Networks Handbook – July 2023

This handbook serves to outline the support and guidance available to the committees and volunteers of all of the member networks of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

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1. Introduction

The Royal Society of Chemistry is grateful for all of the work our member networks do and the time and commitment devoted by everyone involved.

In this handbook, the term “member networks” refers to the following groups:

- Local Sections (worldwide)
- Interest Groups
- Analytical Division Regions
- Education Division Regions

This handbook has been produced as a practical best practice guide to provide support to those members involved in the day-to-day running of the various member networks. We hope you find it useful and informative and welcome any feedback you may have. The handbook only contains information which cannot be found elsewhere on www.rsc.org related to the running of our member networks. All of the forms, documents and resources needed by our member networks are available on the Useful Forms & Documents page.

This handbook has been designed to enable easy updates that will be added electronically. Committees will be notified of any updates via the Networks Newsletter. This handbook was not designed to be printed and used in hard copy.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Networks Team (networks@rsc.org).

April 2022

Version	Comments	Author	Version Date	Review Date
1.0	Final version	Aurora Walshe	01/06/2021	01/12/2021
1.1	Updates to rules, election process, and committee roles. New resources and anti-bribery training information added.	Aurora Walshe	01/04/2022	01/10/2022
1.2	Updates to staff and e-alerts	Heather Bell	04/07/23	

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2. Purpose of our member networks

All member networks have the same basic purpose:

- to provide a focal point for, and support, our members within their network
- to advance the chemical sciences
- to help us fulfil our strategic goals

In order to achieve these aims, there are several tasks and roles all member networks should undertake. These are:

- Engage with the full diversity of members within the network.
- Arrange and deliver an annual programme of varied activities.
- Liaise with staff.
- Act as a channel of communication between members in the network and staff.
- Introduce and promote the Royal Society of Chemistry to the public.
- Encourage recruitment of members in the UK and Ireland (see this section for advice for member networks outwith the UK and Ireland).
- Encourage current members to upgrade membership.
- Promote a better understanding of chemical science.
- Maintain a good relationship with other member groups.
- Support the work of the Chemists' Community Fund, where appropriate.
- Geographical networks should work with other member networks within the same region through the Regional Steering Groups.

Any queries should be addressed to the Networks Team at networks@rsc.org.

Supporting members outwith the UK and Ireland

We promote the chemical sciences and support members worldwide. International activities are often based around an active group of members who form a Local Section. These sections respond to the particular needs of chemical scientists in their country and are involved in activities such as organising conferences and colloquia, sponsoring awards, and community work. In this way they share the same objectives and rules as all of our networks.

To maintain our good relationships with other national chemical societies our Local Sections based outside of the UK and Ireland focus on **supporting existing members** of the Royal Society of Chemistry in their local area and **working with their national chemical society**, rather than recruiting new members.

Where we don't have enough members to effectively form and run a section we will seek to appoint an International Representative to act as a point of contact for members and to act in an advisory role to RSC staff on activities in that country.

Supporting members in the early stages of their career

We actively encourage members in the early stages of their career, including those who have changed career or taken a career break, to get involved in our member networks both as members and committee members. Member networks are encouraged to include activities for all career stages when planning their annual programme of events, including events tailored to early career members, where appropriate.

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Knowing your members

The Networks Team can provide committees with an anonymised report on the demographics of their membership to help them develop a programme of events that caters to their members. These reports can be prepared at any time, but only once per year per committee (unless there is a specific reason that the committee expects the number of members or member demographics to have changed).

Demographic reports include:

- a breakdown of network members by age and gender;
- a breakdown of member by member type and duration of membership;
- the geographical distribution of members (by UK postcode and/or region); and
- a pivot table containing career and job type information that can be filtered by age, member type, country, or Local Section.

Additional information can be provided upon request to networks@rsc.org.

3. Rules for member networks

All of our member networks share one set of rules as requested by the Audit Committee in 2017. These rules were combined and simplified by a review panel of the Member Networks Committee and were approved by the committee in October 2017. In 2021 additional guidance was offered regarding appropriate use of RSC funds and the addition of appointed members to member network committees. The current version of the rules was approved by Member Networks Committee in October 2021. The rules, including accompanying guidance notes and a glossary of relevant terms, are available on the Useful Forms & Documents page.

The day to day running of the section is at the discretion of the committee. It should be noted that historically the model rules provided could be adapted by Local Section committees – **this is no longer the case**. It is acknowledged that there may be difficulties in adhering to all of the rules for some Local Sections outside of the UK and Ireland – any concerns from these sections should be raised with the Member Networks Committee immediately via networks@rsc.org.

4. Committee management

For guidance on the following please refer to the rules and guidance notes:

- Eligibility for membership of committees
- Election of officers
- Election of committee members
- Annual activity and financial reports

Officers – roles and responsibilities

Specific resources for committee officers are available on the different sections of the Useful Forms & Documents page. The main points to note for each role are:

Chair

- The Chair is a Trustee (along with the RSC Board of Trustees) of the group and to take responsibility for any Trustee related matter (RSC carries liability insurance for Trustees).
- They cannot hold the roles of Secretary or Treasurer.

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Secretary

- The Secretary is the point of contact for RSC staff – this includes passing on relevant information to the committee as requested.
- They are responsible for preparing and submitting the Annual Report by the deadline each year.
- They must communicate any changes in committee membership to the Networks Team as soon as possible.
- They should send a copy of the minutes of each committee meeting to the Networks Team as soon as possible after the meeting.

Treasurer

- The Treasurer must maintain up to date accounts including checking the bank account at least once a month for transactions.
- They are responsible for preparing and submitting the Financial Report by the deadline each year.
- Additional bespoke support for Treasurers is available from our Finance Team by emailing networksfinance@rsc.org.

Other roles on the committee

Some of our committees choose to have additional named positions in order to facilitate the smooth running of the committee:

- Minutes Secretary
- Programme Secretary
- Communications Secretary
- Chemists' Community Fund Representative

The make-up of the committee must represent the diversity of the community served and vacancies must be open to all members of the community in accordance with the rules of the network.

Additional roles can be created to aid this, if necessary. Common roles include:

- Early Career Representative
- Postgraduate/ Postdoctoral Representative
- Academic Representative
- Industrial Representative

Recruiting new committee members

In accordance with our rules, all vacancies for ordinary members of our member networks committees **must** be open to all members of the network.

All calls for nominations must be sent out to all members of the network as an e-alert through the Networks Team. A template has been created that includes space for the committee to share the number of vacancies and information about the responsibilities and expectations of committee members, and information about how to submit a nomination via a bespoke online nomination form. The template and a detailed outline of the election process are available on the Useful Forms & Documents page.

If there are more candidates than vacancies, the committee can either accept all applicants or decide to go to ballot. Ballots are held online to enable as many members as possible to cast a vote – a ballot cannot be held at an AGM as this would restrict the voting rights to those in attendance. The online ballot will include the current makeup of the committee and any diversity or skill gaps identified by the committee to support members when casting their vote. Each member of the network will be

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sent a unique voting link to ensure one vote per member; all votes will be anonymous and only the results will be shared with the committee.

