

# Science Council Trustee Role Description

## The Science Council

The Science Council is membership organisation for professional bodies and learned societies across the disciplines of science. It promotes the advancement and dissemination of knowledge of and education in science, pure and applied, for the public benefit. The Science Council is a Royal Chartered, registered charity that sets the standards for professional registration for practising scientists and science technicians.

## Trustees' six main duties

The Charity Commission has established six main duties that trustees are required to fulfil.

- Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with your charity's governing document and the law
- Act in your charity's best interests
- Manage your charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill
- Ensure your charity is accountable

Further information is available on the [Charity Commission's website](#).

## Your role as a trustee

As part of the Board of Trustees, to 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 obligations to enable accountable, effective and efficient and leadership of the Science Council. Trustees are expected to act in an independent capacity but take collective responsibility for Board decisions in all public fora.

## Trustees' key Responsibilities:

### Legal

- To ensure that the charity complies with its governing documents, charity, company and employment law, data protection and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the charity pursues its objects, as defined in its governing documents.
- To ensure that the charity uses its resources solely in pursuance of its public benefit objects.

### Strategic

- To contribute actively to the Board, ensuring the charity has a clear vision, mission, goal and strategy.
- To take an active role in achieving the overall vision, mission, goal and strategy, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To keep under review the long-term development of the charity in light of the political, economic and social environment in which it operates.

To ensure appropriate advice is taken from professional advisers on matters where there may be material risk to the charity or where trustees may be in breach of their duties.

### **Financial**

- To ensure the solvency and effective running of the charity.
- To ensure that the charity has effective financial control systems and procedures, and to review the level of risk regularly as required.
- To protect and manage the physical and intellectual property and resources including all intellectual property belonging to the charity and to ensure the proper investment of its funds.
- To ensure that the operational plan and budget reflect the charity's vision, mission, goals and agreed strategy.
- To approve the annual budget and monitor performance against it.
- To ensure appropriate records relating to accounts and financial matters are maintained and audited in line with regulatory requirements.

### **Reputational**

- To act in the best interests of the charity, its public benefit obligations, and its current and future beneficiaries at all times.
- To safeguard the charity's reputation, and other intangible assets.
- To maintain the confidentiality of all sensitive / confidential information received in the course of a trustee's responsibilities.

### **Governance**

- To ensure the governance framework and structures of the charity are fit for purpose and are reviewed regularly.
- Integrity of board decisions respect and uphold process of decisions.
- To appoint the President and Chair.
- To ensure that proper minutes are kept, recording the deliberations and decisions of the Board and its committees.

### **Management**

- To appoint the Chief Executive, to set their terms and conditions and to ensure that the charity and the appointee invests in ongoing professional development, and considers succession planning.
- To hold the Chief Executive accountable for the achievement of the charity's goals, and provide them with regular, constructive feedback on both management and overall achievement.

## **Trustee tasks**

- To participate in the annual strategy review and planning workshop, and General Meetings.
- To attend Board and committee meetings, read relevant papers, and otherwise prepare in order to make an informed and constructive contribution to effective decision making.
- To maintain up-to-date knowledge of the charity's activities.
- To hold fellow trustees, Board members and the Chief Executive accountable for fulfilling their role.
- To support the staff when requested, sharing expertise, as members of a working groups, committees or in other appropriate ways.
- To build and maintain relationships with Board members, existing and potential member organisations and attend events as an ambassador for Science Council to network and promote the work of the Science Council.
- To champion the charity, including assisting with income generation, speaking, networking, sharing professional connections and otherwise seeking support and funding for the charity's activities in conjunction with staff and volunteers as appropriate.
- To be prepared to act as a spokesperson for the Science Council when asked by the Chief Executive or Chair, working within an agreed brief.

## **Person Specification**

- Demonstrable interest in the science professions from a personal or professional perspective.
- The ability to work at a strategic level.
- Understanding & acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship.
- Willingness to devote necessary time and effort to trusteeship.
- Understanding of the Science Council, its purpose and its work.
- Willingness to take and stand by decisions, putting personal interests aside.
- The ability to probe facts, challenge assumptions and identify the advantages and disadvantages of proposals.
- Good, independent judgement and a willingness to speak up, and constructively criticise and debate proposals.
- The ability to think creatively and facilitate development of solutions.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team and contribute skills, knowledge and expertise.
- Acceptance of the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.