

Scientific Conferences Panel

1. Terms of Reference

Purpose: Reporting to the Building Communities Committee, the Scientific Conferences Panel is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the scientific conferences programme to support the Society's three main strategic objectives:

- 1. Through a better understanding of the diversity of our members, we will enable them to strengthen their existing relationships and gain access to new communities, unlocking the potential for international collaboration and global knowledge exchange.*
- 2. By harnessing local knowledge for worldwide impact, we will advance understanding of microbiology and champion the contribution made by microbiology, our members and their work in addressing global challenges.*
- 3. By recognising global differences in accessing opportunities at the Microbiology Society, we will build on existing strong financial and governance foundations to reinforce long-term sustainability and resilience through diversifying income streams, increasing efficiency and ensuring robust mechanisms for decision-making, monitoring and evaluation.*

The Panel, by using its knowledge and expertise, will ensure the delivery of conferences and events programmes that are appealing to the membership. In so doing, the Panel will fulfil the stated strategic aims of the Society and capitalise on opportunities to create synergy between the conferences and events programmes and journals content. The Panel will work with staff to ensure that conferences and events activities delivered are in line with the agreed strategy and budget.

The Society is committed to creating an inclusive culture that supports equality and diversity and fully reflects both its membership and the global microbiology community across all protected characteristics. The Society seeks to actively encourage all practices that reflect a diverse society.

By participating in panel meetings, all members agree to respect other members' opinions and give all present a chance to contribute. The co-Chair/Chair is responsible for running the meeting, please support them to keep to time. Certain topics discussed will be confidential, therefore members are asked to be mindful not to repeat such information outside of the meeting.

2. Duties

The Scientific Conferences Panel will advise, oversee and support the implementation of the following objectives:

1. Produce and agree the scientific content for Annual Conference as planned by the Society's Divisions with input from other relevant panels and committees, which includes consideration towards membership suggestions to cover the breadth of microbiology while ensuring the speaker line-up is in line with the Society's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

2. Assess the proposals for scientific meetings, for example Focused Meetings, to ensure the highest level of microbiological science is covered by appropriate speakers through fair and transparent processes and in line with the Society's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
3. Serve as an advocate for all Society events, pro-actively promoting meetings and encouraging members to submit proposals, register, submit abstracts and apply for grants.
4. Maintain close collaboration with other Panels, Committees and professional areas of the Society on areas of common interest and how we can capitalise on opportunities to reflect conferences and events content in the Society journals.
5. Maintain close collaboration with other groups and organisations on areas of common interest to enhance the value of meetings for the Society.

3. Meeting Schedule

The Scientific Conferences Panel will meet three times a year in January, July and October. In addition, it will transact its business between meetings by email and other communications to ensure the successful delivery of conferences and events.

The Scientific Conferences Panel can identify matters to be raised for discussion at the General Secretary's Group and Council, in addition to Building Communities Committee.

4. Membership

The membership requires a balanced portfolio of skills and knowledge to be able to fully support and engage with the remit of the Panel. The Panel comprises of:

- A Chair; the co-Chair of the Building Communities Committee.
- A Chair-Elect; sought from the membership by an open call for expressions of interest and approved by Council. By convention, this rotates around the interests of the four Divisions and requires having served in recent year on one of the Divisions and would therefore be advertised accordingly.
- The Chair and Chair-Elect of each Division (Eukaryotic, Prokaryotic, Virus and Irish).
- A Chair and Chair-Elect representative for the Federation of Infection Societies.
- A representative from the Early Career Microbiologists' Forum Executive Committee.
- Up to four co-opted members who do not have to be Members of the Society but who could be chosen to include an appropriate range of skills and expertise not found among the membership. An important role of co-opted members is to provide constructive challenge.

- Ad hoc advisors can be requested to attend certain meetings to address specific knowledge requirements or assist in specific projects.

Unless otherwise stated, the term of office for all positions is two years. At the end of the Chair-Elect's term, they will become Chair of the Scientific Conferences Panel and co-Chair of the Building Communities Committee, with their term extending for a further two years.

The following report into the Scientific Conferences Panel:

- Eukaryotic Division
- Prokaryotic Division
- Virus Division
- Irish Division
- Federation of Infection Societies (FIS) Representatives

Quorum:

So far as possible, the Chair should only allow meetings to be convened if the Chair-Elect and at least one Division representative from each Division is present.

The panel is supported by the Head of Scientific Programmes.

Other members of staff attend meetings as appropriate.