Other ways to join the committee

If the committee is approached by an enthusiastic member who wishes to join or run events for the committee, it is recommended that the committee welcome them as a new member should the committee have capacity to do so rather than turn down an engaged and enthusiastic volunteer. This can be done as part of an ordinary committee meeting.

A member can be co-opted to the committee for a specific role for a specific term of office. For example, this might be the local organiser(s) of the committee's biennial conference, or a representative from a partner society who is not a member of the RSC. Co-opted members do not have voting rights.

A member can be appointed to the committee to fill a specific diversity or skills gap if no suitable candidates have been elected through the normal process. Candidates who fill the criteria can be approached by the committee directly. Their appointment must be approved by Member Networks Committee.

Committee meetings

Our committees may hold their meetings in any suitable venue. It is also possible to hold meetings electronically using technologies such as Skype, FaceTime, Microsoft Teams, or the member network Zoom or GoToMeeting accounts.

- To book GoToMeeting for your committee meeting, complete the online GoToMeeting booking form.
- To book Zoom for your committee meeting, complete the online Zoom booking form.

Committees should consider both the timing and location/ platform of all committee meetings to ensure that these are accessible to all members who may wish to join the committee. Committee members can claim expenses for committee meetings and activities (additional information can be found in the section on committee expenses). Members with additional caring responsibilities are encouraged to apply for the RSC's Grants for Carers to enable them to attend meetings.Accessibility Grants are also available to cover specific support or assistance needed to attend meetings. Both of these are non-competitive grants and offer up to £1000 per member per year.

While it might be appropriate for the committee to provide refreshments at a physical meeting, it is not acceptable to serve alcohol at any business meeting. The committee may choose to have an annual dinner or meal to celebrate the work of the committee but it is not appropriate to fund celebratory activities using network funds as charitable funds should be used wisely to fulfil the purpose of the networks and to support our community.

Due to the number of member networks operating it is, unfortunately, not practicable for staff to routinely attend committee meetings or events. However, the Member Networks Specialists are primarily in post to support your committees and will attend meetings and events when required to respond to any issue that cannot be resolved by telephone or email. If you would like to request the attendance of a Member Networks Specialist at a meeting or event, please email networks@rsc.org.

Please ensure that a full set of all committee meeting minutes and papers is sent to networks@rsc.org as soon as possible after each meeting. It may take some time for staff to read the papers and minutes so please include any important points for staff in the main email.

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Committee resources and assets

The committee can purchase equipment (e.g., laptop, tablet, printer, speakerphone, projector, etc.) to support committee meetings or activities **after** seeking approval from the Networks Team via networks@rsc.org. If approval is given then **each item should be registered with the Networks Team** and allocated a committee member responsible for the safe storage of the items.

Professional services

In some cases, it is necessary for our member networks to engage professional support services to enhance their programme of activities for their community. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Event organisers
- Science communicators
- Professional trainers or presenters
- Website designers

In all cases, **there must be a contract approved by our Legal Team and signed by a member of RSC staff before work can start**. Information about the contract approval process can be found in the member network contracts section.

Our member networks are not permitted to employ anyone, including students, to undertake work on behalf of the network – this includes running social media, undertaking projects or any other casual work. If any committee is considering paying an individual for any activity this must be highlighted to the Networks Team **before** any agreement is made. In the past, networks have paid students to complete projects on their behalf and this has put the RSC at significant financial and legal risk. Regardless of the financial value of the work, our **member networks do not have the authority to employ anyone on behalf of the RSC**. If a bursary is made available to support specific projects or a student placement this must adhere to the guidelines for member network bursaries.

5. Legal responsibilities

Member network contracts

To safeguard our volunteers, **all contracts, agreements, and terms and conditions must be signed by a member of RSC staff**. Members are not authorised to sign contracts or agreements on behalf of the RSC, including their committees.

Our Legal Services Team **must** review all contracts and any document with terms and conditions for our member networks in line with our rules. This includes any licences for electronic platforms, agreements associated with bursaries, and payment for professional services.

Contract Approval Process

The following outlines the process by which contracts are renewed, signed, and approved:

- Contracts should be submitted to networks@rsc.org at the earliest possible opportunity. All contracts must be accompanied by a complete contract approval form to provide the Legal Services Team with the information they need to begin the review process.
- On receipt of the completed documents the Legal Services Team will contact the committee contact to outline the expected timeline for review.

- Following the initial review, the Legal Services Team will outline the necessary changes as well as any additional “nice to have” changes to the committee contact. If agreed, the committee contact will be copied on the correspondence with the contract provider negotiating terms.
- If the contract provider will not accept any of the necessary changes to the terms, then the Legal Services Team will advise the committee contact of the risks associated with signing the contract. If the risk to the committee and the Royal Society of Chemistry is significant then further discussion with senior staff will be necessary.
- Once approved the contract must be signed by a member of staff of the Royal Society of Chemistry with the appropriate authority to approve the value of the contract in line with our internal processes.
- If approval from the Board is also needed an MCB approval form should also be submitted with associated paperwork to networks@rsc.org. The Networks Team will submit the paperwork to the Board in parallel with the contract approval process to minimise the time taken to finalise the approval process.

An outline fo the process and timeline is available on the Useful Forms and Documents page.

Safeguarding

It is important that our member-networks **do not engage in unsupervised activity on a regular basis with unaccompanied children and/or adults at risk**. Such activity might be classified by law as ‘regulated activity’ and requires organisers and those delivering the activity to undergo enhanced background checks. Organisations that knowingly allow barred people to work on regulated activities are **breaking the law**.

Networks seeking to engage children through schools and youth organisations must ensure that these organisations are aware that our members are not responsible for the supervision of the students involved and that the host organisation must provide sufficient supervising adults who will take responsibility for the children. This must be captured on a red risk assessment.

All documents related to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults can be found in the safeguarding section of our risk assessment pages. RSC Designated Safeguarding Officers Magda van Leeuwen and Rio Hutchings are always available and can be reached via safeguarding@rsc.org.

Data protection

What is data protection and the GDPR?

The General Data Protection Regulations (EU 2016/679) (GDPR) came into effect in the UK on 25 May 2018. These regulations replaced existing data protection legislation, the Data Protection Act 1998. In essence, GDPR changes the way in which organisations can collect, store, and process the Personal Data of individuals. As a member network (Local Section, Interest Group, or Division Region) committee of the RSC, any Personal Data that you collect, store or process as part of your activities for that network falls within the responsibility of the RSC. It is therefore very important that you are aware of GDPR requirements and the obligations of the RSC, as ultimately the RSC will be liable for any interaction that you, the member networks, have with Personal Data. You have personal responsibility and are accountable for following the regulations and guidelines.

We have developed a ‘Data protection top tips’ handout for member networks. This and other data protection resources for committees can be downloaded from the Useful Forms & Documents page.

What is Personal Data?

Personal data is widely defined as any information relating to or that can identify a data subject (Article 4(1)). A data subject is the identified or identifiable person to whom the personal data relates.

In practical terms, this means that **any data that can be used to identify a person** (name, address, date of birth, contact details, medical or financial details, photographs, CCTV video, etc.) will amount to Personal Data and has to be treated in accordance with the GDPR.

