

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Recruitment of Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB) members

Application Pack

October 2019

Closing date for all applications is: 29th November 2019 by 16:00 (GMT)

Date of commencement of appointment: 01 April 2020

Recruitment Process for the EPSRC Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB)

October 2019

EPSRC are seeking new members from across EPSRC's stakeholder groups for the Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB), with a strong background in engineering and physical sciences, to provide advice and guidance on the scientific, engineering, and technology aspects of our portfolio.

Introduction

EPSRC is part of UK Research and Innovation, a body which works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. We aim to maximise the contribution of each of our component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.

About EPSRC

EPSRC is at the heart of discovery and innovation. We invest in long-term, fundamental engineering and physical sciences research and training. We are committed to excellence and impact and support the talented scientists, engineers and postgraduate research students who through their research, discover new knowledge, explore new ways of thinking and drive innovation. Our research ranges from physics, chemistry and mathematics to materials, computing and engineering. It provides the underpinning knowledge that informs other fields such as the life and medical sciences and places the UK as a leading global research nation.

Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB)

The Science, Engineering and Technology Board provides the EPSRC Executive with advice and guidance on the scientific, engineering, and technology aspects of our portfolio. The role of the board is to use scientific and technological insight to identify and champion bold new research challenges at the cutting edge of engineering and physical sciences to address long term challenges and for future investment.

This advice stream is highly important to EPSRC within the context of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). EPSRC needs ever more timely advice in order to adapt and react to the new landscape, funding streams and in preparing for Delivery Planning and Spending Reviews.

EPSRC are looking to recruit up to 10 members in this exercise, with a diverse range of expertise and experience in research and innovation from across EPSRC's stakeholder groups, including, academia, business and the third sector. The Board will include an appropriate balance of expertise from different organisations (and career stages) as well as reflecting a diverse mix of individuals and backgrounds.

The terms of reference of the SETB can be found in Annex 1 of this application pack.

Recruitment Process for the EPSRC Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB)

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Role and Person Specification

Applications are sought from candidates who can bring a broad strategic view and act as 'generous generalists', advising EPSRC on the scientific, engineering, and technology aspects of our portfolio. Members are not required to act as representatives of their own organisation, research area, or sector and are expected to adhere to the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#).

The specific requirements sought in the person specification are:

- An excellent record for your career stage in conducting, leading or directing internationally respected research in an academic or other research intensive environment;
- A record of working in a flexible and adaptable multi-stakeholder environment with EPSRC, other UKRI councils or similar organisations to develop, test and provide strategic advice on long term priorities for science, engineering or technology (e.g. horizon scanning or analysing evidence about future trends in the academic, business and/or public sectors);
- Experience of representing the views of the research, innovation and business community, and facilitating two-way communication between the community and EPSRC, other research councils or similar organisations;
- Willingness to dedicate sufficient time to the role, and backing/support from your organisation. Please refer to the terms of reference.

Operation

Appointments to the SETB will usually be for up to four years, with extensions only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Executive. All appointments will begin with effect from **1st April 2020**.

Formal SETB meetings take place up to four times a year. In addition, the SETB works flexibly with EPSRC throughout the year to provide advice as requested by the Executive. It is expected that SETB members will need to commit between 4 and 10 days to SETB work per year. Every effort will be made to support remote participation to SETB activities, if this is appropriate, and to take into account part-time working. EPSRC has developed guidelines to highlight the support available to researchers with caring responsibilities, which are available [here](#). Members are paid a fee for each activity they are involved with and, when attending meetings in person, are reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses.

Please see the SETB Terms of Reference (Annex 1) for further details.

Diversity

We are committed to a policy of equal opportunities, and encourage applications from women, those with a disability, members of minority ethnic groups, and other groups who are currently under-represented on EPSRC's boards.

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We would particularly hope to continue improving the gender balance of the boards in keeping with EPSRC's overall goal of achieving at least 40% participation of women (as the underrepresented group) in EPSRC strategic bodies.

EPSRC has developed guidelines to highlight the support available to researchers with caring responsibilities, which are available [here](#).

Application Process

Applications for the SETB should be made through the [application form](#) on the EPSRC website before **16:00 on 29th November 2019**.

