



MICROBIOLOGY SOCIETY



Independent Trustee

Candidate Information Pack

Jan 2026



Eastside People

“It has been a privilege working with the Microbiology Society for the last couple of years. The Society’s culture is genuinely open, inclusive and professional.

Fortunately for me, this translates into engaged, considered and enjoyable discussions about risk management. This applies equally to the employees, management and academics I have worked with.

I would enthusiastically recommend working in a Trustee role for the Society.”

Andrew Wilson,

External Chair of the Audit, Risk and Evaluation Committee





Welcome from our CEO

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Microbiology Society.

Microbes matter because they are everywhere and affect almost all aspects of our lives. The Microbiology Society matters because it is where those with an interest in microbes come together as a community.

We can see just how important microbiology is from the constant stream of headlines about outbreaks and epidemics of microbial diseases, the spread of infections from animals to people, the massive global threat of antimicrobial resistance, and the effects of bacteria on the Earth's environmental systems. These issues also illustrate the vast diversity encompassed of microbes and the wide array of fields in which microbiology can help to address the world's challenges. Microbiologists work in universities, healthcare, companies and laboratories. Each employer inevitably has its own priorities, but the individual microbiologists can have a greater impact – on health, the economy, the environment, agriculture and their careers – by coming together as a community. The Microbiology Society provides a home to amplify the voice of that community as it shares knowledge with medics, policymakers, industrialists, the media and others so that our growing understanding of microbes can be applied in ways that bring public benefit to society.

For eighty years, the Microbiology Society has been at the centre of that vibrant community. As the world around us changes, we are seeking to bring new skills and experience to our Board of Trustees so that we can meet the strength of our ambition and take advantage of the expanding range of opportunities that the change is bringing. Our values are constant, and we want Trustees who will work with us in a welcoming and transparent ways and who will be dedicated to our aims. The work of the Board of Trustees is important and we are ambitious and hardworking. At the same time, we pride ourselves on our reputation as a friendly, nurturing approachable community. Our members and staff regularly report strong levels of satisfaction and of feeling valued and supported. We are looking for Trustees who share these values, and who want to help us support our community in building its impact.

We look forward to reading your application to become a Trustee of the Microbiology Society.

Dr Peter Cotgreave

Chief Executive

Professor Gordon Dougan

President

About us

Who we are

[The Microbiology Society](#) is a membership charity for scientists interested in microbes, their effects and their practical uses. It has a worldwide membership based in universities, industry, hospitals, research institutes, schools, and other organisations.

What we do

Our members have a unique depth and breadth of knowledge about the discipline. The Society's role is to help unlock and harness the potential of that knowledge. We do this by bringing together and empowering communities that shape the future of microbiology. We generate public benefit by fostering communication both among communities of microbiologists and between microbiologists and other communities who can translate that knowledge in useful ways.

Our vision, mission & values

Vision

Our **vision** is a world in which the science of microbiology provides maximum benefit to society.

Mission

Our **mission** is advancing the understanding and impact of microbiology by connecting and empowering communities worldwide.

Values

Our three core **values** are crucial to the Society's success:

- **We are welcoming** to anyone interested in microbes, their effects and their uses. Our reputation as a friendly, nurturing and approachable community, driven by the experience of a diverse set of members, is extremely important to us.



- **We are transparent** and professional in everything we do. We believe that decisions should be informed by evidence and expertise, and that scientific methods form a robust and dependable way of developing reliable evidence.
- **We are dedicated to our charitable aims.** We are not for profit and strive to ensure that all our resources are applied optimally to furthering the science of microbiology and its application.





Strategic priorities

In the five years between 2023 and 2027, the Society's principal goal is to strengthen our culture of being a community-driven Society by amplifying our members' voices, wherever they are in the world, and empowering them to embed the benefits of microbiology within wider society.

By broadening our community to be more inclusive and international, we can combine our members' knowledge and lived experiences with the expertise of our staff to ensure that the Society is instrumental in transforming opportunities to connect microbiologists into impacts. This in turn will drive us towards a world in which the science of microbiology provides maximum benefit to society.

- **Objective 1**

Through a better understanding of the diversity of our members, we will enable them to strengthen their existing relationships and gain access to new communities, unlocking the potential for international collaboration and global knowledge exchange.

- **Objective 2**

By harnessing local knowledge for worldwide impact, we will advance understanding of microbiology and champion the contribution made by microbiology, our members and their work in addressing global challenges.

- **Objective 3**

By recognising global differences in accessing opportunities at the Microbiology Society, we will build on existing strong financial and governance foundations to reinforce long-term sustainability and resilience through diversifying income streams, increasing efficiency and ensuring robust mechanisms for decision-making, monitoring and evaluation.