Subject to limited exceptions, the GDPR prohibits the processing of Personal Data in relation to racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious and philosophical beliefs, genetic and biometric data, health data and data relating to sex life and sexual orientation. These Special Categories of Personal Data are particularly sensitive and can only be processed in limited circumstances.

If you are in doubt as to the nature of the Personal Data that you are collecting, storing, or processing, please contact the Networks Team at networks@rsc.org immediately.

What can we do with Personal Data?

You must have a clear reason to collect, store and process a data subject's Personal Data; this is referred to as lawful processing. There are a number of ways in which you can lawfully process Personal Data including legitimate interest, the explicit consent, to meet contractual obligations or statutory requirements.

If you do not have a lawful reason to process Personal Data, anything you do with that Personal Data is in breach of the GDPR. If there is an alternative way of achieving the same outcome without the need to process Personal Data, this alternative should be considered.

If you are going to collect or store Personal Data for any reason, or if you are engaging in any activity, event or entering any agreement that involves you (member network) collecting, processing, providing or transferring Personal Data (in any format) to an individual or organisation that is outside of the RSC, you must contact the Networks Team at networks@rsc.org for advice and to make sure you are compliant with the GDPR.

Members' Personal Data

Members' Personal Data is collected, stored, and processed in accordance with the RSC's Privacy Policy and Fair Notice. Members can access that here: www.rsc.li/privacy.

Member network committee members can request member contact details for direct communication upon completion of a data compliance checklist. More information can be found in the section on contacting your members.

Committees can also request demographic reports of their members with aggregated, anonymised member data. More information can be found in the section on knowing your members.

Members of the Public/ Volunteers

The Personal Data of non-members of the RSC should be collected, stored, and processed in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR.

If you currently hold Personal Data for non-members (including any individuals that were previous members of your network, guests at previous events, etc.), please contact the Networks Team at networks@rsc.org for advice.

Events

All event related agreements/ contracts need to be reviewed by the RSC Legal Team in accordance with the member network rules. This review will include data protection clauses; more information about the process can be found in the member contracts section.

When you are arranging activities or events, it is important that you have data protection in mind. Be alert to any request from a venue operator or hotelier that requires you to send them Personal Data as part of the booking. If there is an alternative way of the venue operator or hotelier obtaining that Personal Data directly (i.e., by taking names on the day when people arrive) rather than you providing it, this is preferred.

Photography and Videography

Photographs and video of individuals may amount to Personal Data if the individuals are identifiable and may therefore be subject to data protection.

If you are taking photographs or videos of individuals (whether it is at events or for promotional activities) you may require specific consent from them in advance. For additional information please contact the Networks Team at networks@rsc.org.

Data Storage, Deletion and Security

You should only store data for as long as the purpose for which it was collected applies. If the purpose has passed, you should securely delete all data.

If you are storing or holding Personal Data from previous years on your personal computer, mobile device(s), tablet, hard drive, mobile drives, or cloud, you must ensure that you have suitable security measures in place to avoid unauthorised access to that Personal Data. This will include having proper and up to date malware and anti-virus programmes and ensuring that access is granted by secure password entry only. You **must not share your password** with anyone else.

You may be held liable by the RSC for failure to ensure that you have reasonable measures of security if you are storing or holding Personal Data on your personal computer, mobile device(s), tablet, hard drive, mobile drives, or cloud.

Data Subject Rights

The GDPR enhances existing data subject rights and also introduces new data subject rights including the right to:

- Access information about them.
- Correct information about them.
- Erasure of information about them.
- Restrict what can be done with their information.
- Object to processing of their information and/or automated decision-making.
- Be notified of a data security breach.
- Data portability.

If an individual contacts you and requests to exercise any of those rights listed above in relation to their Personal Data, or that their Personal Data be deleted, you **must** **contact the DPO immediately** for advice as there are strict statutory time limits that apply to such requests.

Data Breaches

In the event that there is a breach, or a suspected breach, of security that leads, or may lead, to Personal Data that you are storing, holding or processing being accessed by an unauthorised individual, you **must advise the DPO immediately**. You must provide the DPO with as much information about the Personal Data and breach/suspected breach as you can.

If there is a breach of security relating to Personal Data that is held, stored, or processed by you, the RSC may ultimately be held liable for the breach by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO). Depending on the nature of the breach, the RSC may be subject to an ICO investigation and could ultimately receive a financial penalty of **up to £20m GBP**.

6. Funding for member networks

Local Section funding

Local Section grants are calculated and administered by the Networks Team. **In line with rule 7.9, grants cannot be released until all of the previous year's reporting paperwork has been received and approved**. The Annual Report must be received and approved by the Networks Team; the financial report must be received and approved by our Finance Team

The annual grants for our Local Sections in the UK and Ireland are calculated and administered differently from those in the rest of the world. Any queries regarding Local Section funding should be sent to networks@rsc.org.

UK and Ireland Local Sections

The UK and Ireland Local Section grants are calculated based on the number of members within the section. Local Sections are not permitted to hold more than £10,000 in their bank accounts. Any part of the grant that would take their balance above £10,000 is held back but can be requested at any time in the year from the Networks Team.

There is a top up fund open to our Local Sections in the UK and Ireland. Applications can be made using the form available on the Treasurer section of the Useful Forms and Documents page. Applications are considered and approved or rejected by a sub-group of the Member Networks Committee four times a year. The deadlines for applications are:

- 1 January
- 1 April
- 1 July
- 1 October

Applications must show that the funding is required for the activity to take place and that the group does not hold sufficient funds in either their current or deposit accounts.

Non-UK and Ireland Local Sections

Local Sections outwith the UK and Ireland submit a detailed proposed programme and budget request each year alongside their financial report for the previous year. Approval is subject to the discretion of staff.

Interest Group funding

Interest Group grants are calculated and administered by the Networks Team. **Grants cannot be released until all of the previous year's reporting paperwork has been received and approved**. The Annual Report must be received and approved by the Networks Team; the financial report must be received and approved by our Finance Team.

Interest Group grants consist of two parts: an administrative grant, based on the number of members in the group, and an activity grant that is based on an average of their impact expenditure for the previous 3 years relative to the other Interest Groups. Impact expenditure does not include expenses associated with committee meetings. Any queries regarding Interest Group funding should be sent to networks@rsc.org.

There is a top up fund open to all Interest Groups. Applications can be made using the form available on the Treasurer section of the Useful Forms and Documents page. Applications are considered and approved or rejected by a sub-group of the Member Networks Committee four times a year. The deadlines for applications are:

- 1 January
- 1 April
- 1 July
- 1 October

Applications must show that the funding is required for the activity to take place and that the group does not hold sufficient funds in either their current or deposit accounts.

Division Region funding

Education Division Region funding

The regional groups of the Education Subject Community (formerly Division) are funded by the Education Subject Community Council. All queries should be sent directly to the Secretary of the Education Subject Community (education@rsc.org).

Analytical Division Region funding

The regional groups of the Analytical Subject Community (formerly Division) are funded by the Analytical Chemistry Trust Fund via the Analytical Subject Community Council. All queries should be sent directly to the Secretary of the Analytical Subject Community (science@rsc.org).

7. Financial Responsibilities

Committees are reminded that the RSC is a charity and therefore **all RSC funds should be used wisely to fulfil the purpose of the networks and to support our community**. Additional information about what RSC funds held by our member networks can and cannot be used for can be found in the frequently asked questions.