Applications are sought from individuals who feel they are able to meet the requirements set out above. There are four parts to the application, which are detailed below:

- **Applicant details:** Basic information and contact details, including title, name, current position, organisation, telephone number and email address.
- **Skills, knowledge and experience:** Questions which capture why you would be suitable as a member of the SETB, based on the selection criteria.
- **Curriculum Vitae:** A CV (no longer than 2 A4 pages) containing details of your professional qualifications, research, work experience, and/or other relevant experience to date.
- **Equal Opportunities information:** EPSRC operates a policy of equality and fair treatment. We aim to ensure that all applications are treated fairly, regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin or disability. To help us achieve this aim the information from this section helps us to monitor the effectiveness of our policy. Individuals are asked to supply equal opportunities information which is not seen by the Selection Committee.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (EU) (GDPR), the personal information provided on this form will specifically be used for the purpose of administering this form and aggregated anonymised data will be used for the purposes of monitoring our advisory and decision making bodies. Analysis of the information will be viewed by EPSRC staff only and personal information will not be used for any other purpose without your specific consent.

For further information on how your information will be used, how we maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold on you, please contact the UK Research and Innovation Information Rights Team.

The closing date for applications is **16:00 on 29th September 2019**. We anticipate a large response so we will expect applicants to strictly adhere to the text limitations set out in the application form. If it is considered necessary we will approach candidates for further information and/or clarification.

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Selection Process

The selection process will consist of two steps:

Step 1 - A shortlist of recommended candidates will be developed by the Executive. Candidates will be assessed against the essential criteria internally at EPSRC. The following will be considerations when making appointments:

- 1) Match to the essential criteria in the person specification, based solely on the evidence provided;
- 2) **Out of applications meeting the essential criteria**, steps will be taken to ensure diversity of membership from across EPSRC's stakeholder groups, with a balance of expertise and institutional representation, and a gender balance in line with our ambition of achieving at least 40% participation of the underrepresented gender across EPSRC advisory bodies.

Step 2 - A sub-committee of Council, the [Appointments Assurance Committee](#) (AAC), will be asked to check that the appropriate processes have been followed by the Executive prior to appointment of SETB members.

The outcomes of the selection process will be announced following step 2; by at least the **end of February 2020**.

Key Dates

Activity	Date
Closing date	29 th November 2019
Shortlisting Panel	December 2019
EPSRC Executive Leadership Team selection meeting	January 2020
Appointments Assurance Committee	January 2020
Applicants informed of decisions	By end of February 2020

Contact

If you require further information on the vacancies or the work of the SETB, please contact:

Dr Sinead Balgobin
Senior Manager – Governance & Planning Team
Email: setb@epsrc.ukri.org
Tel: 01793 444 349

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

EPSRC Science, Engineering and Technology Board (SETB)

Terms of Reference

Vision / Purpose

“Using scientific and technological insight to identify and champion bold new research challenges at the cutting edge of engineering and physical sciences for future investment”

Scope

The SETB is intended to:

- Provide advice and scientific guidance to the EPSRC Executive regarding identification of priority areas and positioning of areas for future critical mass investments e.g. Centres of Excellence and Institutes.
- Develop and maintain an overview of a pipeline of ideas to identify strategic opportunities for additional funding streams, including NPIF funds such as ISCF and SPF.
- Assess and prioritise ideas for Council consideration, providing scientific assurance.
- Enable the Executive to make informed recommendations to Council on scientific priorities.
- Understand the benefits and scientific outputs of our large investments by, for example, interacting with EPSRC researchers to identify exciting science stories and breakthroughs, using this to inform future priorities.
- Champion multi-disciplinary and emerging scientific research challenges.
- Work with EPSRC and its other advisory bodies, including the Theme Strategic Advisory Teams (SATs) to make the case for fundamental, discovery research, helping to identify and publicise scientific breakthroughs in the EPS domain.
- Work across UKRI councils to identify cross-council opportunities and priorities
- Help with two-way communication between EPSRC and the research community.

Membership

Members are drawn from across EPSRC’s stakeholder groups, reflecting a diverse mix of characteristics and backgrounds. They are expected to bring a broad strategic view and to act as ‘generous generalists’, advising EPSRC on the scientific, engineering, and technology aspects of our portfolio. Members are not required to act as representatives of their own organisation, research area or sector and are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life¹. Representatives from EPSRC Council serve on the board on a rotating basis.

