. Collectively and individually, trustees have a legal, regulatory, and moral obligation to enable accountable, effective and efficient and leadership of the Science Council. The role of the Board is to:

- ensure that the Science Council has a clear strategic focus.
- ensure that the Science Council fulfils its charitable objectives.
- ensure that the Science Council complies with its legal and regulatory requirements.
- act as guardian of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, and ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- monitor and hold management to account.
- be accountable to Members in the delivery of the charity's strategy.

The Science Council aims to have a Board that is comprised of individuals who collectively have the right level and mix of skills and experience necessary to fulfil their role on the Board. We also want a diversity of perspectives on our Board, for example in terms of age, background, ethnicity and experience.

Our Board comprises of the Chair (who is a trustee) and 12 elected trustees, all of whom serve three-year terms, with the opportunity to seek re-election for a further three-year term. The Board may appoint up to three trustees if it considers that there is a need for additional skills and expertise on the Board. Trustees appointed by the Board serve three-year terms.

Visit our [website](#) for information on the trustees' role description, matters reserved to the Board and the current Board membership.

The Chair of the Board

The Chair will provide leadership of the Board and work with Member Bodies and other partners in supporting the Science Council's development, growth and long-term financial sustainability. They will ensure that the Science Council delivers public benefit and its charitable objectives.

The Chair's role is to:

- Instigate and facilitate discussions on the strategic development of the charity, ensuring it develops a strategy and clear objectives to set direction and deliver organisational purpose which will result growth of the Science Council's professional registers and financial sustainability.
- Provide visible leadership in championing an open, honest and transparent culture for the organisation, high standards of propriety, and ensure that this is reflected and modelled in its and in the Board's own behaviours and decision-making.
- Maintain the Board's commitment to diversity, renewal and succession planning, in line with the charity's governing document and current good practice.
- Lead the Board in being accountable, ensuring all trustees are 'fit and proper' for the role and understand their own responsibility and accountability for governing the organisation.
- Undergo individual performance appraisal and ensure that the Board regularly reviews performance against agreed objectives including regular evaluation of its performance and that of its trustees and committees.
- Build and maintain close relations between the charity's various constituencies, and stakeholder groups to promote the effective operation of the charity's activities.
- Support and lead on the performance appraisal of the Chief Executive for the effective management and delivery of the organisation's strategic aims and objectives
- Plan, with support from the Chief Executive, the business of Board and Council meetings, and chair General Meetings.
- Facilitate the effective contribution of trustees in and beyond Board meetings and ensure constructive relations within the organisation and between trustees and staff.
- Ensure the Board maintains its responsibility for the effective governance of the organisation.
- Ensure reporting lines and accountabilities are robust and support the effective oversight of the organisation.
- Share and use relevant expertise of all members of the Board, steering it to develop appropriate experience and ability.

- Ensure the Board and its committees are properly constituted to maintain responsibility for the effective governance of the organisation by making the best use of resources, including the development of effective risk and performance management processes.
- Ensure requirements for accurate, timely and clear information to the Board are clear to the Executive team.
- Act between meetings of the Board in authorising action to be taken *intra vires*¹.

Essential criteria

Candidates will be experienced board leaders who have worked effectively in a range of organisations. They will be highly motivated to use their energy and experience to ensure that the Science Council delivers public benefit and its charitable objectives.

The Chair will have:

- A strong track record of leading organisations, ideally in the charity or not-for-profit sector, to achieve growth and reach across relevant communities and with relevant stakeholder groups.
- Excellent chairing skills particularly the ability to facilitate inclusive discussion, consensus building and decision making.
- Considerable experience of building and developing strong and effective boards and providing robust leadership in challenging environments.
- The ability to work effectively with constituent members, grant funders, partner organisations and other key stakeholders, using strong people management and communication skills to secure commitment to a shared strategic vision.
- Excellent governance, organisational and financial skills, including those relating to strategic planning, risk management and organisation-wide performance management.
- An understanding and empathy of the challenges facing science and professional bodies.
- The ability to grasp relevant issues and understand relationships between interested parties and identify opportunities for the Science Council to engage with the political environment.
- A commitment to championing the professional development and registration of scientists.
- A commitment to championing the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion.

¹ All such uses of the chair's power, however, should be reported to the full board of trustees, at the meeting immediately after the action was taken. Any powers residing in the chair are likely to be limited, given the collective responsibilities of the trustees.

Time commitment

Formal Board meetings are held quarterly and set around the charity's financial reporting cycle. Board meetings last approximately 3 hours, and usually alternate between morning (10am to 1pm) and afternoon (1pm to 4pm) meetings. Two Board meetings are held in person in central London. The Science Council holds two General Meetings per year, of which one will be the Annual General Meeting. General Meetings are held online. The Board also holds strategy development and training sessions throughout the year, in conjunction with Board meetings.