Expenses

Claiming expenses for committee activities

Committee members should not be out of pocket for attending or organising activities supporting the RSC on behalf of their network. However, we do recommend that the following points are noted:

- All expenditure should be approved in principle by the committee, before it is accrued, and noted in the minutes to avoid disputes.
- Volunteers cannot be paid for any part of their role, only out of pocket expenses may be reimbursed.
- The cost of a licence for software or online platform can only be reimbursed following approval from the Networks Team.

Additional information can be found in this guide for member expenses.

Travel expenses

The following guidance is standard across the organisation and we recommend that all committees adhere to these points:

- First-class travel costs cannot be reimbursed unless evidence is provided to show that the first-class fare was lower than standard class.
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner for overnight stays is reasonable but further drinks should not be reimbursed.
- The cost of overnight accommodation should be approved by the committee **prior** to booking.

We strongly recommend that you advise speakers of these points before they book their travel.

Conflicts of interest

In any case where a financial transaction, support or payment in kind is made, **all conflicts of interest must be noted in the committee minutes and registered with the Networks Team**. This includes, but is not limited to, awards and bursaries, funding opportunities, payment for services and sponsorship.

A conflict of interest arises where there is a benefit for an individual or organisation to whom a member of the committee has a personal or professional relationship. This includes, but is not limited to, family members or colleagues of a committee member, organisations of which a committee member is a member or trustee, or a company where a committee member is employed.

Bursaries

While the decisions on the details of bursaries sit with the committee, the following guidance should be taken on board by all of our committees:

- All decisions regarding the bursaries must be recorded in committee minutes, which should then be sent to the Networks Team for archiving.
- All bursaries must be promoted to the network community and the following details should be publicly available: criteria, value, judging process and application deadline.
- Bursaries should not be open to members of the committee.

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- If any bursary applications are received from anyone with a working or personal relationship with any committee member then this should be noted and the committee member must not be involved in the selection of successful candidates. The conflict of interest should be noted in the minutes and registered with the Networks Team.

All bursaries should be registered with the Networks Team **before** they are promoted – the team hold a register of all awards and bursaries offered by our member networks to ensure that all available support for their operation and promotion is offered to the managing committees.

The Networks Team can help you streamline the application process and reduce the administrative burden on your committee by setting up a tailored online application form for your award with automated emails to nominators and nominees. For further information contact networks@rsc.org.

Gifts and hospitality

While recognition and appreciation is important, we must ensure we meet requirements related to Charity Commission guidance, anti-bribery regulation, and volunteering good practice. In the first instance, when considering buying a gift, please refer to our Gift and Hospitality Policy.

In general, members should never expect or generally accept gifts from outside the RSC as a reward for their volunteering. One-off gifts of a trivial nature, such as a box of chocolates or flowers, may be accepted. **All gifts, whether accepted or declined, that exceed a notional value of £30 must be recorded on the Gift Register** via networks@rsc.org.

It is not appropriate to buy gifts for members of the committee for volunteering, however there are formal recognition processes to thank volunteers for their service and celebrate their contributions. There are some items on the Brand Centre that are suitable for use as gifts and which can be purchased with the committee funds, in line with the Gift and Hospitality Policy.

Bespoke anti-bribery training resources for member network volunteers is available on the legal section of the Useful Forms & Document page.

Donations to other charitable bodies

The RSC is a charity and as such all RSC funds should be used to fulfil the purpose of the networks and to support our community. This means that RSC funds **cannot** be used to support other charities unless their purpose is aligned to that of the RSC. If you believe that this is the case, please contact the Networks Team for confirmation **before** committing any funds.

8. Inclusion and Diversity

Our Trustees expect that diversity and inclusion are embedded in all of our activities and networks. Specific member network resources have been developed for committees and the following guidelines have been created to support our networks in achieving this.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact diversity@rsc.org.

Committee agenda item

It was agreed that all of our governance boards and committees should have a standing agenda item to ensure that the issues of inclusion and diversity are embedded in all of their discussions. It is recommended that all member networks committees should include the following item in all of their meeting agendas to plan and discuss activities.

> *3.2. Diversity*
>
> *Participants are reminded to be mindful of inclusion and accessibility throughout this meeting and to endeavour where possible to promote diversity in its widest sense.*

Additional considerations can be found guide for inclusive committees.

Terminology

It is important to consider the language and terminology used in your communications. Consider the use of gender specific language and how this may be interpreted by your members and other delegates at events.

It is known that the following terms can be seen as excluding different sectors of our community:

- Early Career Researcher – this is often associated with academic research and excludes those in technical and management roles.
- Younger Member – this excludes those members in the early stages of a new career and those who have taken a career break.
- Early Career Chemist – many of our members work in interdisciplinary fields and do not necessarily consider themselves to be Chemists.

Instead please consider the use of the terms *Early Career Member* or *Early Career Scientist* in your communications.

Additional information can be found in this guide for inclusive communications, including suggestions for language and typeface.

Accessibility

There are several aspects to event planning where it is important to consider inclusion and accessibility, from choosing a venue to the catering options to the time of day. These and more are included in our guide to running an inclusive event for member networks.

Additional inclusion and diversity guides and resources for member networks can be found on our website.

9. Awards and Recognition

Recognition of volunteer activity

We recognise that our members give a lot of time and energy to supporting our community and in order to recognise this dedication the following awards are available:

- Awards for Exceptional Service
- Inspirational Member and Committee Awards

More information on all of our volunteer recognition awards is available on our website.

Long Service Awards

10 Years of Service

The RSC honours members who have completed 10 years of service on their group committee with a Long Service Award certificate and a commemorative plate if required.

To qualify for this award the committee member must satisfy the following criteria:

- Minimum of 10 years of service on a member network committee (does not need to be continuous service, or served on the same committee)
- Must have been an Officer (Chair, Secretary or Treasurer) during the 10 years of service
- Must be serving on the committee at the time of award

Presentation of the award is the responsibility of the committee who may wish to choose a suitable occasion. If you would like to share your presentation on our website as a Community News piece or to be shared with members in *Voice* magazine please send a photograph and an article on the presentation to pressoffice@rsc.org. Guidance on how to write a Community News story can found in the member engagement section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

To nominate a member of your committee for this award please contact the Networks Team (networks@rsc.org).

Over 10 years of service

If a committee wishes the RSC to acknowledge exceptional long service of a committee member they should email networks@rsc.org, who will arrange for a letter from the Chief Executive or President.

Scientific Awards from Interest Groups

All awards should be registered with the Networks Team **before** they are promoted – we hold a register of all awards and bursaries offered by our member networks so that we can ensure that all available support for their operation and promotion is offered to the managing committees.

While the decisions on the details of awards sit with the committee the following guidance should be taken on board by all of our committees:

- All decisions regarding the awards must be recorded in committee minutes which should then be sent to the Networks Team for archiving.
- All awards must be promoted to the network community and the following details should be publicly available: details of the criteria, judging process and application deadline.
- Awards should not be open to members of the committee.
- If any awards nominations are received from anyone with a working or personal relationship with any committee member then this should be noted and the committee member must not be involved in the selection of successful candidates. The conflict of interest should be noted in the minutes and registered with the Networks Team.

