

Panel Membership Recruitment Webinar, 23 April 2021

(Links and contact details updated – March 2025)

Q&As Session

Additional information can also be found in [the application guidance](#).

No.	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1	<p>Are there minimum qualifications/academic positions required for, e.g. Science Board? I have applied in the past for several panels but never even received any feedback on the application - will feedback be provided this time? It's hard to know what you are evaluating when no feedback is given... Thanks!</p>	<p>All requirements and expectations are published in each vacancy, including for Science Board. The above details along with the Science Board requirements available here: https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/stfc/how-we-are-governed/advisory-boards/call-for-applications/</p> <p>The Science Board expertise is split roughly 50:50 between scientists in the particle physics, astronomy, physics nuclear physics, accelerator science areas and users of the national and international facilities.</p> <p>We aim to provide a response on selection outcomes to every applicant although the details might change from panel to panel and on individual cases. We have changed our communication process, and last year communicated all selection outcomes. For example, the Science Board provided a detailed feedback to all unsuccessful applicants.</p> <p>We have to ensure that a breadth across a number of factors such as scientific and geographic areas, institutions, equality, diversity and inclusion is maintained when selecting new panel members.</p> <p>However, often the main reason of non-selection is that other candidates scored higher against the selection criteria. Therefore, we ask all applicants to provide the evidence how they meet the specified criteria. If you have any questions, please contact: psg@stfc.ukri.org</p> <p>The selection outcomes will be communicated in October-November this year, but can be sooner, depending on the selection progress.</p>

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2	<p>Is STFC preferentially looking for active scientists for the science board? I am a public engagement professional with an academic background and am interested in applying to bring my perspective on a science-based panel.</p>	<p>This question was addressed to the Science Board. The membership for Science Board is chosen to cover the areas that it represents and advises upon. We are split roughly 50/50 between scientists in the particle physics astronomy class to nuclear physics, accelerator science areas and users of the national and international facilities.</p> <p>The advisory panel for public engagement sounds more appropriate to your experience.</p> <p>We don't have anybody who specialises in public engagement in Science Board and, because we don't have many discussions in public engagement. It's a good question the overlap between public engagement and science. In Science Board we've only met that sort of combination in listening to reports from various areas, either from the subject specific advisory panels, or perhaps reports about facilities like CERN.</p> <p>In general, we are seeking applications from academia, government, industry, the 'third sector' or civil society communities (including charities) relevant to STFC's grant programmes, and from the communities supported by STFC facilities. Also, submissions from technologists, project managers, and engineers are welcome. All the requirements can be found in the advertised positions.</p>
3	<p>Is the recruitment heavily based upon an individual's academic record?</p>	<p>This depends on the panel. We need people with the right experience. They tend to be more senior people because strategic committees often require some depth and breadth of experience. However, there are some opportunities for applicants in the early career trajectory too. Also, some members have an industrial background either because this is the main requirement of the specific panel or because that perspective is required on the panel.</p> <p>An example of a panel with broader requirements is the Project Peer Review Panel (PPRP). Members of this panel assess multi-million big and small projects and it is very important to have technical expertise, but PPRP also have members with the project management expertise.</p>

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4	<p>What is the (rough) success rate of applications to join an STFC panel? (This will likely be panel-dependent, so an estimate with large error bars is fine.)</p>	<p>The recruitment results in 2019 and 2020 have shown that the overall success rate was around 30%.</p>
5	<p>I'm keen to hear approximate time commitment, location, and flexibility of meetings. Probably depends on the panel, so I'm thinking of AAP. Thanks.</p>	<p>It can go in peaks and troughs but is usually once every few months that you would have a meeting. In some periods, meetings might be a bit more frequently, because of pressing needs.</p> <p>The time commitment can vary depending on the type of the panel you would like to be a member of. For example, members of peer review panels would need to read and score the proposals which are fully peer reviewed. This is hard to give a time to as different panel members take different lengths of time to do this.</p> <p>AAP: it is fair to say that AAP normally have one face to face meeting each year and multiple 1-2 hour zoom meetings depending on what needs to be done (Roadmap update/feeding into UKRI schemes/report to science board etc). It's also worth noting that the advisory panels are encouraged to be self-managed so sometimes STFC staff don't necessarily get involved with every discussion/meeting panels have. The AAP staff members in charge of recruitment are Michelle Cooper / Chris Woolford and should be contacted for further details.</p>
6	<p>What data does STFC take on the influence of our grassroots/public engagement work on education/training/careers? Do the boards on these topics collaborate, and does STFC employ anyone to analyse this data to influence policy? Thank you.</p>	<p>Our public engagement team do a lot of work on the evaluation and impact of public engagement events and activities. They do collect a lot of data, and the evaluation of public engagement is very important to them. See their public engagement framework here.</p> <p>https://www.ukri.org/publications/stfc-public-engagement-evaluation-framework/</p> <p>This framework does acknowledge however that although the long-term impact on learning is the ultimate goal for the public engagement programme, it is difficult to measure because of the range of other influences that are at play and</p>

