

# CHAIR OF THE TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION (TA) ROLE DESCRIPTION



*NB: As per the TA Terms of Reference, the TA Committee may appoint two co-chairs, in which case all references to the role of TA Chair below should be taken to refer to the two individuals sharing this role.*

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION OF TA CHAIR

- To represent the SoA's translator members (as embodied by the TA group) and their professional challenges to the SoA as a whole; to publicly represent literary translators in the UK as a whole.
- To direct and contribute to strategic decision-making and the planning of group activities within the TA through its Committee.
- To develop agendas for meetings of the TA Committee in collaboration with the Staff Coordinator and in line with the strategy decided upon by the TA Committee.
- To effectively chair meetings and to encourage all TA Committee members to have a voice in meetings.
- To represent the plans of the TA Committee to the SoA Management Committee and other meetings as appropriate.

## TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The TA Chair is appointed by the TA Committee and may be removed by this body by simple majority agreement. The TA Chair's initial term will be for two years with an option for renewal for a further two-year term, subject to the agreement of the Committee. After serving two terms (four years) as Chair, the TA Chair must retire and will not be eligible for re-election to the TA Committee until at least four years have elapsed from the end of the previous term. (Candidates elected to the Committee formally assume their roles from 1 January following the elections process in the preceding autumn. Thus, a Chair retiring at the end of 2025 may stand for election no sooner than 2029 for a term beginning in January 2030).

The TA Chair will take part in an induction programme for SoA group committee members when first elected to the TA Committee. The TA Chair will be invited to participate in governance training offered to the SoA Management Committee.

The TA Chair is not a legal director of the SoA but is invited to attend Management Committee meetings as a non-voting nominated representative of the TA, and in doing so will be bound by the [Management Committee Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement](#).

## DUTIES OF THE POSITION

- To work with the Staff Coordinator to schedule TA Committee meetings and draft agendas for these meetings.
- To attend TA Committee meetings which occur at regular intervals as defined by the TA Terms of Reference and to chair these meetings fairly and effectively.
- To attend all relevant training sessions/refresher courses offered by the SoA.
- To represent the TA at SoA Management Committee meetings by contributing to discussions, and when necessary, requesting the addition of items to the agenda and the preparation of necessary papers.
- The TA Chair should encourage and support other members of the Committee, where appropriate, to:

- contribute ideas towards shaping the TA's strategy for the following twelve months;
  - take ownership of one or more of those strategic areas in the TA's work;
  - represent the TA at relevant SoA Sub-Committee meetings;
  - attend local SoA groups as a representative of the TA; and
  - undertake any other activities that support the aims and purposes of the TA as set out in its Terms of Reference.
- The TA Chair is encouraged to attend TA- and SoA-organised events and gatherings to connect with members and to gather informal feedback relating to the concerns of TA members.
- When necessary, the TA Chair's duties outlined above may be shared with members of the TA Committee, the SoA Management Committee or appropriate SoA staff.

The TA Chair should work closely with the staff coordinator on key group issues such as meeting dates and agendas. Draft minutes or action points prepared by the staff coordinator may be circulated to the TA Chair prior to being circulated with the whole Committee. Any work expected of the staff coordinator (beyond that set out in the role description for the TA Staff Coordinator) should be dictated by the action points determined by the Committee meeting as agreed by a majority.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The TA Chair's point of contact within the SoA shall be with its Staff Coordinator. If there is an issue with the Staff Coordinator, the TA Chair can approach the Head of Membership and Author Communities, the Chief Operating Officer or the Chief Executive Officer, as appropriate.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The TA Chair shall 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 TA Chair is a voluntary role and is not remunerated. Out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed in line with the [SoA Expenses Policy](#).

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

The TA Chair is appointed from among the members of the TA Committee, whose members are drawn from and elected by the TA membership.

## VALUES

The TA Chair should:

- represent all TA members regardless of background or career stage;
- uphold the highest ethical standards of integrity and probity (see [the Book and Publishing Industry Professional Values](#) and the [Nolan Principles of Public Life](#));
- listen sensitively to the views of others;

- seek to gain the trust and respect of TA members, as well as that of the SoA's Management Committee and staff; and
- seek to implement best practices wherever possible.

## ESSENTIAL

The TA Chair must have:

- excellent communication skills: the ability to communicate clearly, the confidence to speak in front of groups of all sizes, and the willingness to serve as the public face of events;
- an approachable personality with the desire to meet with members from a range of different communities, backgrounds and career stages;
- the capacity to attend TA Committee meetings, group events, meetings, etc. as appropriate – in-person or remotely – throughout the UK; and
- a firm understanding of the issues faced by literary translators.

## DESIRABLE

Ideally, the TA Chair will have:

- experience in handling sensitive, complex or confidential issues with integrity.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Issues related to the TA Staff Coordinator: see the SoA Complaints procedure [here](#). Any informal issues or queries can be raised with the staff coordinator's line manager.

Issues related to other TA Committee members or the TA Chair: the best route is to raise issues during a Committee meeting as this will be recorded in the minutes. It is worth rereading the SoA [Dignity and Respect policy](#) before seeking to address any unacceptable behaviour.

You may also find [these notes](#) helpful regarding the conduct of those in public office. Although Committee members do not hold public office, they are elected from within the membership of the TA and thus are expected to demonstrate a commitment to the values endorsed by the SoA and other publishing stakeholders.