Members are required to declare any personal, private or commercial interests that might conceivably conflict with the interests of the EPSRC, and must withdraw from any discussion of topics in which they have such an interest.

The names of all SETB members together with a register of potential conflicts of interest are published on the EPSRC website.

¹ <https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/governance/recruitment/membershipsab/annex/>

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Recruitment

Recruitment for the SETB is carried out every two years through an open call for applications. Based on the competencies and characteristics required for the role, detailed in the SETB Person Specification, the Executive identifies those whom it might wish to appoint. The Appointments Assurance Committee (AAC)² acts in an oversight capacity for all appointments of EPSRC's strategic advisers including the SETB. This committee considers and reviews the Executive's proposals and the rationale for these recommendations, challenging as appropriate, and reviews the appropriateness of the recruitment process. The AAC is ultimately responsible for confirming and ratifying appointments.

Term

Membership of the SETB is usually for four years, with extensions at the discretion of the Executive. In order to ensure the maximum flexibility and to ensure long-term continuity across the membership of the SETB, EPSRC ensures there is staggering of terms. Some members may therefore serve for less than four years. If a SETB member's circumstances should change which may affect their membership, the Executive should be informed as soon as possible.

Operation

Formal SETB meetings take place up to four times a year. In addition, the SETB works flexibly with EPSRC throughout the year to provide advice as requested by the Executive.

It is expected that SETB members will need to commit between 4 and 10 days to SETB work per year. Every effort will be made to support remote participation to SETB activities, if this is appropriate, and to take into account part-time working. EPSRC has developed guidelines to highlight the support available to researchers with caring responsibilities, which are available [here](#)³.

Members are paid a fee for each activity they are involved with and, when attending in person meetings, are reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses.

Quality Assurance

EPSRC relies on the quality of the strategic advice it receives. This provides an external check on the development of EPSRC's direction and plans. A Deputy Executive Chair of the EPSRC chairs the SETB to ensure that the reported outcomes accurately reflect the nature of the advice received and that all present at the meeting discharge their roles appropriately. The advisory function of the SETB is separate from the:

- Responsibility for decisions made by the Executive and by Council;
- Independent peer review processes managed by EPSRC.

² <https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/governance/appasscomm/>

³ <https://epsrc.ukri.org/funding/applicationprocess/basics/caringresponsibilities/>

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Expectations

The Executive will endeavour to:

- Provide the appropriate information so that SETB members are adequately briefed and able to contribute meaningfully.
- Provide an appropriate forum and tools for members to provide appropriate, high-quality strategic advice.
- Maintain members' knowledge of EPSRC strategic thinking and direction. We will facilitate information flows between the SETB and EPSRC Council, and SETB and the other EPSRC advisory streams including Theme SATs.
- Be clear about the information SETB members can share more widely and that which is provided in confidence.
- Inform members about the use made of the advice and subsequent outcomes and in particular to explain the rationale where the advice has not been followed.
- Make public a note of meetings.

The Members of the SETB will endeavour to:

- Act within the 'Seven Principles of Public Life', in particular to provide independent, informed advice avoiding actual or perceived conflicts of interest and taking a collegiate approach to policy and strategy development;
- Bring a broad strategic view to bear and acting as 'generous generalists', advising across the breadth of EPSRC's portfolio;
- Challenge constructively and/or validate EPSRC's perspectives drawing on the available evidence and their own experiences;
- Take individual and collective ownership of the advice they provide whilst recognising the separation of that advice from responsibility for the decisions made, which rests with the Executive;
- Work as a team with other SETB members, and EPSRC and be proactive in bringing issues and opportunities to the attention of the Executive;
- Be prepared to work flexibly with EPSRC – including, for example, assisting with consideration of scientific opportunities on fast timescales between formal meetings;
- Use their profile as SETB members in order to sustain excellent two-way communications within their respective stakeholder communities and, where appropriate, with decision-makers. This includes:
 - Gathering intelligence that can be brought to bear in policy development;
 - Explaining EPSRC policies to the community;
 - Advocating, where relevant, on specific issues on behalf of Engineering and Physical Sciences;
- Attend meetings of the SETB.