

Networks Handbook – January 2025

This handbook serves to outline the support and guidance available to the committees and volunteers of all of the member networks of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

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1. Introduction

The Royal Society of Chemistry is grateful for all of the work our member networks do and the time and commitment devoted by everyone involved.

In this handbook, the term “member networks” r

Knowing your members

The Networks Team can provide committees with an anonymised report on the demographics of their membership to help them develop a programme of events that caters to their members. These reports

are prepared by the Networks Team on a regular basis. They are available to all committees and can be requested from the Networks Team.

They cannot hold the roles of Secretary or Treasurer.

Secretary

The Secretary is the point of contact for RSC staff – this includes passing on relevant information to the committee as requested.

They are responsible for preparing and submitting the Annual Report by the deadline each year.

They must communicate any changes in committee membership to the Networks Team as soon as possible.

They should send a copy of the minutes of each committee meeting to the Networks Team as soon as possible after the meeting.

Treasurer

The Treasurer must maintain up to date accounts including checking the bank account at least once a month for

Contracts should be submitted to networks@rsc.org at the earliest possible opportunity. All contracts must be accompanied by a completed [contract approval form](#) to provide necessary context and aid the review process.

The Group are responsible for all logistical aspects of the event, as well as the payment and cancellation terms. We recommend that at least one officer as well as the event organiser gives their approval on the logistical aspects prior to asking RSC staff to sign the contract. However, this can be negotiated to different terms if the group so wishes.

What is Personal Data?

Personal data is widely defined as any information relating to or that can identify a data subject (Article 4(1)). A data subject is defined as a natural person whose identity can be identified, directly or indirectly, by reference to any information in a data set, and to any other information held by the controller (Article 4(1)).

If there is a breach

Interest Group grants

Travel expenses

The following guidance is standard across the organisation and we recommend that all committees adhere to these points:

First-class travel costs cannot be reimbursed unless evidence is provided to show that the first-class fare was lower than standard class.

A glass of wine or beer with dinner for overnight stays is reasonable but further drinks should not be reimbursed.

The cost of overnight accommodation should be approved by the committee **prior** to booking.

We strongly recommend that you advise speakers of these points before they book their travel.

Conflicts of interest

In any case where a financial transaction, support or payment in kind is made, **all conflicts of interest must be noted in the committee minutes and registered with the Networks Team**. This includes, but is not limited to, awards and bursaries, funding opportunities, payment for services and sponsorship.

A conflict of interest arises where there is a benefit for an individual or organisation to whom a member of the committee has a personal or professional relationship. This includes, but is not limited to, family members or colleagues of a committee member, organisations of which a committee member is a member or trustee, or a company where a committee member is employed.

Bursaries

While the decisions on the details of bursaries sit with the committee, ~~it~~

Early Career Researcher – this is often associated with academic research and excludes those in technical and management roles.

Younger Member – this excludes those members in the early stages of a new career and those who have taken a career break.

Early Career Chemist – many of our members work in interdisciplinary fields and do not necessarily consider themselves to be Chemists.

Instead please consider the use of the terms *Early Career Member* or *Early Career Scientist* in your communications.

Additional information can be found in this [guide for inclusive communications](#), including suggestions for language and typeface.

Accessibility

There are several aspects to event planning where it is important to consider inclusion and accessibility, from choosing a venue to the catering options to the time of day. These and more are included in our guide to [running an inclusive event](#) for member networks.

Additional inclusion and diversity guides and resources for member networks can be found [on our website](#).

9. Awards and Recognition

Recognition of volunteer activity

We recognise that our members give a lot of time and energy to supporting our community of

should email networks@rsc.org, who will arrange for a letter from the Chief Executive or President.

Scientific Awards from Interest Groups

All awards should be registered with the Networks Team **before** they are promoted – we hold a register of all awards and bursaries offered by our member networks so that we can ensure that all available support for their operation and promotion is offered to the managing committees.