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We have developed a guide to support committees in running a competitive prize scheme, and to share good practice and learnings from our Review of Recognition Programmes. Guidelines on terms of reference for selection panels and on the selection process for use by those Groups who offer their own awards are available on request.

The Networks Team can help you streamline the application process and reduce the administrative burden on your committee by setting up a tailored online application form for your award with automated emails to nominators and nominees. For further information contact networks@rsc.org.

10. Supporting our volunteers

Networks Team

The Networks Team is dedicated to advising all of our member networks on their activities and assisting with communication between committees and members. These staff members will also put interest groups and Local Sections in touch with other specialist staff where appropriate in order to foster stronger links between member groups and our networks and departments.

We are always happy to hear from our members and will do our best to help you in any way we can. Please feel free to contact us by email or telephone, we're always happy to hear from you.

Contacting the Networks Team

There are three members of the Networks Team:

Fiona McMillan
Member Networks Manager
Monday to Thursday 07:45–15:00, Friday 09:30–15:00

Debbie Dekker
Member Networks Specialist
Monday to Friday 08:15–16:15

Heather Bell
Member Networks Specialist
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 08:30–17:30, Wednesday 08:30–12:00, Friday 08:30–17:00

Kat Espino
Member Networks Events Specialist
Monday to Friday 08:30–16:30

The team use a shared mailbox (networks@rsc.org) to ensure that urgent queries are picked up as quickly as possible. We are all based in Cambridge in Thomas Graham House but we are happy to dial in to online meetings or attend meetings in Burlington House or other locations where practicable.

Royal Society of Chemistry,
Thomas Graham House,
Science Park, Milton Road,
Cambridge, CB4 0WF, UK
Tel +44 (0) 1223 420066

Keeping you up to date: the Networks Newsletter

The monthly Networks Newsletter highlights information from various RSC departments and is emailed to all committee members on the first weekday of the month. The Newsletter content is

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tailored to committee members based on their role, network, and location. The full version is posted to the MyRSC Networks Newsletter blog each month.

Member network licences for virtual events

The RSC has acquired licences for GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar and Zoom specifically for the use of our member networks. The booking forms and additional support and resources for member network online events can be found on the virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page. Contact the Networks Team for information to help you choose the correct platform for your event.

Training and support opportunities

New officers and committee members

The Networks Team aim to contact all new committee members with an overview of their role on the committee and the rules along with an opportunity to speak with a member of the team.

Bribery Act

Training for all of our committee members relating to the UK 2010 Bribery Act is available on the legal section of the Useful Forms & Document page. This includes the RSC Anti-Bribery Policy, case studies of situations where member network volunteers might experience a conflict of interest or attempt at bribery, and a five-minute training video that introduces the 2010 Bribery Act and how it applies to the RSC, our members, and volunteers.

Interest Group Forum

Following feedback from Interest Group committees the Interest Group Forum was approved by the Member Networks Committee to provide a suitable governance forum for all of our Interest Groups.

The forum involves one representative from each Interest Group (ideally one of the officers) attending an annual meeting to discuss matters relating to governance and member engagement. The meeting will be chaired by two elected members who act as Interest Group advocates and sit on the Member Networks Committee.

Local Sections Day

Following feedback from our Local Section committees the Member Networks Committee determined that the Regional Steering Groups provide a suitable governance structure for our geographical networks but that there was still a need for an annual opportunity for all Local Sections committee representatives to meet to network and to share experiences.

The Local Sections Day is an opportunity for active members of each Local Section committee to take part in a celebration of positive activities run by our members. During the event there will be opportunities for sharing experiences regarding the recruitment of committee members, member engagement and activity ideas amongst other topics of shared interest as well as an opportunity network with those from other areas.

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Other staff supporting our member networks

A number of other staff teams within the Royal Society of Chemistry offer support to our member networks. Some are contactable directly and others through the Networks Team.

Events Team

The Events Team can support registration of some bigger events run by our member networks – for further information please email events@rsc.org.

Submitting an event to the events database

All networks must submit their events to the conference and events database by completing the online form.

All events entered into the database will be advertised in the monthly Update sent to members each month with Chemistry World (if submitted before the data is collated for publishing) and will appear on the forthcoming events page for the appropriate network, as well as appearing in the general events list on the website.

Social events may also be entered into the database.

Online Registration Service for member network events

RSC Events offers automated online event registration to member networks that enables delegates to register easily for events and (where appropriate) pay their registration fees by credit/debit card. Free events can also be managed using the system. The service is free to all member networks.

The online request form to set up an online event registration page for your event can be found here: rsc.li/member-networks-event-support

The event will need to be listed on the RSC events database before online registration can be set up in order that the registration link can be viewed and accessed.

Regions Team

The Regions Team includes our Education Coordinators who are based in their relevant region, they can all be contacted directly via our website.

Our Education Coordinators are experts in chemistry education and outreach and are happy to offer their specialist advice and guidance to all of our member networks on request. They cannot sit on any committees but they can be invited to attend committee meetings if they are available.

Burlington House Hospitality Team

Information on the use of meeting rooms and the catering available at Burlington House in London is available on our website.

Please note that member networks using the venue receive a significant level of discount in comparison to corporate bookings.

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Networks Finance Team

There are colleagues in our Finance Team who are available to offer support to our member networks committees. Initial contact should be made by emailing networksfinance@rsc.org.

This team are responsible for liaising with Treasurers and Chairs regarding the annual financial report and can offer both advice and training.

11. Communicating with your members

Staff supported communication

The Networks Team support our member networks to promote their activities in a number of ways.

E-Alerts

All messages from our networks are sent out weekly on Thursdays, and each network can send out **one** e-alert per month.

Due to the system we use to send out e-alerts, we can guarantee that these messages will reach every member of your network regardless of their unsubscribe preferences on our systems. As a result, networks can only send information about events to members of the group or groups hosting events. We therefore encourage Interest Groups and Subject Community Regions running events of interest to members of other groups to consider formally collaborating on or co-badging these events, when relevant, to engage with a wider community to whom we can then justifiably promote the event or activity.

We know that collaboration comes in many forms and to clarify the type of collaboration we propose the following wording being used in e-alerts where two or more networks are working together on an event:

- This event is organised by the RSC FSTG in association with XXX. – This could be for when a group is simply co-badging but not involved in the organisation.

- This event is organised by the RSC FSTG supported by XXX. – This could be for when a group is offering some support in organising the event.

- This event is organised by the RSC FSTG sponsored by XXX. – This could be for when a group is offering only financial support in organising the event.

- This event is organised by the RSC FSTG and RSC XXX. – This could be used for when an event is a true collaboration between the groups.

It is hoped that this type of wording will help to ensure that members of the group, which is not the main organiser, understand why they are receiving information about this activity.

All messages will contain a footer with links directing members to find more events in their field or local area.

To request an e-alert for your members, complete the e-alert request form and return it to networks@rsc.org at least **five working days** prior to the mailing date to allow for the time it takes to process them. The template is also available on the Useful Forms & Document page.

Events (including virtual events) must be submitted to the events database prior to an e-alert being sent. Directions on how to use the database can be found in the events database section.

