

Trustee

Primary Responsibilities

A trustee is a member of the Board of Trustees, which is the governing body of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

Trustees are responsible and collectively liable for the government and control of the Royal Society of Chemistry and its property and affairs¹. They provide appropriate oversight, governance and leadership to the Royal Society of Chemistry in pursuit of its object and must always act in its best interests.

Trustees actively participate in decision-making processes and play a lead role in the development of the Royal Society of Chemistry's strategic aims, objectives and goals, in accordance with its Royal Charter, By-Laws and other legal and regulatory guidelines.

Trustees work in partnership with the executive to ensure that their decisions are acted upon and the Royal Society of Chemistry is managed responsibly. All trustees should recognise the difference between the role the Board of Trustees plays in governing, developing and agreeing the strategic direction of the Royal Society of Chemistry and that of the Leadership Team in applying the strategy to day-to-day operations.

Trustees act with reasonable care, skill and diligence, and take appropriate advice when necessary. They should demonstrate integrity, adopting values and creating a culture that helps advance the Royal Society of Chemistry's charitable purposes.

Trustees must ensure the Royal Society of Chemistry is accountable. They must comply with statutory reporting requirements and demonstrate appropriate accountability to members and the wider public.

Duties and wider responsibilities

All trustees are expected to:

- develop the strategy by which the Royal Society of Chemistry fulfils its charitable object;
- establish clear strategic objectives to deliver the agreed plans and regularly review performance against those objectives;
- hold the Chief Executive to account for the effective management and delivery of the organisation's strategic aims and objectives, where appropriate;
- promote and develop the charity in order for it to grow and maintain its public benefit;

¹ RSC Royal Charter Article 5.

- contribute to constructive debate regarding the strategic development of the Royal Society of Chemistry and any significant issues it faces;
- safeguard the good name and promote the reputation of the Royal Society of Chemistry;
- build and maintain relations with members and stakeholder groups in order to progress the effective operation of the Royal Society of Chemistry's activities;
- ensure that actions approved by the Board of Trustees are implemented effectively, where appropriate, by the Chief Executive and the Leadership Team;
- establish effective communication with staff, members and other stakeholders;
- represent the Royal Society of Chemistry and advocate its achievements at functions, meetings and in the wider media, in line with agreed media position statements;
- set the tone for the Royal Society of Chemistry through leadership, behaviour and performance;
- ensure that the charity complies with its Royal Charter and By-laws, charity law and any other applicable legislation and regulations, where applicable;
- ensure the effective and efficient administration of the Royal Society of Chemistry and its resources;
- strive for good practice in governance;
- maintain the fiduciary duty invested in the position, undertaking such duties in a way that adds to public confidence and trust in the charity;
- ensure that financial controls are robust;
- identify and assess risks and opportunities, determining which are appropriate or desirable, and establishing effective risk management mechanisms in order to monitor these;
- ensure that those working on behalf of the Royal Society of Chemistry, including third parties, abide by the standards which it sets and also by the relevant requirements of legislation;
- ensure an effective system for the recruitment, appointment and monitoring of the work and activities of the Chief Executive;
- promote the highest standards of corporate governance in compliance with the Charity Governance Code and other regulatory guidance;
- take appropriate professional advice in all matters where there may be a material risk to the charity or where trustees may be in breach of their duties;
- ensure the Royal Society of Chemistry promotes equality and diversity for all its stakeholders;
- uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity;
- participating fully in the work of the board, ensuring the collective responsibility of the Board of Trustees;
- attending and possibly chairing, committees and ad hoc meetings;
- participating in induction, training and other evaluation identified as an individual and as part of a board or committee;

- commit to board diversity, renewal and succession management in line with the By-laws and current good practice;
- undergo an individual and board performance appraisal, and attending any additional training highlighted as a result of the evaluation process; and
- maintain absolute confidentiality about all aspects of the trustees' business, bearing in mind the overriding legal obligations placed upon trustees.

Person specification

The following characteristics, knowledge and experience (or commitment to gain them) are advantageous to the role of trustee:

- dedication to the general advancement of chemical science and its application
- high level of understanding and interest in the issues that the Royal Society of Chemistry seeks to address/represent as a chartered professional body and registered charity
- commitment to the values and principles of the Royal Society of Chemistry
- strong business and financial acumen in either a commercial, academic, or civil society setting
- proven leadership skills
- experience of committee work
- highly developed interpersonal and communication skills
- strong organisational skills
- ability to understand complex strategic issues, analyse and resolve difficult problems
- sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role
- sound, independent judgement, common sense and diplomacy
- high standards of personal integrity
- widely perceptive with an ability to comprehend issues and relationships between interested parties
- resilient in dealing with difficult problems and challenges
- clear understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, liabilities and responsibilities of trustees
- sound knowledge of good governance
- ability to listen to and welcome alternative opinions and experiences

Time and commitment

Being a Royal Society of Chemistry Trustee requires significant time and commitment.

As a minimum, a trustee is expected to attend the following meetings:

| Meeting | No./yr | When | Where | Duration | Role |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Board of Trustees | 4 | July November February April | London x 3 Cambridge x 1 | Span 2 days | Member |
| Annual General Meeting | 1 | July | London | 1-2 hours | Attendee |
| Summer Party | 1 | July | London | 1 day | Attendee |

Trustees may be appointed to normally no more than one of the following boards or committees

| | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Nominations Committee | 2 | October March | London | 2.5 hours | Member |
| Audit and Risk Committee | 4 | October January March June | London x3 Online x1 | 4 hours | Member |
| Finance and Resources Board | 3 | November February June | London x2 Online x1 | 4 hours | Member |
| Publishing Board | 3 | October February June | Online Cambridge London | 4 hours | Member |
| Chemists' Community Fund Committee | 3 | November March June | London | 5 hours | Co-opted Member |

All RSC meetings provide the opportunity to attend by videoconference if the Trustee is unable to attend in person.

Additionally a trustee may be asked to:

- represent the Royal Society of Chemistry at meetings with influential stakeholders, e.g. ministers, policymakers, business leaders;
- attend functions as the Royal Society of Chemistry's senior representative, e.g. award ceremonies, launch functions, other organisations' celebrations;
- meet with Royal Society of Chemistry staff in order to help progress key projects;
- go to member events to mix with members and gain insights and feedback (e.g. regional meetings, annual member conference);

- take part in a time limited working group or advisory sub-groupings of trustees.

The tenure of a trustee is 4 years, starting from the close of the Annual General Meeting, which is normally in July each year.