

# WORKING EFFECTIVELY FOR GROUPS AND NETWORKS



## Effective Governance

It's often helpful for Committees/Steering groups to have a focus for the year. Groups might want to look at their [terms of reference](#) and think about the stated aims of the group and adapt or amend the terms of reference if necessary.

Having a focus should mean it's easier to see results and therefore make those volunteers on Committees feel more of a sense of achievement. It could be a small thing or a really big thing. It might cross over into other specialisms or contribute to the wider work of the SoA via its policy department.

These aims can be broken down into areas and the steering group can make decisions on how best to address these. Often Committees will decide they want to put on events for members that will be of practical help or professional interest, with speakers drawn from their membership or from the publishing / agenting / broadcasting world, or even one aimed at early career writers.

## What can we do?

Most members will know about the events that the groups run, three of which will be supported by the Events team at the SoA usually as part of the SoA@Home events series. You can find more information about these events in the [Annual Timeline document](#). You'll see that more informal online meetings are also possible if Committees want to run them in addition to the staff supported meetings. There are a couple of Zoom accounts that could be used for these meetings. Your staff coordinator can set these up for you.

In addition to the events, the committee might like to decide on a focus for the next twelve months – or a couple of areas of development. This could be a focus on **increasing membership in their area/specialism**, it could be around a particular difficulty that is an issue for that area/specialism – such as **AI for translators and illustrators** or **working with funding bodies**. You might decide to improve the profile of the group by contributing articles to relevant journals, or the press. You might want to create a **checklist for writers** who go into schools, or think about safeguarding implications for your members. You might decide you need to recruit younger writers as members and research university courses that teach relevant subjects and try and make links with the tutors and through them, the students (the SoA Outreach team could support with a visit, with enough notice). Any aims could be championed by one steering group member who could feed back any progress to the steering group at the next meeting – helping to keep everyone's focus on that area.

## Divide and conquer!

Once the focus is decided upon, the committee could split up the jobs among its committee members. Each committee can have a representative in attendance at **Management Committee** meetings. This is a non-voting post, but representatives can contribute to the discussion. Having a seat at the table can be really beneficial for your genre, especially if it is not otherwise represented by an elected member. The representative is often the chair of the group but could be another member on the committee/steering group if the Chair is unavailable. In addition, we host **regular meetings for Special Interest Group representatives** to share best practice and tips. This is an informal meeting and would be ideal for someone with little time for extra research or another role. Information shared at this meeting could be fed back to the Committee at the next meeting. A quick **skills audit** of your committee should help make everyone feel they have something to offer, and between them share out the