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Update

Entries for the monthly Update (sent to members each month with Chemistry World) are taken directly from the events database. Directions on how to use the database can be found here.

Please enter your event details into the events database approximately **two months** in advance of your event to ensure the information is included in the edition of Update preceding your event – the data for Update is collected on the first working day of the month before it goes out to accommodate print and mailing deadlines.

If there is a need for an event to be included in Update more than two months in advance of your event please email pressoffice@rsc.org. Advance inclusion is at the discretion of the News & Media Team.

News articles and *Voice*

Our News & Media Team look for Community News stories to publish on our website and in *Voice* magazine, to pitch to local, national, international and trade press, and to run on our social media channels. No story is too big or small, so please send the team your photos and ideas.

The team can help you tell your stories, get you recognition for the amazing work you do, raise the profile of your networks and promote your events. They can also advise on the most appropriate channel to disseminate your news.

- Contact pressoffice@rsc.org with your ideas and queries.
- Encourage your members to get in touch with their personal experiences, things they've achieved, and their thoughts and opinions.
- Tweet @RoySocChem with what you've been doing
- See our news page for examples of some recent stories from our community
- Let us know about the events you've held
- Tell our News & Media Team about the events you have coming up – do you have a high-profile speaker, or are you holding a discussion on a topical subject? They might be able to send a journalist along to conduct interviews and cover the event.
- Let us know how we can help you – we can send you more information to help you make the most of our services, or even run workshops or webinars.

When including photos in any form of reporting it is imperative that written permission is obtained in advance from the photographer.

The News & Media Team prepared this guide on how to write a Community News story for member networks, additional resources can be found in the member engagement section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

Inserts into Chemistry World

This service is only available to Local Sections.

Local Sections may use the January, March, and September issues of Chemistry World for distribution of flyers and notices. Notification of all deadlines is regularly circulated in the Networks Newsletter.

All inserts must be produced through the Brand Centre using one of the editable flyer templates. Each Local Section can order up to three inserts; they can be single or double-sided and the cost of producing and delivering the inserts is **not** deducted from your Brand Centre credit.

Contact networks@rsc.org for further details or with any queries.

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Website

The main site for RSC information, providing access to products, services and activities offered by the RSC is www.rsc.org. Each of our member networks has a presence on the website – each committee should take ownership for the content on their pages and any changes should be sent through to networks@rsc.org.

Each network can use its homepage for posting information about the group and committee, publicising events, providing contact details, publishing newsletters, etc. Any events listed on the events database by the network will automatically be linked to through the forthcoming events link on their web page.

All networks' social media channels are included on network webpages and Twitter feeds are embedded into your RSC web pages – if you have any that are not included, or if you set up a new social media channel then please email the details to the Networks Team.

Staff cannot offer any support for non-RSC websites.

Direct communication

Social media

Member groups can support their activities through social media where appropriate if they wish. However, it is expected that all social media account operators take note that social media posts are beholden to our professional standards just as any other form of communication. As such, our standard communication guidelines still apply, including correct usage of the brand.

Individual logos and social media avatars have been created for and shared with all Local Sections and Interest Groups; contact the Networks Team for copies of these. Our Production Services Team can create social media banners upon request; contact CAPS@rsc.org for a banner image if required.

Additional resources for using social media can be found in the member engagement section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

Member lists

In order to target members more accurately, it is possible for a member group to obtain lists of members and their contact details. This can be based on specific selection criteria within the scope of the RSC membership database, i.e. profession, membership category, location, age range, etc. Lists are available from our Membership Team by emailing memsearch@rsc.org. You will need to have completed a data protection compliance checklist within the last twelve months before you can receive member data; you can download the form here or request one from our Membership Team.

Any data obtained from the RSC's main membership system is provided in accordance with the RSC registration under the Data Protection Act and in accordance with its rules. Data is supplied for RSC purposes only and must not be passed on to or supplied for a third party. The list must be kept secure and destroyed after six weeks. A data protection compliance form must be completed before any data will be made available.

These lists must not be stored for more than 6 weeks in accordance with the RSC Data Protection Rules.

If the data is used to send an email the email addresses must be in the BCC field.

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Address labels

If any network would like to send a hardcopy mailing to members, address labels may be ordered via networks@rsc.org. The labels will be sent to the Secretary, unless notified otherwise. The labels must only be used for RSC business and they must not be passed to a third party (individual or organisation). If the labels remain unused, they must be destroyed after six weeks (as required by the Data Protection Act). You can, however, request new labels as frequently as you wish.

It is also possible to request labels only for those members in your network who cannot be contacted by email.

12. Promotional items and our brand

The current RSC logo was developed in 2019. The brand guidelines and logo can be downloaded in various sizes and formats from our brand microsite: brand.rsc.org.

Branded document templates for committees are available from the branded resources section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

Member network logos

Each member network has its own bespoke logo to use. Committees should use the most recent version of their logo (from the 2019 brand refresh); different file formats of member network logos can be requested from the Networks Team.

Brand guidelines for member networks and branded templates are available from the branded resources section of the Useful Forms & Documents page. Committees can replace the RSC logo with their own logo in these templates to tailor the documents for committee activities.

Brand Centre

Local Sections and Interest Groups can order promotional items as well as pre-printed literature on the Brand Centre: rsc.li/brand-centre. There are also a number of templates on the Brand Centre that can be used by all of our networks to create bespoke flyers and pop up stands.

Each committee will be allocated credit on an annual basis to use on the Brand Centre. This credit covers all expenditure including delivery charges. Bespoke literature and promotional items will be charged at the price shown online but pre-printed literature is free of charge. Delivery costs depend on the quantity and weight of the order. Committees will be invoiced by the Finance Team for any additional spend on the Brand Centre – this will need to be paid for using the annual grant.

We ask that committees only order items that they need for specific events, there is no need to spend the allocated funds and charitable funds should only be used as needed. We also ask that volunteers consider the environmental impact of over-ordering and only use promotional items that will add to the impact of activities.

Additional information about services available from the Brand Centre can be found in this Networks Newsletter article and guidelines and FAQs are available on the branded resources section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

If you have any technical issues with the Brand Centre please email rsc@justdigitaluk.com.

If you have any queries about the Brand Centre please email networks@rsc.org.

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Brand Centre Invoicing

All Local Sections and Interest Groups have been allocated £400 of credit on the Brand Centre for each calendar year. All credit will be reset to £400 on 1 January each year – it is not possible to accrue unused credit.

All credit relates to the calendar year in which the funds are spent and cannot be carried over – we pay the external provider monthly and we cannot carry the debt over into the next financial year. The Networks Team are responsible for monitoring your credit balance so any queries should be sent to networks@rsc.org.

The Networks Team will notify the Treasurer of a committee if their available credit has fallen below £100 and if they have exceeded the credit limit. There is no obligation to only spend within the £400 credit limit but any additional expenditure will be deducted from the following year's annual grant.

The costs of Local Section inserts in Chemistry World are not deducted from your credit as these are paid for from a central budget.

We have allocated the credit to each committee **in addition to your annual grant** but we do ask that you use the credit only for those items which you would be happy to use your grant to pay for. We are responsible for the justification of this additional budget and we hope that you will only use it for necessary items.

