

# Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council

## Terms of Reference

### 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council ('STERIC') is to lead IPEM's scientific, academic, innovation and research activities. This includes identifying and supporting requests to IPEM for scientific input (which includes engineering and technology innovations and developments) and support by external bodies and agencies, and identifying themes to form and revise the strategy for science and its outputs. 'Science', 'scientific' research and activity are used herein in a general sense to describe innovation, discovery and research activities across physics and engineering in medicine, encompassing science, engineering and technology, applicable of all members regardless of specialism or job title.
- 1.2 The Council is responsible for the delivery of activities identified in an annual action plan approved by the Board of Trustees. The Director is responsible for reporting progress against the action plan to the Board of Trustees.
- 1.3 The Director will be provided with information on the budget available for relevant activities, and the Council can allocate funds from that budget; only additional spending requests will need to be approved by Finance and Business Planning Committee ('F&BP').
- 1.4 The Council's work will encompass relevant activities across the four countries of the UK, in service delivery, academic and industry settings, and across medical physics and bioengineering at all levels.
- 1.5 The Council may ask for input and advice from any of the committees, Special Interest Groups ('SIGs'), Panels, Working Groups or Communities of Interest to assist in its work.

### 2 Functions

STERIC's core functions are to coordinate and progress the scientific activity of the Institute, including but not restricted to the following:

#### 2.1 Science

- 2.1.1 Oversee and ensure delivery of outputs related to scientific and academic issues, including the Institute's programme of scientific meetings, which is managed by the Conferences and Meetings team, and the work of its SIGs.
- 2.1.2 Develop, oversee and ensure delivery of IPEM's online and electronic science-related learning products, and develop and support partnerships in this area where appropriate.
- 2.1.3 Keep under review currently important areas of scientific and academic work externally and facilitate IPEM's involvement where appropriate.
- 2.1.4 Encourage new scientific and academic work including through members' Communities of Interest and other interested parties.
- 2.1.5 Oversee the preparation, delivery and updating of scientific reports and science-related publications (excluding journals) where appropriate. Ensure ethos and action of journals is aligned with IPEM's strategy and science strategy.
- 2.1.6 Prepare responses to scientific questions and consultations on behalf of the Institute.

#### 2.2 Research and innovation

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Document Number: 0252

Version Number: 07.00  
Issue Date: 13-09-2022  
Revised by: Catriona Inverarity

Page 1 of 5  
(03-03-17)

Responsible Body: STERIC  
Creation Date: 26-01-2011  
Creation Date: 26-01-2011  
Created by:

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## Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council

### Terms of Reference

2.2.1 Promote research and innovation activities in academic, industrial, service and cross-functional settings, including through strategic oversight of IPEM’s portfolio of prizes and awards, and innovation funding programmes.

2.2.2 Build and maintain links with relevant industries and research groups.

2.2.3 Encourage new innovation work, at any stage from inception to implementation, including through members’ Communities of Interest and other interested parties.

#### 2.3 General

2.3.1 Propose nominees to represent the Institute on appropriate external bodies and committees on specific areas of scientific expertise, where there is a business need, and subject to identification of funding.

2.3.2 Bring matters of scientific, research and academic or general importance to the attention of Board of Trustees.

2.3.3 Through the Director of the Council, maintain timely and effective relations with the President, CEO and senior officers of IPEM.

### 3 Frequency and conduct of meetings

3.1 The Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council meets three times a year, usually as set out below:

Month	Key functions (in addition to normal business)
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review recent Medical Physics and Engineering Conference (MPEC)</li> <li>• Commence initial planning for the following year’s MPEC</li> <li>• Finalise committee action plan for the following year to inform business plan for Finance and Business Planning Committee.</li> <li>• Review and approve SIGs’ action plans</li> <li>• Review response to innovation programme</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan the innovation programme for the year</li> <li>• Revise science strategy content based on updated horizon scanning information from the Professional Knowledge &amp; Innovation Manager</li> <li>• Review content and delivery of science strategy outputs</li> <li>• Identify any vacancies on the Council effective from September, to be advertised in April</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review response to prizes and awards programme</li> <li>• Review progress against action plan to produce objectives for the forthcoming year in line with the existing strategies, to inform the draft budget. Identify and mitigate risks to IPEM relating to Board activity and provide an update report on risks to the office</li> </ul>

## Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council

### Terms of Reference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratify membership of SIGs from September</li> </ul>
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- 3.2 A quorum shall consist of one third of the membership.
- 3.3 In the absence of the Director the Deputy Director shall chair the meeting. If neither are present the committee members shall select a person to chair the meeting.
- 3.4 The Chair shall ensure formal minutes are made of the meeting.

