ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY

Role Descriptor:

President

Primary Responsibilities

The President is an elected officer of the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

The President provides leadership to the Board of Trustees, enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the Royal Society of Chemistry. The President plays an integral role in ensuring that appropriate decisions are correctly made including developing the Royal Society of Chemistry's strategic aims, objectives and goals in accordance with its Royal Charter, By-Laws and other legal and regulatory guidelines.

The President sets the conditions for the overall board and the individual effectiveness of trustees and establishes clear expectations concerning the Royal Society of Chemistry's culture, values and behaviour, leading the Board of Trustees in ensuring that these are embedded and enforced.

The President needs to work in partnership with the Chief Executive to ensure that trustee decisions are acted upon and the charity is managed responsibly. The President and Chief Executive should fully understand the difference between the role the Board of Trustees play in governance, developing and agreeing the strategic direction of the Royal Society of Chemistry and that of the Leadership Team in applying that strategy to day-to-day operations.

Duties and wider responsibilities

In addition to those duties and wider responsibilities performed by all trustees, the President is expected to:

- instigate and facilitate discussions on the strategic development of the charity;
- provide clarity of vision to the Board of Trustees in fulfilling the Royal Society of Chemistry's charitable object;
- ensure that the Board of Trustees has agreed strategic priorities;
- work with the President Elect and Honorary Treasurer in the recruitment of the Chief Executive;
- provide leadership and support to the Chief Executive, where appropriate;
- support and appraise the performance of the Chief Executive;
- build and maintain close relations between the Royal Society of Chemistry's various communities and senior level stakeholders to deliver impact and advance the effective operation of charitable activities;
- preside at general meetings and control the order of the proceedings;

- represent the Royal Society of Chemistry as its most senior representative at functions, meetings and in the wider media, in line with agreed media position statements;
- uphold the Royal Society of Chemistry's values by example and ensure that the organisation promotes equality and diversity for all its stakeholders;
- lead trustee discussions on the manner in which the Royal Society of Chemistry continues to provide public benefit as a charity;
- facilitate effective board meetings, liaising with the Head of Governance and Chief Executive, where appropriate, with the drafting of agenda and supporting papers for trustee meetings and ensure that the business is covered efficiently and effectively in those meetings;
- encourage all trustees to contribute their skills, experience and opinions in order to ensure adequate scrutiny;
- create a board environment with strong working relationships, where challenge and scrutiny are welcomed;
- attend and chair committees and other ad hoc meetings as required;
- ensure, in liaison with the Head of Governance and Chief Executive, where appropriate, that appropriate procedures, processes and controls are in place and followed;
- maintain the trustees' commitment to board diversity, renewal and succession planning, in line with the Royal Charter, By-laws and/or current good practice;
- undertake evaluations of the performance of trustees and direct the Head of Governance to facilitate remedial action where required; and
- act between full meetings of the Board of Trustees in authorising actions to be taken under the powers of the Presidential office, e.g. banking transactions and legal documents in accordance with relevant mandates.

Person specification

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

- Member, Fellow, or Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry
- distinguished reputation within the profession of chemistry
- outstanding contribution to the advancement of chemical science and its application
- influential, innovative and impactful in their practice of science
- high level of understanding and interest in the issues that the Royal Society of Chemistry seeks to address/represent as a chartered professional body and registered charity
- a commitment to the values and principles of the Royal Society of Chemistry
- strong business and financial acumen in either a commercial, academic, or civil society setting
- proven leadership skills

- highly developed interpersonal and communication skills
- strong organisational skills
- ability to understand complex strategic issues, analyse and resolve difficult problems
- sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role
- experience of committee work
- sound, independent judgement, common sense and diplomacy
- high standards of personal integrity and probity
- politically astute, with the ability to grasp relevant issues and understand relationships between interested parties
- resilient in dealing with difficult problems and challenges
- clear understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, liabilities and responsibilities of trustees
- sound knowledge of good governance

Time and commitment

Being the Royal Society of Chemistry President and the foremost ambassador for the Royal Society of Chemistry requires significant time and commitment.

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

Meeting	No./yr	When	Where	Duration	Role
Board of Trustees	4	January April July November	London x 3 Cambridge x 1	Span 2 days	Chair
Honorary Officers	4	Normally precede Board of Trustees meetings	As above	1-2 hours	Chair
Annual General Meeting	1	July	London	1-2 hours	Chair
Nominations Committee	2	March October	London	2 hours	Chair
Performance Management and Remuneration Committee	2	February November	London	2-3 hours	Member
Summer Party	1	July	London	1 day	Host

Additionally the President is likely to be asked to:

- represent and speak up for the Royal Society of Chemistry at meetings with influential stakeholders, e.g. ministers, policymakers, business leaders;
- attend functions as the Royal Society of Chemistry's foremost ambassador, e.g. award ceremonies, launch functions, other organisations' celebrations;
- commit to UK and international travel in order to attend important external meetings or events;
- meet with Royal Society of Chemistry staff in order to help progress key projects;
- go to member events to mix with members and gain insights and feedback (e.g. regional meetings, annual member conference).

It should be noted that the successful candidate serves two years as President Elect before assuming the role of President. In terms of the role during this time, the Trustee Role Descriptor applies. In terms of meetings, the President Elect attends all of those listed above, with the exception of Nominations Committee, in the role as a 'Member'.

In total, the successful candidate will serve as a trustee for a term of four years; two years as President Elect from July 2020 to July 2022 and two years as President from July 2022 to July 2024.