

Honorary Officer: Membership

Role description

Sara Hilditch, the Honorary Officer for Membership, is standing down on 1 January 2022. A successor is now sought to take on the role.

1. The role

The Honorary Officer for Membership is a member of Council by co-option and a Trustee of the Society. Together with the President, the Honorary Officers are key players at the heart of the Society who form a team responsible for coordinating policy on all themes and offering advice to Council on a wide range of issues. The position therefore brings the opportunity to influence and shape the strategic direction and policy of the Society and to play a major role in one or more areas of the Society's activities.

2. Why do it?

An Honorary Officer can expect to gain a broader view of the Society, to learn about areas outside their usual spheres, to establish a substantial network of contacts and to develop new transferable skills. In addition, there is the satisfaction of serving the discipline and helping to shape the Society. A further benefit may be the potential synergies between the Honorary Officer's work for the Society and the salaried post in which they are employed – in both directions. Taking on the post of Honorary Officer is a major commitment, but those who have done so feel they are amply rewarded by the enhancement of their own skills profile and by the contribution they make to the statistical community.

3. Membership

The Honorary Officer will be the lead volunteer supporting and advocating membership issues and representing the voice of RSS members.

They are responsible for:

- Taking a strategic overview of membership-related activities and advising and reporting to Council as appropriate
- Working with the team to develop membership activities which form part of the overall activity plan of the Society
- Establishing and maintaining existing support and consultation structures to provide information, advice and assistance in implementation of policy
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the Society's work in the membership area

The Honorary Officer will play a key role in supporting the membership team to develop, deliver and monitor the Membership Strategy. The Membership Strategy consists of eight main strands:

- Research and planning
- Recruitment
- Communications
- Retention

- Engagement
- Promoting professional accreditation
- Publishing to strengthen the discipline
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Society's membership team consists of Nicola Emmerson (Director of Membership and Professional Affairs), Ricky McGowan (Head of Professional Standards and Accreditation), Anna Heath (Membership Manager), Olga Mendes (Partner Engagement Manager) Joanna Ratajczak (Membership and Professional Affairs Administrator), Amaka Nwagbara (Member Engagement Manager), Amirah Chaudry (Statisticians for Society Officer), Alfie Jenkins (Membership Team Administrator), Judith Shorten (Journals Manager), Brian Tarran (Significance Editor), Mawreen Chapman (Office Manager).

The team are committed to delivering a high-quality service to members/potential members and their roles are aligned to the strands of the membership strategy. They are all experts in their work areas and will help guide the Honorary Officer through the varied and sometimes complex issues that affect running the wide range of membership activities.

There are membership related work areas that are overseen by other honorary officers and vice presidents (professional affairs, sections/study and special interest groups/local groups, publications) and collaboration between these roles is encouraged.

4. General information

The Society's Vice Presidents, Honorary Officers and the Honorary Treasurer respectively oversee the following activities and interests:

- Education
- External affairs
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Academic affairs
- Conferences and events
- Professional affairs
- Publications
- Sections, study groups & local groups
- Membership
- Finance
- Staffing
- National Statistics

5. Time commitment

The time commitment and balance of activities depend to some extent on the priorities of the Society and those of the membership team at any given time, but the Honorary Officer for Membership should expect to spend about ten hours a month. There are three Council meetings a year (currently remote; we anticipate that there will be two remote and one in person meeting in the coming year). Previous role holders have found that it is helpful to have regular meetings with the membership team, or with individual team members. The rest is flexible and desk-based, largely involving email or preparing reports.

6. Length of appointment

Honorary Officers will normally be expected to serve for four years. No Honorary Officer shall serve for more than six years in any period of ten consecutive years.

7. Support

Office

The role of the Honorary Officer is one of leadership, co-ordination, supporting, developing, and implementing ideas and policy. The Honorary Officer for membership will develop a close working relationship with the staff members involved in delivering the different strands of the membership strategy, and other Honorary Officers who also support work areas of the team (Publications, Engagement and Professional Affairs Committee).

Institutional

No honoraria can be paid by the Society; nor are employers of Fellows recompensed for time devoted to voluntary Society duties. The RSS publishes guidance [here](#) for all Society volunteers.

Travel and subsistence

The Society will meet reasonable travel, hotel and subsistence costs incurred by the Honorary Officer whilst undertaking duties on behalf of the Society.

8. Person specification

The Honorary Officer for Membership should be enthusiastic about the work of the Society and should have experience and a reputation in some area of statistics, with an interest in developing and promoting the benefits of RSS membership. The role holder should have a broad interest in statistics and should appreciate the breadth of statistical activity within the discipline. As an Honorary Officer they should also bring to the area knowledge of their area of statistics, and of experts and other stakeholders in the field, as well as their experience as a user of the Society's services.

The Honorary Officer should be able to think creatively and innovatively about the Society and its goals, and the ways in which these might be improved. They will need to be a good communicator, able to represent the Society within and outside the statistical community. They should be able to motivate, encourage and support the many people active in the Society's work, and should be able to work in a team with others, such as Council members and staff. Skills at resolving conflict can also be an advantage.

The post involves some administration, and the ability to prepare reports and process correspondence to defined deadlines is important as these are regularly required for the Society's governance meetings.

9. Submission of suggestions and applications

The Society operates a transparent process to identify Honorary Officers. It establishes a search committee which is responsible for drawing up a job description, publicising the vacancy, receiving applications and nominations, researching these, and making a recommendation to Council. A search committee for the Honorary Officer for Membership has been established with the following membership:

Sylvia Richardson (President)
Stian Westlake (Chief Executive)

The Search Committee now seeks applications from and nominations that identify Fellows for consideration as the Honorary Officer for Membership.

The Committee welcomes expressions of interest from anyone interested in filling this post as well as suggestions from others of Fellows who have the qualities and experience to fill this position. There is no need to gain the permission of the person being suggested before putting forward their name.

Expressions of interest should be accompanied by a CV and a personal statement detailing why a candidate would be suited to the task.

The Committee will in due course approach the person they wish to nominate before putting forward their name to Council.

Applications and suggestions should be forwarded to Stian Westlake, Chief Executive of the Royal Statistical Society at 12 Errol Street, London EC1Y 8LX (email: s.westlake@rss.org.uk)