

Part B - Trustee duties, requirements and commitments

Trustees serve on the governing board of the British Pharmacological Society, which is a charity and therefore they have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, ensuring it is solvent, well-run and delivering the charity's outcomes for the benefit of the public.

A Trustee is a voluntary role, that complies with [key duties of all trustees of charities in England and Wales](#), as well as abiding by the [Society's Code of Conduct for Trustees and Vice Presidents](#) and therefore act in a professional, ethical and moral manner.

All candidates must have a demonstrable commitment to the Society's charitable objectives of promoting the full spectrum of pharmacology and in support of pharmacologists. The elected candidates will be expected to oversee the [Society's 2026-2030 strategy](#).

All candidates must have willingness and ability to:

- advocate for, and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion as part of their role to ensure that [the Society's vision for equity, diversity and inclusion](#) is progressed positively
- to think strategically, creatively and for the long-term
- knowledge of and ability to discharge the core responsibilities of being a charity Trustee
- commit the time to the Council as indicated below
- serve on appropriate formal and informal committees/advisory groups relating to specific functions or projects
- to absorb information about the Society (and its key messages) to be an effective and positive ambassador and 'influencer' for the organisation

Summary of legal duties as a Trustee

Compliance – Trustees must:

- ensure that the charity complies with charity law and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as a regulator
- ensure that the charity prepares reports on what it has achieved and Annual Returns and accounts as required by law
- ensure that the charity does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in its governing documents and that it fulfils the charitable purposes set out within the documents
- ensure that the charity complies with all other relevant law and the requirements of other regulators which govern the actions of the charity
- act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or loyalty, or misuse of charity funds or assets
- trustees will be required to obtain the Companies House Identity Verification code as they will be a Director of the Charity as well as a trustee.

Prudence – Trustees must:

- ensure that the charity is and will remain solvent
- use charitable funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the charity's purposes
- avoid undertaking activities that might place the charity's funds, assets, people or reputation at undue risk
- take special care when investing the funds of the charity or borrowing funds for the charity to use

Duty of care – Trustees must:

- use reasonable care and skill in their work as Trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the charity is well-run and efficient
- consider getting external professional advice on matters where there may be material risk to the charity or where the Trustees may be in breach of their duties
- ensure that the working environment of the staff team is safe, free from bullying & harassment, and in line with the Society's policies and procedures

The British Pharmacological Society is a company limited by guarantee. Trustees are therefore also Directors of the company. As Trustees/Directors of a company, they have the protection of limited liability in relation to actions properly undertaken on behalf of the charity, because an incorporated charity has a legal personality distinct from its members and Trustees. The Society's Trustees/Directors are routinely insured by Director's Liability Insurance. The Trustees/Directors remain responsible for compliance with their legal duties.

Eligibility

We ask all applicants for Trustee positions to submit a 'declaration of eligibility' as part of their application. It is an offence to act as a charity Trustee while disqualified unless the Charity Commission has given a waiver under section 181 Charities Act 2011.

From a Society membership perspective, all candidates for elected trustee positions must be either an Early Career Member, Full Member, Retired Member, Fellow, or Honorary Fellow of the Society.

Time commitment and nature of involvement

Council Meetings normally take place four times a year at our central London office with the option to attend virtually. Meetings normally run from 11.00 - 15.00pm on a weekday, and Trustees are expected to contribute the equivalent of around 6 hours per meeting (2 hours preparation time and 4 for the meeting itself). In addition, Trustees will be expected to attend up to two strategy days, a trustee training day and dinner.

Contributions outside Council meetings vary but may include:

- ensuring an effective governance structure
- reviewing the Society's risk register on an annual basis
- ensuring the Society acts as a fair, equitable and inclusive employer
- contributing positively to discussions outside of meetings such as periodic email contact for the Trustees to consider specific issues
- attending Society strategy days or away days
- being invited to be involved with specific working groups or projects
- responding to ad-hoc requests for input from staff and Officers of the Society
- taking on an ambassadorial role to promote the Society and the full spectrum of pharmacology to the wider public

An induction training session is provided each year to introduce all new appointments to the role responsibilities of being a trustee. The Society provides training sessions for Trustees and reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed. Further information on specific activities of Trustees can be found in the BPS Articles of Association and Rules, copies of which can be found on the Society's website.