

Science Council Trustee Recruitment

Candidate information pack

February 2020



CONTENT

Page Name	Page Number
Welcome	2
About us	2
Your role as a trustee	4
Vacancies and skills needs	5
Key dates	6
Equality of opportunity	6
Useful links for prospective trustees	7

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of the Science Council. This information pack provides you with the information you need to determine your suitability for the position and will assist you in mapping your core competencies with the requirements of the post and the Science Council. The pack also provides details on the application process and contact details should you have any further queries.

As a multi-disciplinary membership organisation connecting professional bodies from across the scientific disciplines, the Science Council has a vital role to play in promoting the science profession for the benefit of society. Now more than ever, the profession must work collectively to tackle environmental challenges, deliver economic growth, and societal progress. This is an exciting time to join us as a trustee, as we continue to deliver our strategy in partnership with our members.

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and experience, particularly those who are not afraid to challenge the status quo, who can provide new perspectives on the way we work and provide strategic leadership and direction to help us navigate the challenges facing the charity and the science community more broadly. Whether you are an experienced trustee or looking to take on your first trustee role, and have the time and energy to commit to the role, we want to hear from you.

About us

Our purpose

The Science Council is a membership organisation for professional bodies and learned societies in science. Its membership embraces the breadth of science and represents most sectors of the economy; a broad range of scientific disciplines and multi-disciplinary scientific activity; and encompasses research scientists, industrial scientists, and technical staff. Our charitable purpose as stated in our Royal Charter is “*to promote the advancement and dissemination of knowledge of and education in science, pure and applied, for the public benefit.*”

To fulfil this purpose, the Science Council’s strategy focuses on three core strands:

Registers and Licences: promoting the value of professional registration and working with members to make the registers available as widely as possible.

Community and Membership: supporting the collective work of members for the benefit of science and the profession

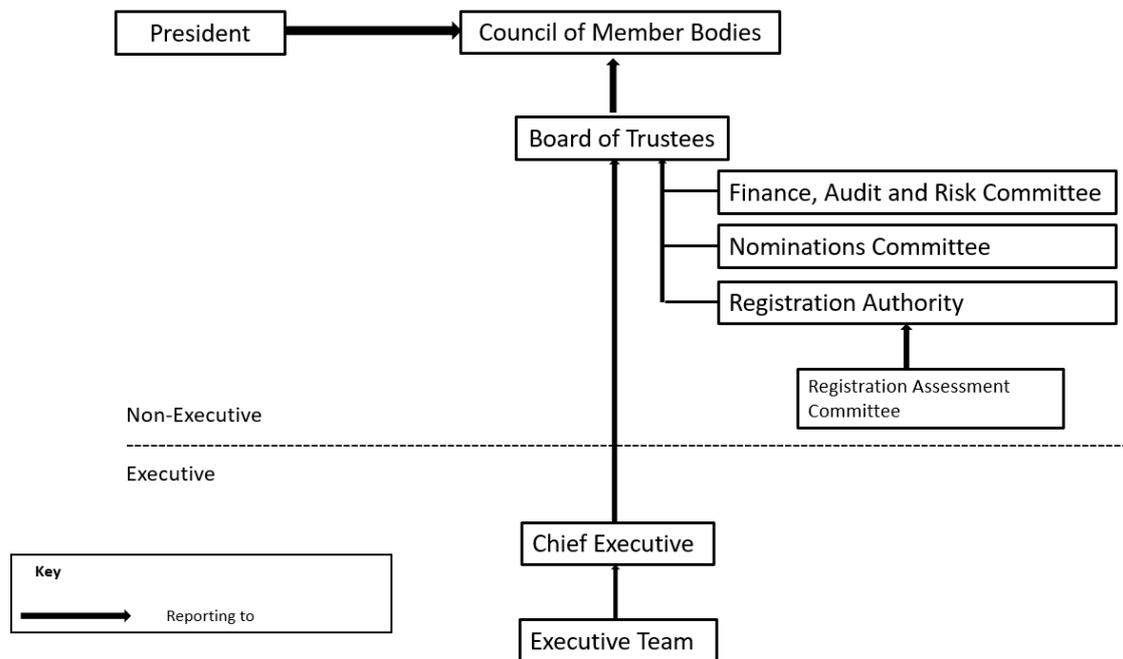
Policy and Influence: maximising the influence of all members and create an inclusive and professional culture in science.

Our values and guiding principles

- We will be **Inclusive** of all disciplines of science and all types of scientist and science technicians through our Members.
- We will be **Informed** by evidence and research and by our Members and Registrants.

- At all times, we will be **Positive** and balanced in our promotion of the contribution of scientists and technicians to society and of our Members, our registrants and the science workforce as a whole.
- We will be **Collaborative** in our approach to debate and discussion and in our attitude to conversation in general.

Organisation chart



Further information, including the **Science Council's Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and the most recent Trustees' Report and Financial Statements** are available on the Science Council's website www.sciencecouncil.org.

Key Science Council projects

Technical Pathways project

This is a joint initiative, with grant funding from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, between the Science Council and its members to significantly raise the profile of and support for technicians over a four-year period. The initiative will seek to embed a culture of professional registration within the science community promoting parity of esteem for science technicians; enhance career development opportunities for those working at a technical level; and create a package of services for employers to aid development of the technician workforce.

