The **Diversity and Inclusion** Task Force leads The Society's work to ensure that the principles of diversity and inclusion are embedded across all activities of The Society; and to oversee contributions to external organisations that aim to establish the wider STEM community as a sector that is open and accessible to all.

**Terms of Reference:** *Diversity and Inclusion Task Force*

A Task Force is a smaller group than a Committee, focusing on one topic rather than a full strategic strand. The group exists indefinitely.

**PURPOSE**

Reporting directly to the Board, and in collaboration with the staff lead for Diversity and Inclusion, this Task Force is responsible for:

- Ensuring the growth of The Society’s data on diversity of the membership, and ensuring the data are used to inform activity;
- Identifying areas of activity within The Society that will improve diversity and inclusion within physiology and The Society’s membership;
- Overseeing the allocation of funds through the Support and Inclusion Fund;
- On behalf of The Society, supporting and actively engaging with external organisations that focus on increasing the representation of minority, under-represented and protected groups in the wider STEM community.

The *Diversity and Inclusion* Task Force will work with staff to deliver project plans agreed by the Board. It may also propose new projects to the Board for consideration.

**REMIT**

The *Diversity and Inclusion* Task Force will work to ensure that the principles of diversity and inclusion are embedded across all activities of The Society. Representation of all Advisory Committees will ensure that consideration is given to the full breadth of The Society’s work, and in particular to any areas where barriers to inclusivity are identified and can be tackled at the earliest opportunity. It is expected that members of the Task Force maintain an active awareness of issues relating to Diversity and Inclusion and share them with the group in order to inform activity The Task Force will report to the Board on an annual basis and make recommendations for new activities and policy changes that will enhance diversity and inclusivity at The Society.
GOVERNANCE

Membership
The membership will be comprised of the two Trustee Champions for Diversity and Inclusion, alongside the Champions for Diversity and Inclusion that sit on each of the 3 Advisory Committees. When Advisory Committee representatives are due to retire due to completion of their term on the parent committee, they may continue to serve along with the new representative to the task force for three more meetings to allow for continuity. The Task Force will comprise of:

- The Chair, who will be one of the two Trustee Champions. In the absence of the Chair, due to for example, illness, the remaining members present can elect one of themselves to chair that meeting;
- Other members may be co-opted onto the Task Force as considered appropriate (a maximum of 2 may not necessarily be Members of The Society). This is considered a particularly important aspect of this Task Force to ensure there is appropriate diversity in representation of the groups the Task Force is looking to support.

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be 50% of the membership of the Task force, plus one.

External members should be chosen to include not only an appropriate range of skills and expertise not found among the membership but also, where appropriate, to increase diversity of representation and breadth of experiences. Members of the Committee will normally serve for the period they act as Champions on the Board/Committee plus the transition period allowed for, above.

Staff Attendance
The Staff Lead for Diversity and Inclusion shall be required to attend the Task Force, unless otherwise delegated to an appropriate member of staff.

Recruitment of Members
Members of the Task Force will be drawn from the Board (Trustee Champions) and the three Advisory Committees (Champions for Diversity and Inclusion) – for further details see Membership.

Frequency and duration
The Task Force will meet quarterly and additionally as required.

Where the absence of a Task Force member is unavoidable, apologies should be sent to the Chair as soon as possible and comments on the agenda items and papers submitted prior to the meeting. Reasonable adjustments in the form of remote access to meetings and allowances for absence in exceptional circumstances may be made.

Finance and legal
A Task Force may not authorise expenditure and must observe any budget set for it and follow the financial controls and accounting procedures and requirements set by the Board for The Society. A Task Force must not enter into any legal commitments or incur any financial or other liabilities on behalf of The Society.

Conflicts of interest and loyalty
A Task Force member who has a clear and substantial interest in a matter described above should declare that interest before, or at the beginning of any Task Force meeting where the matter is to be discussed, whether or not that interest is already recorded in the Register of Interests. Ideally, a notice should be sent to the Chair before the meeting. The Chair of the meeting should ask, at the beginning of each meeting, whether anyone has
or may have a conflict, where this might be relevant. As new conflicts are discovered they should be added to the Register of Interests. Further details are provided in The Society’s Policy on Conflicts.

Reporting procedure

Agendas and associated documentation will be distributed seven days before the meeting, via email. The Task Force must have formal minutes of its meetings and record all proceedings, decisions and recommendations. Minutes, approved by the Chair, should be written within two weeks of the meeting and circulated to Task Force members. The “Chair’s minutes” will be submitted to the Board as appropriate.