

Terms of Reference

Publications Committee

1. Duties

- To keep under review Biochemical Society publishing products and services to ensure that they are relevant, serve the community and provide value for the Society and the molecular bioscience community
- To report to the Scientific Activities Committee on the contribution of publishing activities towards the Society's objectives
- To keep under review scientific policy and standards for the Biochemical Society portfolio of journals as a whole, in line with Biochemical Society policy, including advising on desirable policy changes
- Ensure that Biochemical Society-owned publications are run in line with scholarly publishing best practice in terms of ethics (i.e. in line with Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines)
- To respond to cases of dispute involving Biochemical Society-owned publications escalated from Editorial Committees/Boards via approved management and governance procedures
- To consider the scientific and community value aspects of any new Biochemical Society-owned products or services and ensure that the Society's interests are served in any new ventures or collaborative arrangements
- To approve the appointment of members of Editorial Boards and Committees by PPL Board, according to agreed governance procedures

2. Membership

i. Number of Members

The Committee will have seven (7) members.

ii. Composition

The Committee will be composed of members with the following specialisms/skill-set:

- The Chair of the Committee
- Two (2) members representing the Editors-in-Chief of the portfolio of Biochemical Society journals
- One (1) member with specific experience/skills related to magazine publishing or Science Communication
- One (1) member working in an industrial setting
- One (1) 'Early Career Researcher' member
- One (1) Librarian/Information Professional

Each position will carry a term of office of three (3) years with the exception of the representatives of the Editors-in-Chief who will be reappointed in line with the below, on an annual cycle.

Meetings of the Committee will be attended by members of Biochemical Society staff as appropriate, including the Director of Publishing and Publisher.

ii.a Editors-in-Chief of Biochemical Society Journals

Two representatives of the Editors-in-Chief of the Biochemical Society portfolio of journals will be nominated to attend meetings of the Publications Committee as full members.

iii. Chair

The Chair of the Publications Committee will be a member of the Biochemical Society with previous editorial experience of Society journals; non-Biochemical Society journals; and with sufficient knowledge of the Biochemical Society and Learned Society sector.

iv. Initial implementation arrangements (time limited)

During the initial implementation of the Committee, the current Chair of Portland Press Ltd Board of Directors will act as the interim Chair of the Society for one year. Following this period, a replacement Chair in line with the above will be elected/appointed via the Society appointment procedure and the authority granted to the Council of Trustees during the implementation of the new governance structures.

[Clause iv of this document will be removed following the one year term of office of the initial Chair.]

v. Election of members

Members of this Committee will be elected from the Biochemical Society Membership, and from external parties if the skills and other requirements defined for this Committee are not met.

Members will be elected in line with standard *Biochemical Society Election Procedures* as far as possible.

vi. Conduct

Members are required to adhere to the governance code of conduct, as found in the Biochemical Society Governance Handbook.

3. Meetings

i. Frequency of meetings

The Publications Committee will meet a minimum of three (3) times per year, with additional business carried out electronically as far as possible. The Chairperson may convene additional meetings as s/he deems necessary. Attendance via telephone and/or video conferencing services is possible at the discretion of the Chair. In the interest of operational efficiency, where possible these meetings will be scheduled to take place on the morning of the dates of Portland Press Ltd Board Meetings.

Members who are absent from two meetings in a row, may be asked by the Chair to reconsider their availability to serve on the Committee. Members who are absent from three meetings in a row, may be asked by the Chair to resign their position.

ii. Quorum

A quorum shall be five (5) members.

iii. Agenda and papers

An agenda, along with documentation/information/reports supporting the items under discussion will be circulated to members of the Committee, by email, a minimum of seven (7) calendar days before a meeting. Papers will include summaries of most recent Editorial Board meetings where applicable.

In the absence of return communication outlining errors in the delivery of email, the agenda and papers will be considered received by all parties unless otherwise notified.

It is essential that all papers are read and considered in advance of the meeting.

iv. Minutes

Formal minutes recording the proceedings of these meetings will be taken and distributed to the Chair for review within seven (7) days of the meeting taking place.

Final minutes will be circulated to all Committee members, and others in attendance, as close to three (3) calendar weeks after the meeting takes place as is practicable.

v. Decision Making

Where possible a general consensus identified by the Chair of the Committee will be sufficient to consider a matter passed, rejected or deferred.

Where consensus is not possible, all decisions will be made by a vote, with each Committee member holding one (1) vote. Where an equity of votes occurs, the Chair may cast an additional vote to finalise the decision, or may defer the decision for later action.

4. Reporting

i. Portland Press Ltd

The Publications Committee will report to the Board of Directors of Portland Press Ltd on all matters related to the remit of this Committee.

ii. Scientific Activities Committee

The Publications Committee will report to the Scientific Activities Committee on the contribution of the Society's publishing activities to the greater Society strategy.

The Chair will sit on the Scientific Activities Committee.

iii. Annual General Meeting

The Chair of this Committee is to attend the Annual General Meeting held in June/July of each year to represent this Committee. If this is not possible, a further member of the Committee may be nominated to stand in their stead.

5. Ownership of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are owned by the Council of Trustees and Publications Committee. Any changes must be authorised by the Trustees and, where possible, undertaken in consultation with Portland Press Ltd.

Last updated: 24 August 2017