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		<p>because of the complexities and cost of capturing long-term (longitudinal) data.</p> <p>APPE and ETCC are hoping to work more closely together in the future to help raise the engagement skills of our research communities but at the moment data on the influence of our public engagement work is not being used to influence the work of the ETCC which is primarily directed at postgraduate level.</p>
7	<p>Are there any limits on the number of members from the same university/institute on one panel i.e. is it worth applying if there is already someone from your institution on the panel you are interested in?</p>	<p>We try to ensure that we have wide representation and select members from a wide variety of institutions, so in some cases there wouldn't be any point in applying if there is a newly appointed member from your institution. However, you may not know the exact circumstance of that panel at the time you apply. We also ensure to minimise conflicts of interest with institutions or departments.</p> <p>However, in some circumstances there are instances where we might have representatives from the same institution on a panel. This might be for example when the applicants are bringing different expertise to the panel.</p>
8	<p>For which panels are applications being sought?</p>	<p>The full list of the panels participating in the Open Call can be found here:</p> <p>https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/stfc/how-we-are-governed/advisory-boards/call-for-applications/</p>
9	<p>What would the typical time commitment be for one of the academic advisory panels?</p>	<p>It goes in peaks and troughs. Please see the answer in Question 5 but please contact a panel you are interested in for a specific answer.</p>
10	<p>How senior in academia do you have to be to join the advisory panel?</p>	<p>You will need to look at the requirements for the panel you are applying to.</p>
11	<p>Who would someone from public engagement be best suited for a subject specific panel?</p>	<p>APPE would probably be the best panel for your expertise or possibly the Stephen Hawking fellowship panel depending on your other expertise. APPE is not involved in the open call this year but it worth contacting the appropriate panel</p>

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		secretary to enquire when they might be recruiting new members.
12	What is STFC's policy and process regarding the selection of panel members from a diversity point of view?	Recruiting a diverse membership is very important to us. We need to balance a number of factors including people from different career stages, expertise, experience, and skills. We don't want our panel to be all from senior academics, however, we need a senior academic input too. We have a target for gender recruitment but for all aspects people need to Successful applicants need to meet the criteria of the panel.
13	I notice that the panels structure has a pyramid/tree structure. Is it better to start with a panel at the bottom of the tree to gain experience before applying for higher profile panels?	The more experience you get the more you progress through the system. Quite often members do take this approach. An example is, quite often people will start off on the Fellowships Panel and then become a member of ETCC then possibly SB etc. If you have the relevant experience though don't be constrained about applying for higher level panels.
14	How long are panel memberships, and would a change in a panel member's role/job within or external to STFC affect their membership?	Usually three years. Not normally unless there was a very extreme competitive interest.
15	Particularly for the Science Boards where there is more seniority, how is gender diversity achieved?	We want our panels to be a diverse diversity of voices. Also, please see the answer in Q13.
16	Do the boards accept applications from ECR (Early Career) members?	It depends, but generally yes.
17	But without feedback, how do you improve your case if you still want to try again?	We now acknowledge submitted applications. A similar question has been answered above (Q1).
18	Do you allow representation from across STFC too? I work at STFC and would love the opportunity to be a part of, encourage and	Yes. Submissions from STFC employees (for example scientists / technologists / project managers and / or engineers) who meet the criteria for panels are also welcome, but we

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	influence the decisions that determine the future of our very own career space.	sometimes need to ensure there are no conflicts of interest on particular panels.
19	After submitting the application, are there any other steps for candidates (e.g. responding to reviewer feedback, or interviews)?	<p>When we receive submitted applications, we issue an acknowledgement. Around October/ November, the application will be assessed, and the selection outcomes will be communicated.</p> <p>At present we do not conduct interviews for most posts.</p> <p>However, for the post of Chair, for example, of a board or panel, there is a possibility that you may be invited for interview.</p>
20	How long is the term of office on the Science Board?	Typically, three years.
21	How do panels communicate with the levels upward to see how their advice is used? Is it via the Chairs who report back to members?	Panels will typically prepare a report that will either be presented to Science Board for discussion by the Chair, or another representative of the panel.
22	It would be easier to see how 'fixed' geographic membership was if the web pages showed when the members joined.	<p>The lists of all affiliations of all Advisory Bodies and Peer Review Panels are published and updated annually on individual panel/boards webpages, where the information about represented institutions can be sourced from.</p> <p>However, we take the point and will look at how feasible this proposal might be.</p>
23	Is it possible to apply for more than one panel at a time?	Yes, you may apply for a maximum of three.
24	How often do panels recruit new members?	<p>It may only be every three years. However, most panels want some variation in panel members terms, so they are not recruiting a whole new panel. Consequently, this period can vary between every year and 3 years. Please look for information on our webpage https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/stfc/how-we-are-governed/advisory-boards/call-for-applications/</p>