



Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Chair

Candidate information pack

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chair of our Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. Tackling the most pressing global challenges will require a diverse science workforce and ever-deepening interdisciplinary collaboration between scientists and society. As an interdisciplinary membership organisation connecting over 30 professional bodies from across science, and upholding the standards across our profession, the Science Council has a unique and valuable role to play in ensuring public trust and confidence in the scientific workforce and transparency in the process of science.

The current Chair of our Finance, Audit and Risk Committee will be stepping down at the end of 2024 having served four years in the role. We are now looking to appoint his successor in September 2024. The next Chair will assume office in January 2025.

As the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, you will play a key part in the governance and strategic direction of the Science Council, ensuring good financial oversight and actively participating in decisions regarding the effective and efficient use of our resources to support our financial stability, and help grow the Science Council into an increasingly respected, influential, and sustainable organisation.

There is an excellent governance culture at the Science Council, with a diverse mix of committed trustees and committee members, ably supported by the Science Council staff. This is your opportunity to join an 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.

This information pack provides you with the information you need to determine your suitability for the role and will assist you in mapping your competencies with our requirements. The pack also provides details on the application process and contact details should you have any further queries. To ensure the upmost impartiality, the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee must not be an employee or member of any of our Member Organisations. This notwithstanding, we welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. If you have the time to commit to the role, we want to hear from you.

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

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 vision and 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.

Over the course of 2024, we will be developing our next strategy, with a focus on growth. We expect to launch in the first half of 2025

Challenges for 2025 and beyond

Our long-term financial sustainability will be a live issue for the Board over the next 12 months. As ever, we are commitment to upholding professional standards in science and, together with our Member Organisations, continue to promote the importance of registration and speak widely of its purpose and value. We know that reversing the long-term trend in declining registrant numbers and attracting and retaining Member Organisations are key to our financial health and sustainability.

We will continue to focus on delivering activities that add value for Member Organisations, registrants and the wider science community, and investing in activities that promote the value of registration and further our charitable objects. We continue to think creatively about how we market our registers and diversify our income streams to support the financial viability of the charity. The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee will play an important role over the next few years in helping to shape our strategic plans, ensuring that our financial resources and operational resilience meet the present and future needs of the science community and beyond.

The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

Candidates will possess a blend of strategic vision, governance experience, and a solid understanding of financial management to support our financial stability and strategic growth. We would expect candidates to have strong communication skills and an interest in our mission, be able to take a balanced approach to decision-making, with the ability to actively listen and involve others in the decision-making process.

Role and responsibilities

The Chair will provide leadership to help ensure that the charity's external and internal (where applicable) audit functions are operating efficiently and effectively; to ensure that the risk management process adopted by the charity enables the identification of key risks as well as the internal controls to mitigate these risks; and the charity maintains adequate and effective financial controls and processes.

The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee works in close co-operation with, and provides support and advice to, the Chief Executive, the Honorary Treasurer and Chair of the Board of Trustees. Operating within the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Chair's primary duties will be to:

- Provide leadership to the Committee to ensure that it is effective in its role and that effective arrangements are in place for risk management, finance and internal control.
- Approve the agenda of Committee meetings and chair all meetings of the Committee.
- Facilitate the provision of relevant expertise to the Committee.
- Ensure compliance with the Committee's Terms of Reference and delegation of authority.
- Guide and advise the Board of Trustees in the approval of the Annual Report and Financial Statements.
- Understand the accounting procedures, key internal controls and risk management in order to assure the Board that the Council's financial integrity is sound.
- Agree with the Honorary Treasurer a reporting format for the Board, ensuring that the objectivity and independence of the Chair of the Committee is not compromised.
- Facilitate meetings between the Committee and the external auditor at least once a year without the presence of management.
- Ensure that the Committee provides the Board with sound advice, assurance and useful and timely reports from the Committee. Ensure that accepted recommendations of any internal audit reports are implemented.
- Provide support and direction to Committee members to ensure their contribution is relevant and effective.

- Lead the annual review of the Committee's own performance, facilitating the contribution of Committee members, staff and other key individuals as appropriate.
- Attend Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting.

Person specification

Essential

- A track record of being an effective Chair and strong communicator.
- Experience of charity finance
- The ability to analyse proposals and examine their wider consequences.
- Good interpersonal skills with the ability to build and foster consensus on issues of standards and process.
- Be independent minded and operate with integrity.
- Demonstrate commitment to creating a culture of EDI across the Committee's areas of responsibility and promoting a diverse range of views and perspectives.
- The time required to fulfil the role.
- Accept the Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Desirable

- Experience of working within the professional body, membership or regulatory sectors.
- Experience of charity audit and risk management frameworks
- Understanding of legal and financial guidelines set out in current legislation, charity law and company law. Hold a financial or accountancy qualification.

Term of office

This is a role for a period of three years, with the potential for renewal for up to a further three years.

Time commitment

The role requires a commitment of approximately 10 full days per annum; this includes attending quarterly Board meetings (two of which are in person), and quarterly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings per year (two of which are in person) and the Annual General Meeting (which is normally held online). In addition to formal meetings, you will need to dedicate time to working with staff to develop agendas for meetings and reading papers in advance of meetings. Informal meetings between the Chair and the Chief Executive may be held as required. These will be held online or by electronic communication.

Location

Our offices are located near Old Street in London, but we now offer a fully flexible and hybrid working culture. We hold half of our Board and committee meetings online. Where meetings are held face to face, these will be in central London.

We require the Chair to be UK-based so that they can attend in-person meetings at short notice.

Remuneration

The role is a voluntary non-executive role and you will be compensated for reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of your role, so please do not exclude yourself from consideration by virtue of where you live and work.

How to apply

Prior to making an application we invite you to have a discussion with the current Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, Dr Chris Westcott. 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 visit our [application website](#) where you will be asked to provide 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. Please note that we will not accept applications that do not include a CV and covering letter. Please also provide details of two referees that we may contact (we will not contact your referees without your prior consent).

The application deadline is **midnight Friday 16th August**.

Following the deadline, applicants will be shortlisted, with interviews held in the week beginning **Monday 9th September** 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 unavailable for interview in that week.

The Board of Trustees will make an appointment on **Wednesday 25th September**. The successful candidate will start their term in office in January 2025. In advance of commencing the role, there will be opportunities for the successful candidate to engage with trustees, committee members 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 satisfy statutory requirements as they pertain to becoming a trustee. 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 Charity 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

END OF THE RECRUITMENT PACK