The role requires a commitment of approximately 24 days per year, depending on business needs. This will include preparing and chairing Board and General Meetings, as well as wider networking and advocacy work. The Chair will work closely with the President, Chief Executive and the Board to lead the charity in the direction agreed by the Board and supported by Member Bodies.

You will also need to dedicate time to plan and prepare for Board and General Meetings. Informal meetings between trustees, the Chair and the Chief Executive may be held as required, usually held online or by electronic communication. There may also be additional time required for ad-hoc work to support the activities of the Science Council.

Term of office

The appointment will be for an initial three-year term starting in September 2024 with the potential for renewal for a further three years.

Location

The role will require the Chair to travel in the performance of their duties. The Chair will be expected to have appropriate transport arrangements in place for travel within the UK and should be willing to travel internationally should the need arise. The role is a voluntary non-executive role but you will be compensated for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of your role. We require the Chair to be UK-based so that they can attend in-person meetings at short notice.

Age requirement

We are keen to hear from people of all ages, but please note that the Science Council requires trustees to be 18 or over.

How to apply

Prior to making an application we invite you to have a discussion with Adam Donnan (Chair of the Board). Please contact the Governance and Corporate Services Manager Oliver O'Hanlon (o.ohanlon@sciencecouncil.org) to arrange an informal discussion.

If you do wish to apply, please send an up to date CV (which should be no more than 2 pages in length) and covering letter (which should be no more than 2 pages in length) outlining your suitability for the role to Oliver O'Hanlon (o.ohanlon@sciencecouncil.org). Please title the email '*Science Council Board Chair application*'. Please state in your covering letter whether you are an employee or a member of one of our Member Bodies.

Please note that we will not accept applications that do not include a CV and covering letter.

Please also provide details of at least two referees that we may contact (we will not contact your referees without your prior consent).

The application deadline is midnight Monday 15th April 2024.

Following the deadline, applicants will be shortlisted, with interviews held in the week beginning Monday 29th April in person in London. An online interview option is available if you are not able to attend an in-person interview. A face to face follow up meeting may be required if the interview takes place online. As soon as possible, please let us know of any dates and times that you are unavailable for interview in that week.

The Board of Trustees will make an appointment on Wednesday 22nd May. The successful candidate will start their term in office at the end of the Board Meeting in September.

In advance of commencing the role, there will be opportunities for the successful candidate to engage with the Board and key staff and orientate themselves to the Science Council before taking up the position.

Equality of opportunity

The Science Council is strongly committed to equality of opportunity in the provision of its recruitment, selection and employment procedures.

Monitoring is recommended by the Codes of Practice for the elimination of discrimination. In order to monitor this policy, we request that applicants complete an Equal Opportunities Form (which can be found on the application page), which will be used for this purpose and **will form no part of the selection and interview process**.

Applicants must also satisfy statutory requirements in order to become a trustee as detailed below:

You must be at [least 18 years](#) old to be a charity trustee.

Some people are disqualified by law from acting as charity trustees or holding senior management positions within a charity unless authorised to do so by a waiver from the Charity Commission

This includes anyone who has an unspent conviction for:

- an offence involving dishonesty or deception.
- specified terrorism offences or being a designated person (under specific anti-terrorist legislation).
- a specified money laundering offence.
- contravening a Charity Commission Order or Direction.
- offences of misconduct in public office, perjury, or perverting the course of justice.

Automatic disqualification rules also apply to people who are:

- currently declared bankrupt (or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order) or have an individual voluntary agreement (IVA) with creditors.
- on the sex offenders' register
- [disqualified from being a company director](#)
- removed from a trustee role by either the Commission or the High Court due to misconduct and/or mismanagement.

As soon as someone becomes disqualified, for example, the day they are convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, they are automatically barred from acting as a trustee. It is a criminal offence to act as a charity trustee while disqualified. However, the Charity Commission can grant a waiver either generally or in relation to a charity or a specific class of charities.

If you are convicted of a relevant offence or become bankrupt and you wish to remain eligible to be a trustee, you may apply to the Commission for a waiver. Any adult person who is not disqualified by law, or prohibited by law, or prohibited by the charity's articles or association, may become a trustee (director) of a charitable company.

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

Useful links

The Charity Governance Code

<https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en>

The Essential Trustee, What you Need to Know. The Charity Commission

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/451020/CC3.pdf

Conflicts of Interest: a Guide for Trustees

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees-cc29>

Science Council Royal Charter

<https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Royal-Charter.pdf>

Science Council Bylaws

<https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/BylawsApprovedOct2021.pdf>

Science Council Regulations

https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/SC_Regs_AprovedOct2021.pdf

END OF THE RECRUITMENT PACK