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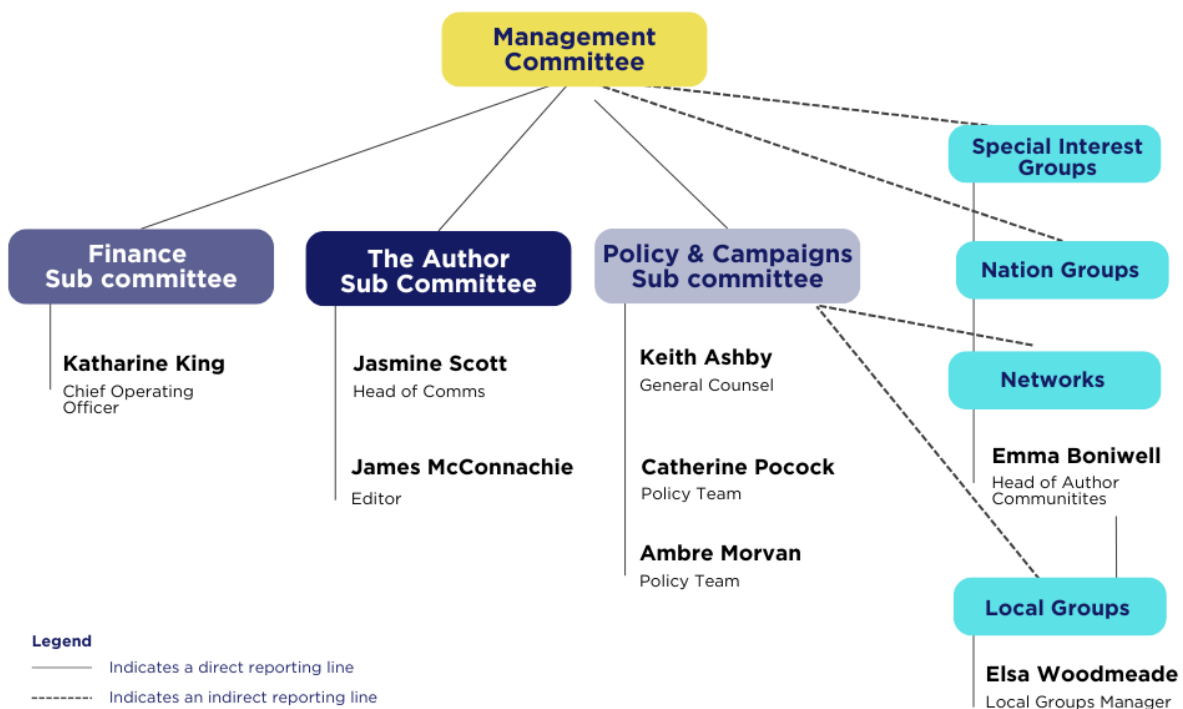


responsibility. You may find it more satisfactory to create your own list of desired skills that relate to your industry area, or the work of the Committee – because of this, no template has been designed. Please [ask for help](#) if necessary. At each subsequent meeting, the committee members could update everyone on their progress. Other suggested roles include: **recruiting** from within the other existing networks, **attending** local group meetings, **lobbying** relevant MPs, but please read our policy on [who speaks for the SoA](#) first and seek advice or a briefing from the [Communications team](#).

Information on how your group concerns can be “fed up the line” are explained in the structural organisation chart below. Should you want to refer a concern for further discussion, please contact [Anna Ganley](#) to add things to the Management Committee’s agenda. For all other committees you will find contact details [here](#):



## GROUP FUNCTION ORGANISATION CHART



### Budget

Each Group and Network has a budget to help plan spending. The budget does not roll forward if it is unspent in one year.

The Special Interest and Nation groups have a budget of £1,500 each.

The Networks have a budget of £1,000 each.

## **WORKING EFFECTIVELY FOR GROUPS AND NETWORKS**



Any in-person meetings or events need to break even, with members paying for any refreshment charges, although room hire costs could be covered by the SoA

Typically, the budget is spent on travel for committee members attending in person meetings, or for event speakers' fees. The cost of speakers is listed below to help you work out the cost of putting on an event. (Travel to London for Management Committee meetings is covered by the Management Committee budget.) If the group's event planning means the budget is forecast to be overspent – for instance a week of special events to celebrate a particular milestone – your staff coordinator can talk to the Finance team. Often the expenditure will be approved, but it will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The SoA works on a January – December financial year.

### **Speaker fees for 2025**

#### **#SoAatHome online events (from 45 to 90 minutes):**

- Professional Development / Workshop presenter: £300
- Keynote/principal speaker rate: £200
- Event chair fee: £200
- Panellist fee: £150

#### **SoA in person seminars and workshops (up to 3 hours):**

- £300 for the first 90 minutes
- £450 for up to 3 hours + VAT and expenses, depending on specific details

#### **Short readings**

Short readings would usually be from poets/performers without a talk/panel discussion element.

#### **Stand-alone performance**

£50 (for up to 15 minutes), then £12.50 per 5 minutes (equates to £150 per hour) up to a maximum fee of £100 for performers as part of a mixed bill, or up to £200 for a sole performer.