

Chair of Policy Committee job description



Date	To take office at the 2026 Member Forum (26 November 2026)
Duration of position	A maximum of 4 years

Overall purpose: Trustee & Chair of Policy Committee

The purpose of the Chair is to lead the work of the Policy Committee. The Chair sits on the Board of Trustees (the Board) as a full Trustee of the Physiological Society ('the Society') and a Director of the Society. The Chair is responsible for developing the direction of the Committee in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference, the Society's policies and strategic direction agreed by the Board, and the Society's charitable objects.

The Chair of the Policy Committee is appointed at the Member Forum (26 November 2026). The term of office is four years. Committee meetings are usually virtual and twice yearly, with other project focused meetings or email discussions as required. The Board meets four times per year (currently once in person and three times virtually, but always with a hybrid option).

Working with the CEO and the Principal Policy and Public Affairs Advisor, the Policy Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Society's strategic priority on policy – working to ensure that physiology is a well-funded, high-profile discipline where physiologists can operate in a supportive policy landscape. The aim is for physiologists to play a leading role in informing the public policy response of governments to global health challenges.

Committee chairs are responsible for facilitating committee meetings and reporting the committee's findings to the Board. A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time commitment, to both Committee and Board business, and to respond to tight deadlines where necessary is a key requirement of this role.

Specific duties and responsibilities: Chair of Policy Committee

- ensure the Society has a framework of strategic priorities across science and health policy and public affairs activity, in line with the Society's strategic priorities, that is regularly reviewed;
 - for example, to build on our successes in the climate change and health field, and the healthy ageing field, identifying opportunities across science policy and public affairs that are relevant to the physiological sciences and ensuring these align to the Society's overarching strategic priorities;
- work closely with the Chair of the *In Vivo* Task Force to ensure policy priorities related to this area are advanced;
- lead collaboration with committee members and expert panels, as required, to develop proactive and reactive, evidence-based recommendations that underpin policy-relevant activity and positions, including responses to consultations;
- work with the committee to ensure outputs are evaluated, lessons are learned, and their implications captured, to inform future strategy;

- work with committee members to develop and enhance the policy activities of the Society and therefore promote physiology to a wider audience including for example policy makers, parliamentarians, and the public;
- provide leadership externally for the Society on policy matters and with key partners;
- report and update the Board on activities and progress against agreed objectives;
- work with the Chairs of other Committees as required.

Skills, knowledge and experience:

- excellent overview of key areas of, and developments in physiology;
- provide strong and inspirational leadership to drive forward the policy implementation plans and associated activities;
- understand the diverse physiological interests of the membership and ensure there is close collaboration with other Committees;
- display excellent facilitation skills i.e. the ability to structure meetings for inclusivity, ensuring all voices – especially quieter ones – are heard and one or two people do not dominate;
- exhibit strong organisational skills and proficiency at chairing meetings including excellent time management and the ability to encourage equal contribution;
- possess strong interpersonal and communication skills including being an active listener with the ability to influence and summarise discussions concisely;
- clear understanding of equality, diversity and unconscious bias;
- *desirable*: demonstrated experience serving on boards or committees and understanding of governance processes.

Trustee job description

Overview

A Trustee is a member of the Board of Trustees, which is the governing body of the Physiological Society.

Trustees are collectively responsible for the Society's governance, finances, and strategy, ensuring it operates in pursuit of its charitable objectives and best interests. They provide appropriate oversight, leadership, and active participation in decision-making, shaping strategic aims in line with its governing documents and other regulatory requirements. Trustees must act with reasonable care, skill, and diligence, seeking professional advice when necessary. They are also responsible for statutory reporting and demonstrating appropriate accountability to members and the public.

Trustees work in partnership with the Chief Executive, who runs the Society's day-to-day administration and management. The Chief Executive provides leadership to the charity and acts within the strategic policy and delegated authority framework laid down by the Board of Trustees.

To find out more about being a Trustee take a look at the [Charity Commission guidance](#).

Specific duties and responsibilities:

All Trustees are expected to:

- set and oversee the strategic direction of the Society in furtherance of its Charitable objectives, Vision and Mission;
- ensure the outputs of the Society are pertinent to the pursuit of its charitable purposes and for the public benefit;

- establish and conduct good Governance to ensure compliance with the Articles of Association, Regulations, Charity and Company Law;
- ensure The Society's resources are managed responsibly to maintain the financial stability and sustainability of the Society;
- exercise due diligence and prudence in decision-making to uphold the charity's best interests;
- act as an ambassador for the Society, safeguarding its good name and values;
- stay abreast of changes in the Society's operating environment;
- contribute to regular reviews of the Society's own governance;
- attend Board meetings adequately prepared to contribute to discussions;
- use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect the Society's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third party interests;
- ensure that the Society promotes equity, diversity and inclusion for all its stakeholders;
- take appropriate professional advice in all matters where there may be a material risk to the charity or where trustees may be in breach of their duties;
- maintain the confidentiality of all sensitive / confidential information received in the course of a Trustee's responsibilities.

In addition to compliance with statutory duties, every Trustee should use their specific skills, knowledge, or experience to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions.

Personal qualities:

Trustees should possess a(n):

- very high level of credibility within the physiology community;
- ability to act with impartiality, tact and diplomacy while being decisive;
- ability to give considered, objective opinions and a willingness to constructively challenge where necessary;
- ability to think creatively and strategically;
- willingness to act in the best interest of The Society and to separate any secondary role on the Board from their primary duties as a Trustee where necessary;
- ability to work effectively as a member of a team and foster a collaborative environment;
- sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role, including permission from their institution.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Statement:

We are committed to actively promoting equity, diversity and inclusivity. To this end we would welcome approaches from individuals from underrepresented groups, including minoritised communities and applicants with a disability to better reflect the community we support and help broaden our perspectives.