Our current strategy covers a five-year time-span (from 2023–2027) and can be read in full [here](#).



Our commitment to diversity

The Microbiology Society is concerned with the 'leaky pipeline' of talent within Microbiology and understands and supports the need to address this for the benefit of the discipline and the Society.

Greater diversity within all that we do will widen the talent pool available for the field of Microbiology and create networks of ideas and collaborations, potentially leading to greater development and innovation.

Overall, facilitating an environment of equality and diversity will foster a sense of inclusivity which will pave the way for us to build the capabilities to support Microbiology in the future.

The Society is committed to creating an inclusive culture that supports equality and diversity and fully reflects both its membership and the global Microbiology community. The Society seeks to actively encourage all practices that reflect a diverse society.





An exciting time to join us

This is a pivotal moment for the Microbiology Society. Microbiology sits at the centre of many of today's most urgent global challenges, from emerging diseases and antimicrobial resistance to climate change, food security, and environmental sustainability. As an international, community-driven organisation, the Society amplifies the voices and expertise of microbiologists, ensuring their work leads to meaningful discovery, innovation, and public benefit. Our vision remains steadfast: a world where microbiology delivers maximum value to society. To get there, we are strengthening our culture, broadening our membership, and empowering microbiologists to connect, collaborate, and influence in new ways.

The coming years will bring significant change. As scientific publishing models evolve, we are diversifying our income, reshaping our activities including our publishing portfolio, and increasing engagement with our international community. We are also investing in the next generation of microbiologists and embedding greater inclusivity across our governance and community. Introducing external trustees marks a major evolution – bringing in fresh perspectives, commercial insight, and broader lived experience to complement our Board.

Against this backdrop, the role of trustee has never been more important. We are seeking someone who can help the Society navigate complexity with clarity and ambition.

Candidates must appreciate both the immense potential of microbiology and the nuances of the research community, its pressures, culture, and diversity gaps. They must understand the need for sustainable funding, inclusive participation, and the vital role the Society plays in shaping the future of the discipline.

For the right candidate, this is an exceptional opportunity to help steer an important scientific organisation working to embed the benefits of microbiology within wider society. You will contribute to ensuring the Society remains financially resilient, strategically bold, and deeply connected to the needs and aspirations of microbiologists worldwide.



Being a trustee – what's involved

Every charity has a Board – a group of volunteers who ensure that the organisation is effective in carrying out the purpose for which it was set up.

A helpful summary of trustee roles and responsibilities can be found in the Charity Commission guidance for new Trustees: [The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do \(CC3\)](#)

What you'll gain from this role

Becoming a trustee is an interesting and compelling way to engage with the charity sector. It is a role that will give back as much as you put in, and often more. One of the primary takeaways from the [Charity Commission's 2025 research into trusteeship](#) is the extent to which trustees benefit from their experience. Although trusteeship is a significant voluntary undertaking, the majority would recommend it to others. Many trustees reported experiencing multiple and profound benefits, from feeling they are positively impacting the world to feeling more connected to a community or movement, highlighting the rewards of responsibility. Overall, just 1% of the trustee population surveyed would not recommend the role to others.

Strategic experience

Strategic experience can be hard to come by. It can often take decades to find yourself in a role which requires strategic oversight. A charity Board role is a fantastic way of getting a head start on this, allowing you to develop and hone your critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills. The strategic experience which can be gained through a trustee role can have an immediate and powerful impact on your career, opening doors to new responsibilities and more senior job prospects.

Equally, for those who have already had some strategic responsibilities, a Board role provides an opportunity to use those skills in a significantly different context.

Continued personal development

Through a trustee role, you can gain a clearer idea of your professional strengths and weaknesses whilst simultaneously learning new skills. Understanding how to adapt your professional knowledge to useful and impactful ends is a good reminder of your versatility,



giving you confidence in your existing abilities while challenging you push the boundaries of your expertise.

Teamworking

As a Trustee at the Microbiology Society, you are part of a team and will have the opportunity to apply your unique skills and experience while also learning from others. Working in a team with a passionate team of individuals who bring diverse perspectives is often one of the most enjoyable aspects of the role. The ability to collaborate effectively with others and to challenge constructively the ideas of fellow trustees as well as those of the leadership team is essential to ensuring the Board's strategic decisions are fully informed, reasonable and effective.





Trustee job description

Location	Online/London
Time Commitment	The overall time commitment is approx 10 days per year. See additional information below.
Salary	This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses can be claimed.