While the decisions on the details of awards sit with the committee the following guidance should be taken on board by all of our committees:

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ft.1yg341(y1j0 Tc 00C -41.133 -1r5 0 TT)TJ0 Tc 08.4 (edmu4 0 1)Tj-0.770 Td

Debbie Dekker

Member Networks Specialist

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 08:00–16:00, Thursday 08.00 – 15.30

Claire Quadling

Member Communities Coordinator

Monday to Friday 07:30 – 17:00

Kat Espino

Member Networks Events Specialist

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 16:30

The team use a shared mailbox (networks@rsc.org) to ensure that urgent queries are picked up as quickly as possible. We are happy to dial in to online meetings or attend meetings in Burlington House or other locations where practicable.

Royal Society of Chemistry,
Thomas Graham House,
Science Park, Milton Road,
Cambridge, CB4 0WF, UK
Tel +44 (0) 1223 420066

Member network licences for virtual events

The RSC has acquired licences for GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar and Zoom specifically for the use of our member networks. The booking forms and additional support and resources for member network online events can be found on the [virtual events area of the Useful Forms & Documents page](#). Contact the Networks Team for information to help you choose the correct platform for your event.

Training and support opportunities

New officers and committee members

The Networks Team aim to contact all new committee members with an overview of their role on the committee and the rules along with an opportunity to speak with a member of the team.

Bribery Act

Training for all of our committee members relating to the UK 2010 Bribery Act is available on the [legal section of the Useful Forms & Document page](#). This includes the RSC Anti-Bribery Policy, case studies of situations where member network volunteers might experience a conflict of interest or attempt at bribery, and a five-minute training video that introduces the 2010 Bribery Act and how it applies to the RSC, our members, and volunteers.

Interest Group

publicising events, providing contact details, publishing newsletters, etc. Any events listed on the [events database](#) by the network will automatically be linked to through the forthcoming events link on their web page.

All networks' social media channels are included on network webpages and Twitter feeds are embedded into your RSC web pages – if you have any that are not included, or if you set up a new social media channel then please email the details to the Networks Team.

Staff cannot offer any support for non-RSC websites.

Direct communication

Social media

Member groups can support their activities through social media where appropriate if they wish. However, it is expected that all social media account operators take note that social media posts are beholden to our professional standards just as any other form of communication. As such, our standard communication guidelines still apply, including correct usage of the brand.

Individual logos and social media avatars have been created for and shared with all Local Sections and Interest Groups; contact the Networks Team for copies of these. Our Production Services Team can create social media banners upon request; contact CAPS@rsc.org for a banner image if required.

Additional resources for using social media can be found in the [member engagement section of the Useful Forms & Documents page](#).

Address labels

If any network would like to send a hardcopy mailing to members in the UK or Ireland, address labels may be ordered via networks@rsc.org. For other countries, data can be provided to print labels locally. The labels will be sent to the Secretary, unless notified otherwise. The labels must only be used for

Appendices

Glossary

Following feedback from our members

As a chartered body, we have

Operational Rules	<p>Any committee member may raise any of the working practices of the committee for discussion at any time.</p> <p>It is not permitted for any committee to set their own operational rules (these would not be flexible or open for discussion).</p>
Networks Handbook	<p>The Networks Handbook is an electronic document prepared by the Networks Team to outline the support available to our member networks as well as guidance on good practice.</p>

The Networks Handbook is updated regularly and notified to members. 3 (ood)-12.3 (.4 p)Tj-0.812.2 (ni)3.228

only be used as needed. We also ask that volunteers consider the environmental impact of over-ordering and only using promotional items that will add to the impact of activities.

... set up a new award?

See the [scientific award section](#).

... set up a new grant/ bursary?

See the [bursary section](#).

... set up registration for my online event?

This depends on the

...pay for a speaker?

If you are engaging a professional speaker there should be a contract between the speaker and the network. Please contact Kat Espino in the Networks Team (email networks@rsc.org) to guide you through the process.

If you are engaging a speaker who is not a professional speaker but has expertise in their field, you can provide an honorarium payment to recognise the service they have provided. A contract is not required for honorarium payments, but it should be recorded in your minutes.

...pay a volunteer for their time or give them a gratuity?

RSC funds should not be used to make a payment to a volunteer for their time or as a gratuity. You should not provide any gift or voucher to a volunteer in recognition of their time or as a gratuity. Committees can reimburse reasonable travel, food and refreshment expenses for volunteers that help at events.

... buy equipment for the committee to use during

... sponsor a committee member/member who is raising funds for another charity?