13. Registered Charity Number

It is the requirement of the Charity Commission that all member networks use the RSC registered charity number on all RSC printed materials in the form: Registered charity number 207890.

This is included in all printed materials procured from the Brand Centre and in templates available on the branded resources section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

Appendices

Glossary

Following feedback from our members the following glossary of terms has been compiled to minimise any difficulty in the interpretation of the rules.

Member networks	
Analytical Division Region	The Analytical Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry has 8 active sub-committees which are responsible for the support of members of the Division within their geographical boundaries. All of these groups are within the UK and Ireland. These committees are member-led and report to the Analytical Division Council and receive their funding from the Analytical Chemistry Trust Fund. These groups are responsible for organising a programme of activities for their members and many participate in the running of the Schools Analyst Competition.
Education Division Region	The Education Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry has 2 sub-committees which are responsible for the support of members of the Division within Scotland and Ireland. These committees are member-led and report to and receive their funding from the Education Division Council.
Local Section	Local Sections are member-led committees which have the purpose of supporting all members of the Royal Society of Chemistry within their boundary. Local Sections are governed by the Member Networks Committee and receive funding from the Networks Team.
Interest Group	Interest Groups are member-led committees focussed on a specific area of scientific interest which have the purpose of supporting all members of the Royal Society of Chemistry who have joined the group. Interest Groups are governed by the Member Networks Committee and receive funding from the Networks Team.
Boards and Committees	
Council	The RSC Board of Trustees was formerly known as Council.
Member Communities Board	The Board is delegated authority by the Board of Trustees to oversee all member communities including our member networks.
Member Networks Committee	The Member Networks Committee reports to the Membership and Qualifications Board. The committee is responsible for the governance of all Local Sections, Interest Groups, and other relevant member networks.

	The committee consists of the 10 Chairs of the Regional Steering Groups and two Interest Group Representatives.
Regional Steering Groups	The Regional Steering Groups are geographical groups which include representation from all relevant geographical networks as well as individual representatives tasked with giving their perspective as: • A member in the early stages of their career • A member working in academia • A member working in industry The Chemists' Community Fund and the RSC Regions Team are also represented.
Interest Group Forum	The Interest Group Forum is the annual governance meeting for our Interest Groups. Each committee is invited to send one representative to discuss issues of governance. This meeting is run by staff in collaboration with the Interest Group Representatives on Member Networks Committee.
Governance terms	
Charter	Our Royal Charter was granted in 1980 and states that the object for which we are constituted is "the general advancement of chemical science and its application and for that purpose: • to foster and encourage the growth and application of such science by the dissemination of chemical knowledge; • to establish, uphold and advance the standards of qualification, competence and conduct of those who practise chemistry as a profession; • to serve the public interest by acting in an advisory, consultative or representative capacity in matters relating to the science and practice of chemistry; and • to advance the aims and objectives of members of the Society so far as they relate to the advancement of the science or practice of chemistry." As a learned society we are concerned with advancing chemistry as a science, developing its applications, and disseminating chemical knowledge. As a professional body we maintain professional qualifications and set high standards of competence and conduct for professional chemists. We also provide a wide range of services and activities of value both to members, and to the community. As a representative body we provide information and advice on issues involving the science and practice of chemistry at all levels. We also act on behalf of qualified chemists so that their expertise and experience may be used to the best advantage of the community.

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	As a chartered body, we have a special status with a paramount duty to serve the public interest while remaining completely objective. Our Charter was amended in 2001. These changes allowed the introduction of a new membership structure, under which the number of membership categories was reduced, and the award of CChem was separated from admission of a Member (MRSC) or Fellow (FRSC).
By-law	Rules for the regulation of the Royal Society of Chemistry as allowed by our Charter.
Trustee	Trustees bear joint responsibility for the fulfilment of the legal and financial obligations of the Royal Society of Chemistry. In the Royal Society of Chemistry, our Board of Trustees members and the Chairs of our Local Sections and Interest Groups are Trustees.
Officers	For the purposes of governance of member networks only the roles of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are recorded on our membership database. The role descriptors for Officers can be found in the Networks Handbook.
Ordinary member	Any member of a committee in addition to the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are recorded as ordinary members.
Appointed member	A member can be appointed to the committee to fill a specific diversity or skills gap if no suitable candidates have been elected through the normal process. Candidates who fill the criteria can be approached by the committee directly, however their appointment must be approved by Member Networks Committee.
Co-opted member	A member can be co-opted to the committee for a specific role for a specific term of office. For example, this might be the local organiser(s) of the committee's biennial conference, or a representative from a partner society who is not a member of the RSC. Any member of an Interest Group committee that is not a joint group with another organisation who is not a member of the Royal Society of Chemistry is recorded as a co-opted member. Co-opted members do not have voting rights and should only be on committees in line with the rules.
Impact expenditure	This is the annual expenditure reported in the financial report associated with all activities other than committee meetings and general administration.
Quorum	A quorum is the number of committee members required to be in attendance at a meeting/involved in a decision to cause the decision/meeting to be considered valid.

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	Committees may define their quorum in their working practices. If undefined then it is good practice to consider a meeting quorate if the majority of the committee is in attendance.
Trust Fund	All funds held by the member networks (with the exception of joint groups) belong to the Royal Society of Chemistry. Member networks are delegated authority to spend these funds through the Trust Deed – the funds are considered a Trust Fund.

Documents	
Trust Deed	All Local Sections in the UK and Ireland and our Interest Groups have a Trust Deed produced upon establishment. The Trust Deed is the official document which delegates authority to the Officers of the committee to spend the funds of the Royal Society of Chemistry as held in their Trust Fund. The Trust Deed also outlines the purpose of the network.
Rules	The rules for member networks of the Royal Society of Chemistry are set by the Membership and Qualifications Board. Following a review by the Member Networks Committee in collaboration with all of our member networks this single set of mandatory rules for all member networks was approved in October 2017. Variance in the rules is only permitted by approval of the Member Networks Committee. The rules are in place to ensure that the Officers and Ordinary Members of our member networks committees are compliant with all relevant legislation and that our networks are operating within Charity Commission guidelines. The rules and guidance notes should be read together.
Guidance Notes	Following discussions with our member networks it was requested that a set of guidance notes be prepared to support the understanding of the rules. The rules and guidance notes should be read together.
Working Practices	All committees may agree their own working practices – these are the decisions made by the committee to support the efficient organisation and administration of the committee. Examples include defining a quorum, deciding if an AGM will be held, delegation of roles etc. Working practices should be aligned to the rules and cannot override any rules. Working practices should be agreed by the committee and do not need approval by the wider network membership. Any committee member may raise any of the working practices for discussion at any time.
Operational Rules	Any committee member may raise any of the working practices of the committee for discussion at any time. It is not permitted for any committee to set their own operational rules (these would not be flexible or open for discussion).

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Networks Handbook	The Networks Handbook is an electronic document prepared by the Networks Team to outline the support available to our member networks as well as guidance on good practice. The Networks Handbook is updated regularly and notifications of any updates will be circulated via the Networks Newsletter.
Staff	
Networks Team	The Networks Team consists of staff members dedicated to the support of our member networks. We are very friendly and approachable and always happy to help. We can be contacted using networks@rsc.org or by calling 01223 432141.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I…?