Purpose of role

From 2025, the Society constituted a new Board of Trustees comprised of the Society's three Executive Officers (President, General Secretary and Treasurer) and three elected members, plus up to three external experts. The role of the Board is to govern the organisation, provide the strategic direction of the Society and ensure its long-term financial sustainability.

Alongside the Board of Trustees, an Advisory Council comprised appointed and elected members of the Microbiology Society is responsible for discussions about the Society's core activities and programmes such as journals and conferences. The Advisory Council must be consulted by the Trustees on important issues and has the right to advise the Trustees on any matter it considers appropriate.

The Board of Trustees and the Advisory Council are both led by the Chair, the President of the Microbiology Society.

General responsibilities for all trustees

The Trustees are the governing body of the Microbiology Society and are, collectively and personally, ultimately responsible for all the Society's activities.

Trustees of the Microbiology Society:

- Ensure that the Society complies with its constitution, charity law, company law and any other applicable legislation and regulations.
- Analyse and contribute positively to the strategic development of the Society, establishing clear objectives to deliver the agreed strategy and associated plans, and regularly reviewing performance against these objectives.



- Maintain the financial viability of the Society and ensure the best use of financial and other resources in pursuit of the charitable objects, including ensuring the proper investment of funds.
- Ensure that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and that the Board is kept fully informed through timely and relevant information.
- Uphold the charitable aims of the Society and ensure these are reflected in Board discussions.
- Participate fully in the work of the Board, including induction, training and performance evaluation, and ensure the corporate responsibility of the Board of Directors.
- Ensure the effective implementation of Board decisions by the Leadership Team of the Microbiology Society and hold them to account for the effective management and delivery of the Society's strategic aims and objectives.

Who we're looking for

Experience of charitable fundraising

In recent years the Microbiology Society embarked on a fundraising programme, Unlocking Potential and in 2025 carried out a fundraising campaign to celebrate the Society's 80th anniversary.

The Society is seeking a Trustee to continue this work and to assist in building an effective fundraising strategy, someone who can help connect us to individual philanthropists, senior corporate leaders and/or their own network, and help to lever significant income for the organisation.

Candidates must have significant experience of the charitable fundraising environment and knowledge of fundraising best practice at strategic and operational levels.

All candidates will also need to show:

- Strategic thinking skills and the ability to process a range of information, participate in discussion, and constructively challenge where necessary.
- Knowledge and understanding of overseeing budgeting and financial performance.
- A willingness and ability to devote the necessary time commitment and to respond to tight deadlines where necessary.



- Ability to communicate with tact and diplomacy and foster a welcoming and collaborative environment, with experience of participating in committee or equivalent leadership meetings.
- An ability to act with impartiality, to make sound judgements and a willingness to accept collective responsibility for Board decisions.
- A willingness to act in the overall best interest of the Society, without conflict of interest and conflict of loyalty.

Time commitment – additional information

In total, the time commitment is approximately 10 days per year, including meetings. The Board of Trustees meets for formal meetings four times each year. Two of these are in person, usually at the Microbiology Society offices in London, and two are online. Formal papers are circulated to all Trustees one week before each meeting and members are expected to read the papers and come prepared to participate in discussion where relevant. The Board of Trustees will also conduct business via email as necessary in between meetings and you may be invited to optionally attend other ad-hoc meetings during your term.

The role is voluntary and the time commitment will vary. As a guide however, we expect you to commit to the following:

- You will need to pre read the Board papers and attend four Board meeting per year, two are in person at the Society's offices (14-16 Meredith St, London, EC1R 0AB) and two are held online.
- Co-opted trustees serve until the third 1 January following their appointment (ie, between 2 and 3 years).
- After their initial term in office, they may be eligible for co-option again by the Trustees for a second consecutive term of office.
- Once these time periods have elapsed, the Trustee concerned must take a break from office for three years.



Ready to apply?

[Eastside People](#) is supporting Microbiology Society in the recruitment of these roles. Please [click here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and a cover letter **both in Word doc format**.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why are you interested in a Trustee role at Microbiology Society.
- Having read the information pack, what relevant experience and skills do you feel you would bring to this role? This might come from paid work, study, community or voluntary work or other experience.

If you would like a call to discuss any of the roles in more detail, please email John Sanger to arrange a convenient time at johns@eastsidepeople.org. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability and potential. If you have a disability or require reasonable adjustments during the application or interview process, please contact us so we can support you appropriately.

The closing date for applications is Monday 9th March. Shortlisting interviews will take place shortly after and shortlisted candidates will have an interview with The Microbiology Society during the week beginning 23rd March.

Finally

We understand AI can be a helpful tool, but please use it with caution and ensure your application is personalised and accurate.

If you know anyone else who might be interested, please do share this information pack with them.



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