

PURPOSE OF THE ROLE OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER

- To represent the Society of Authors in Scotland (SoAiS) membership on all issues affecting them. This includes communicating with members, sharing plans and strategy with members, and voicing the needs and concerns of members as their democratically elected representatives. Communication and other administrative tasks are supported by a Staff Coordinator from the SoA staff.
- To work in collaboration with the Senior Policy Manager (Scotland) to represent our membership on policy issues affecting the Scottish membership. Current examples include: contributing to our work to regularly increase the Live Lit rates from Scottish Book Trust; feeding back on funding and freelancer rates to the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) and Scottish Government via the Senior Policy Manager (Scotland) who attends their meetings; and planning our campaigning around funding for the arts and specifically authors, illustrators and translators, in the runup to the next election.
- To contribute to strategic decision-making and planning activities of the SoAiS, in collaboration with the rest of the committee.
- To represent the SoAiS committee and membership at meetings and in sub-committees as appropriate. Current examples including attending SoA policy sub-committee meetings and sitting on the board of Literature Alliance Scotland.

THE TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Committee members are elected into post by members of the Society of Authors living in Scotland (as determined by postcode).

Although the exact term is defined by the groups' own Terms of Reference (or equivalent), the suggested terms are for two years, with the option to renew twice for a further two-year term by agreement with the rest of the Committee. After a two-year gap in service, Committee members can be re-elected to serve another two-year term, with potential for re-election twice more. Therefore, in a period of 14 years, it would be possible for a member to serve on the Committee/Steering group for a maximum of 12 years.

Committee members will take part in an induction programme at the start of their term.

Although the Committee members are not Directors of the Company, they may attend Management Committee (board) meeting as a non-voting nominated representative

of their committee, and in doing so will be bound by the Management Committee Code of Conduct [Link to document not in public domain [here](#).]

DUTIES AND TIME COMMITMENT OF THE ROLE

- To attend SoAiS committee meetings which will occur once every two months, for two hours.
- Where appropriate, committee members may also wish to join an SoAiS sub-committee on a particular issue or campaign.
- To contribute to the SoAiS newsletter, which is arranged by the SoAiS Secretary and distributed by the Staff Coordinator.
- To suggest and/or arrange events, as required, in collaboration with the rest of the committee and managed by the Staff Coordinator.
- In collaboration with the rest of the committee, and with the administrative and organisational support of the Staff Coordinator, to plan and run the annual SoAiS elections and SoAiS AGM.
- In addition to attending SoAiS committee meetings and sub-committee meetings, committee members are encouraged to attend networking and local group meetings to connect with members. Attendance at meetings with members may provide a helpful means to connect with members and gather informal feedback to help keep the committee in touch with members' concerns. This can be shared with the Staff Coordinator, other committee members and, when appropriate, with the Management Committee (board) and the Chief Executive.
- Committee members may contribute ideas towards shaping the strategy of the group for the next twelve months, and as such may be asked if they would be prepared to take ownership of one or more of those strategic areas, such as Equality Diversity and Inclusion, representing the SoAiS Committee at SoA Policy or other Sub-Committee meetings, or attending a local group as a representative of the Committee.

The total time commitment should not exceed 8 hours (ballpark 6-8 hours) per month.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The committee member's point of contact within SoA, shall be with the Staff Coordinator. If there is an issue with the Staff Coordinator, the committee member can approach the Head of Membership, Chief Operating Officer, or Chief Executive Officer.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Committee members may not communicate any confidential information known to them by reason of their position that has not been made public, except with the permission of the Head of Communications, or the Chief Executive Officer. More information about this can be found [here](#).

EXPENSES

The role of committee member is a voluntary role and is not remunerated. Expenses will be reimbursed in line with the [SoA Expenses Policy](#).

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Committee members are elected from within the relevant section of the Membership.

VALUES

- Represent all members within a specific interest group or nation group from every background, and career stage.
- Uphold the highest ethical standards of integrity and probity ([Nolan Principles of Public Life](#)).
- Listen sensitively to the views of others
- Gain the trust and respect of members, Management Committee and staff.
- Seek best practice wherever possible.

SKILLS & APPROACH

- Good understanding of the issues faced by authors within a specific interest group or nation.
- A desire to contribute to the strategy and campaigning work of the SoA to protect and further the rights of authors.
- Excellent communication skills: a talent for communicating clearly and with the confidence to speak in front of groups of all sizes.
- An approachable personality with the desire to meet with members from a range of different communities, backgrounds and career stages.
- Capacity to attend committee meetings, group events, meetings, etc. as appropriate - in-person or remotely - throughout the UK.
- Experience of handling sensitive, complex or confidential issues with integrity.

IF THINGS GO WRONG

Queries with your staff co-ordinator: you can view our Complaints procedure [here](#), any informal issues or queries can be raised with the staff co-ordinator's line manager.

Queries with other committee/steering group members or Chair: the best route is to raise issues during a committee/steering group meeting as this will be minuted. It is worth re-reading our [Dignity and Respect policy](#) to effectively challenge any unacceptable behaviour.

You might also find [these notes](#) helpful regarding the conduct of those in public office. Although Committee members are not in “public” office, they are elected from within the membership of the Society of Authors and this is a good base level of acceptable standards of behaviour.