… book an online event?

The RSC has acquired licences for GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar and Zoom specifically for the use of our member networks. The booking forms for the member network accounts can be found on the virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page. Contact the Networks Team for guidance to help you choose the correct platform for your event.

Other platforms may be more appropriate for your events and can be used where necessary but the RSC Legal Team **must** be consulted on the terms and conditions **prior** to purchase.

Please **do not log in or start a practice session outside your designated time slot**. You might affect someone else's event.

… charge for my online event?

It is not possible to charge through the GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar or Zoom member network accounts, however the RSC Events Team can process credit/debit card payments for events.

You will need to submit your event to the events database and request a registration page at rsc.li/member-networks-event-support. The registration service is free to use, but for paying events 2.5% of the final income will go to cover the credit card processing fee charged to us by Worldpay.

Depending on the platfrom you are using for your event, at the close of registration you will need to:

- share the Zoom or GoToMeeting joining details with registered attendees;
- send the GoToWebinar registration link to registrants after payment and ask them to register to receive their unique join link; or
- manually input registrants' details to GoToWebinar so that the system can send them their unique join link for the event (this is less convenient for the committee but is the more secure option for GoToWebinar events as registrants will not have the free registration link to share).

Note that given the breadth of free online events available, you might need to justify the registration fee in your event promotion to persuade audience members to pay.

… complete a risk assessment for an online event?

You do not need to prepare risk assessments for online events without children. If your online event is targeted at children you should start with a red risk assessment and outline the steps in place to mitigate the risks to the child. For social or family-friendly events where children might be present with parents, there is no need for a red risk assessment as there are no safeguarding concerns.

Additional information is available on our risk assessment pages and specific guidance for physical and virtual Top of the Bench events can be found in the organisers handbook.

… order a pop-up stand for network events?

The committee can order a pop-up stand through the Brand Centre (rsc.li/brand-centre). Additional information about services available from the Brand Centre can be found in this Networks Newsletter article and on the branded resources section of the Useful Forms & Documents page.

… order promotional material?

Most of our member networks have a small allocation of budget to purchase items from the Brand Centre (rsc.li/brand-centre). This was put in place to enable our volunteers to make branded literature and to acquire promotional items for use at their events. We ask that committees only order items that they need for specific events, there is no need to spend the allocated funds as charitable funds should only be used as needed. We also ask that volunteers consider the environmental impact of over-ordering and only using promotional items that will add to the impact of activities.

… set up a new award?

See the scientific award section.

… set up a new grant/ bursary?

See the bursary section.

… set up registration for my online event?

This depends on the platform you're using for your event:

- GoToWebinar supports registration for the event so you do not need to set up a registration page for your webinars.
- For GoToMeeting anyone with the join link can attend the event. If you wish to set up registration you can request an online event registration page from the RSC Events Team that enables delegates to register easily and (where appropriate) pay their registration fees by credit/debit card. The service is free to all member networks and can be found at rsc.li/member-networks-event-support.
- You can request a bespoke registration page when booking your Zoom meeting.

… set up registration for my physical event?

The RSC Events Team offers automated online event registration to member networks that enables delegates to register easily for events and (where appropriate) pay their registration fees by credit/debit card. Free events can also be managed using the system. The service is free to all member networks and can be found here: rsc.li/member-networks-event-support.

… submit an event to the Events Database?

You can submit your events to the events database by completing the online form. Please ensure that you say your event is a member network event as RSC events are prioritised on the database and included in the monthly Update.

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Can I…?

… apply for a grant organised by my committee?

No. Grants or bursaries should not be open to members of the committee.

… buy a gift for a committee member who is retiring/ going on parental leave/ unwell?

Small gifts can be purchased in certain instances, in line with the Gift and Hospitality Policy. We do have some items on the Brand Centre that are suitable for use as gifts and which can be purchased with the committee funds. All gifts which exceed a notional value of £30 must be recorded on the Gift Register (via Networks@rsc.org).

… buy a gift for a speaker?

One-off gifts of a trivial nature, such as a box of chocolates or flowers, may be given to a speaker. All gifts which exceed a notional value of £30 must be recorded on the Gift Register, in line with the Gift and Hospitality Policy.

… buy equipment for the committee to use during events?

Not without prior approval. Normally hardware purchases would not be approved, if approval is given then each item should be registered with the Networks Team and allocated a committee member responsible for the safe storage of the items.

… have an annual dinner for the committee?

The committee may choose to have an annual dinner or meal to celebrate the work of the committee but it is not appropriate to fund any celebratory activities using network funds.

… hire a professional service for an event?

In some cases, it is necessary for our member networks to engage professional support services to enhance their programme of activities for their community. In all cases, **there must be a contract approved by our Legal Team and signed by a member of RSC staff before work can start**.

… hire a student to conduct research for the committee?

No. Our member networks are not permitted to employ anyone to undertake work on behalf of the network – this includes running social media accounts, undertaking research, or any other casual work – as it can put the RSC at significant financial and legal risk. **Member networks do not have the authority to employ anyone on behalf of the RSC**, regardless of the financial value of the work.

… make a donation to a local charity/ Chemists' Community Fund?

Generally, the answer is no. Our charitable status means that we cannot use our funds to support other charities unless their purpose is aligned to that of the RSC. If you believe that this is the case, please contact the Networks Team for confirmation **before** committing any funds.

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… organise an event for children?

Yes, however it is important that our member-networks **do not engage in unsupervised activity on a regular basis with unaccompanied children**. For events targeted at children you should start with a red risk assessment and outline the steps in place to mitigate the risks to the child. More information is available in the safeguarding section.

Guidance for physical and virtual Top of the Bench events can be found in the organisers handbook.

… pay for an online platform?

The RSC has acquired licences for GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar and Zoom specifically for the use of our member networks. Although individual licences for these types of platforms are not costly, the changes in data protection law mean that the RSC has **negotiated specific contracts with the providers to protect our members**. As such, our member networks must not purchase their own licences without prior consultation with our Networks and Legal teams.

The booking forms for member network online events can be found on the virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page. Contact the Networks Team for information to help you choose the correct platform for your event. Other platforms may be more appropriate for your events and, where necessary, they can be used, however the RSC Legal Team must be consulted on the terms and conditions prior to purchase.

… pay for a celebratory dinner for the committee?

The committee may choose to have an annual dinner or meal to celebrate the work of the committee but it is not appropriate to fund celebratory activities using network funds. Network funds are charitable funds and should be used to fulfil the purpose of the network and support our community.

… provide refreshments for a committee meeting?

Yes, the committee can provide refreshments at a physical meeting, however it is not acceptable to provide alcohol as it is not appropriate to serve alcohol at any business meeting.

… sponsor a committee member/member who is raising funds for another charity?

Generally, the answer is no, our charitable status means that we cannot use our funds to support other charities unless their purpose is aligned to that of the RSC. If you believe that this is the case, please contact the Networks Team for confirmation **before** committing any funds.

… sponsor an event?

Committees can support grass roots or local events that fulfil the purpose of the networks and support our community through, for example, travel bursaries, poster prizes, or subsidising the costs.

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