Technician Commitment

Launched in 2017, the Technician Commitment is a university and research institution initiative, led by a steering group of sector bodies, with support from the Science Council and the Gatsby Charitable Foundation's [Technicians Make It Happen](#) campaign. The Commitment aims to ensure visibility, recognition, career development and sustainability for technicians working in higher education and research, across all disciplines. Universities and research institutes are invited to become signatories of the Technician Commitment and pledge action against the key challenges affecting their technical staff.

Employer Champions

Our [Employer Champion](#) programme provides a package of support for employers that have made the commitment to support their scientific and technical staff to become professionally registered.

Your role as a trustee

Key duties and responsibilities

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 obligations 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; and,
- be accountable to members in the delivery of the charity's strategy.

Term of office

Currently, a trustee's term of office is 4 years. Candidates should note that, following consultation with our members, we are in the process of changing the term of office to 3 years with the potential for renewal for a further 3 years. We have received informal approval from the Privy Council for this change, but candidates should be aware that if we do not receive formal approval, the term of office will remain at 4 years.

Time Commitment

Formal Board meetings are held quarterly and set around the charity's financial reporting cycle. Board meetings last approx. 3 hours. The Board also holds an annual away day which takes place in the middle of the year.

The Board has three subcommittees: Finance, Audit and Risk Committee; Nomination Committee; and the Registration Authority. Each of these meets approx. 4 times per year. Subcommittee meetings are approx. 2-3 hours long. Trustees are expected to serve on at least one of these committees.

The Science Council normally holds three General Meetings per year, one of which will be the Annual General Meeting. Trustees are encouraged to attend General Meetings so that they can meet with representatives from across the membership and with Science Council staff.

In addition to formal meetings, informal meetings between Board Members, the Chair and the Chief Executive may be held as required and may be in person or by electronic communication. There may also be additional time required for ad-hoc work to support the activities of the Science Council.

Remuneration

Trustee roles are voluntary non-executive roles. Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses properly incurred in the performance of trustee duties will be reimbursed in accordance with our volunteer expenses policy.

Location

Board meetings are held in central London, although some UK travel may be necessary. Trustees will be compensated for any costs incurred by them in respect to travel arrangements in accordance with our volunteer expenses policy.

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

Vacancies and skills needs

The Board is looking to fill **TWO** trustee vacancies this year and is particularly keen to receive applications from people with skills in the following areas (we don't expect to find all of these skills in one person):

- Workforce planning/long-term workforce trends; because we want to be able to adapt to the long-term changes in the world of work to ensure we meet the needs of the scientific workforce.
- Policy networks and influence; because we want to influence science and education policy, and raise the profile of professionalism in science.
- Finance and risk management; because we want to safeguard against short and long-term uncertainties in fluctuations in our income and manage our exposure to risk.
- Practising scientists of all disciplines; because we want to better understand what support the scientific workforce needs from the Science Council and professional bodies.

It is not necessary to have previous board/trustee experience as support will be provided. These positions could therefore suit individuals taking their first steps to develop wider board level and governance experience.

If you don't have these skills but you believe that your background could be useful to us and you are interested in joining our board, we still want to hear from you.

We want to ensure that our Board is as representative of the scientific workforce as possible. We would therefore particularly like to hear from women, ethnic minorities, younger people, disabled people and marginalised groups.

Vacancies will be filled by individuals from outside of the Science Council's membership. You are not eligible for election if you are an employee and/or member of one of our Member Bodies. You can find a list of our Member Bodies [here](#) to check your eligibility.

If you would like to have an informal conversation about the role you can contact the Chair, Dr Helen Pain (painh@rsc.org) and/or the Governance Manager, Oliver O'Hanlon (o.ohanlon@sciencecouncil.org or 020 3434 2025)

Key dates

Applications will be accepted until **5pm Tuesday 21st April**. Following your application, please contact the Governance Manager if you need further assistance. The Board will consider the applications on **5th May**. Candidates' information and supporting statements will be circulated to Science Council members who will vote for candidates to fill the vacant positions. The results will be announced at our Annual General Meeting on **Tuesday 30th June**. Successful candidates will take office at the end of the meeting. The induction of new trustees will be arranged after the AGM.

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 would 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:

Any person aged 16 or over can act as a trustee of a charitable company provided that they are not disqualified by law, although the Science Council requires trustees to be 18 or over.

The Charities Act 2011 disqualifies people who:

- have unspent convictions for offences involving deception or dishonesty
- are undischarged bankrupts
- have been at any time removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Charity Commission or the court in England, Wales or Scotland, because of misconduct
- are disqualified from being company directors under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- have failed to make compositions (i.e. come to an arrangement) with their creditors and have not been discharged.

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.

Under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 the court may disqualify people:

- Who have been convicted of criminal offences relating to the promotion, formation, management or liquidation of a company.
- Who have been persistently in default of a company legislation for filing accounts and other documents.

- Who have been found guilty of fraudulent trading or fraud.
- Whose conduct as a Director has made them unfit to be involved in the management of a company.

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

Useful links for prospective trustees

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

The Hallmarks of an Effective Charity. The Charity Commission

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/387134/CC10_Low/nk.indd.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

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

Science Council Bylaws

<https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/BylawsDec2018.pdf>

Science Council Regulations

<https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RegulationsAugust2019.pdf>