

Section 3 – Background

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3 Background

3.1 What are Interest Groups?

There are 75 RSC Interest Groups each of which play an important role in contributing to the many RSC activities in support of the chemical sciences. These Groups are member driven and each Group is devoted to a specific area of the chemical sciences. Each has its own Rules and Trust Deed which has been approved by RSC Council. Interest Groups are required to submit an annual report of their activities and audited accounts. Each Interest Group is also affiliated to one of the nine RSC Divisions or the Membership Qualifications Board.

There is one dedicated member of RSC staff who is available to advise Interest Groups on their activities and assist with communication. It is not possible for RSC staff to provide administrative support or assistance with event organisation for Interest Groups. Any queries regarding Interest Groups should be addressed to the Member Networks Specialist for Interest Groups.

interestgroups@rsc.org

The Interest Groups provide inputs on many issues covering the chemical sciences and the RSC is grateful for the dedication and hard work of the members of Group committees. Some of the ways in which these Groups contribute to the RSC's overall strategy are:

- Creating a forum for all members of the RSC involved in specific subject areas to make contact with each other.
- Providing an opportunity for those members to increase their knowledge and to enhance their professional capacity by holding meetings.
- Assisting the RSC in its work commenting on scientific issues.
- Encouraging networking, the exchange of information and the dissemination of results amongst members of the Groups.
- Assisting in developing public understanding of the social, educational and economic importance of the chemical sciences.
- Identifying individuals and corporate leaders who are willing to participate in the work of the Groups and the RSC in general.
- Ensuring that the current and future "health" of the subject is developed and monitored at all times.

A current list of Interest Groups can be found at www.rsc.org/interestgroups and in Appendix B.

3.2 RSC Strategy

Vision: To be foremost in the world promoting and developing the Chemical Sciences for the benefit of society.

The future of the RSC has been outlined in the RSC Strategy on a page. RSC Council would be delighted to receive feedback on the RSC's strategy including suggestions on how it could be improved or further developed.

For further details and to view the RSC's Strategy on a page online, please visit: www.rsc.org/Strategy.

This is restricted to RSC Members only.

3.3 RSC Organisation and Structure

The RSC Council is the governing body of the RSC and the members of Council are the Trustees of the charity. Council is required to manage and be responsible for the affairs of the RSC as set out in the Charter and By-laws. The Secretary of the RSC, known as the Chief Executive Officer, works under the general direction of the Honorary Officers and is responsible for the management of the RSC and its staff.

Council has set itself the task of ensuring that it operates at a strategic level, keeping abreast of national and global issues affecting the RSC's operating environment including political and economic trends, developments in science, professional practice and the business environment. It provides direction by setting, and keeping under review, a strategic plan and allocating resources. In addition it establishes governance structures and processes, delegates authority and monitors conformance.

Council ensures that the RSC meets its statutory obligations and adopts good practices in its governance and management processes; its role is strategic, not operational.

The latest RSC Organisation and Structure can be found in Appendix C.

3.4 Other RSC Networks

The RSC maintains a variety of Networks which members can become involved in to make the most of their membership. These cover many different areas including:

Local Sections

There are 35 Local Sections across the UK and Ireland which act as a focal point for RSC members who live or work within that local area. The Sections run a variety of events and activities for members and the wider community throughout the year. Interest Groups are encouraged to connect with Local Sections if they are organising an event within their area.

RSC Representatives

RSC Representatives play a vital role by acting as the main point of contact between the RSC and its members in academia and industry. They circulate information and news from the RSC to members in their workplace, facilitate networking between RSC Members and may organise social and scientific events. RSC Reps also promote RSC membership to non-member colleagues, provide feedback of members' views to the RSC and help with major public awareness events, such as [Chemistry Week](#) (see Section 10)

Younger Members Network

The Younger Members Network provides opportunities for members in the early stages of their careers to further their professional development by getting involved in a variety of activities and meeting other members at a similar stage in their career. The network offers the chance to establish useful contacts and participate in a range of local events. A branch of the Younger Members Network is the Student Chemical Society Network. This network supports student ChemSocs throughout the UK and Ireland. It also aims to encourage communication and enhance interaction between Student Chemical Societies, Younger Members, Local Sections, RSC Representatives and the RSC.

The Volunteer Visitor Network

Volunteer Visitors play an essential role in supporting the work of the Benevolent Fund. Volunteer Visitors are RSC members who offer their time to respond to requests from members and their families for a wide range of assistance. Volunteers receive training and support and may be called upon to provide help in many forms, from simply offering a listening ear to accompanying a member to RSC local events or organising social activities in their local area.

International Sections and Representatives

The RSC promotes the chemical sciences and supports members worldwide. International activities are often based around an active group of members who form an International Section. These Sections respond to the particular needs of chemical scientists in their country and are involved in activities such as organising conferences and events, sponsoring awards, and community work.