#### 4 Communications, decision making and records

- 4.1 An electronic or paper copy of the agenda and agreed minutes of each meeting shall be:
- sent to all Board members and those listed in 5.2
  - sent to Institute's secretariat for archiving (accessible to all trustees and Council members).
  - placed on the committee's section of the Institute's website.
- 4.2 During a Council meeting the Chair opens a discussion and will seek to achieve a unanimous agreement on each action/decision. If consensus cannot be reached then decisions may be made by a "show of hands" using a simple majority decision, subject to a quorum being present. The Chair has the casting vote if there is a tie.
- 4.3 When electronic communications and decision-making are required prior to the next Council meeting:
- a) the discussion/ decision will usually be initiated by the Director sending an electronic communication to all Council members simultaneously. The message may initially seek advice. All discussion responses should be sent "reply all".
  - b) when the Director judges it to be appropriate (e.g., a consensus view appears to be emerging) a specific proposal will be circulated electronically to all Board members requesting a vote (agree/disagree/abstain) and a deadline for responses will be set (usually a minimum of 3 working days after the request). All decision responses will be sent to the Director only. The Director has the casting vote if there is a tie. The deadline for decision may be extended if fewer than the quorum for that Board have responded. The resulting decision will be formally noted at the next Board meeting.
  - c) the electronic discussion/ voting may be run by another person, on behalf of the Director, however the Chair remains responsible for ensuring that the decision-making process is transparent, robust and accessible by all Board members.
- 4.4 The Deputy Director shall ensure that:
- a) all the Council's website communications to the general public and members are informative and accurate and are prepared and approved in accordance with relevant Institute policies.
  - b) the contents of the Council's webpages are updated in line with the editorial policy and regularly reviewed for accuracy (at least every six months).

## Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council

### Terms of Reference

- 4.5 The Director shall ensure that a brief report of the Council's activities is provided annually (usually in February) to the External Relations Manager for inclusion in the Institute's Annual Review.
- 4.6 The Director will make the committee aware of issues relating to Data Protection to ensure that the committee complies with the IPEM Data Protection Policy.
- 4.6.1 Any queries relating to Data Protection will be referred by the Chair of the committee to the Data Protection Officer.

### 5 Reporting arrangements

- 5.1 The Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council reports directly to the Board of Trustees.
- 5.2 The National Office shall manage all agenda, minutes and other papers.
- 5.3 The Director of Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council shall attend the Annual General Meeting and be prepared to respond to any questions from members of the Institute on any issue within the Council's area of responsibility.
- 5.4 The Director of Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council shall be a Trustee of IPEM and attend the Board of Trustees.

### 6 Membership

- 6.1 The Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council membership is as follows:
  - Director (Chair) (*term of office usually 2 years*)
  - Deputy Director (*usually 2 years, followed by 2 years as Director*)
  - Four members with an interest in research or innovation, to include both scientists and technologists ('scientists' includes engineers) (*term of office 2 years, renewable once*)
  - 1 SIG Chair representative (*the term of office of the SIG representative shall be during their term of office as SIG Chair*)
  - IPEM national office CEO
  - IPEM national office Conferences and Meetings Manager
  - IPEM national office Professional Knowledge and Innovation Manager
- 6.2 The President, or their representative, is entitled to attend meetings of this committee as an ex officio member.
- 6.3 In addition the Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council may invite any member of the Institute to attend part or all of particular meetings of the Committee for discussion of specific items of business.
- 6.4 When members cannot attend specific meetings, suitably briefed deputies should attend in their place.
- 6.5 STERIC shall ensure continuity between member terms by offsetting tenures of at least two members (from four members and one SIG Chair representative) by one year. There should

## Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council

### Terms of Reference

not be any instance where the entire of STERIC's non-office members end their tenure in the same year except under extraordinary circumstances.

#### 7 Special Interest Groups

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Research and Innovation Council may propose the establishment and dissolution of SIGs, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and funding from F&BP.

The Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council will oversee the outputs of any groups reporting directly to it.

#### 8 Working groups

The Science, Technology and Engineering Research and Innovation Council may set up 'task and finish' groups for a limited period to assist in fulfilling its role, subject to funding from F&BP. The Council will provide the terms of reference for such groups, ensure appropriate resources and activities, and ensure that the group delivers their output.

#### 9 Inclusiveness and diversity

Inclusiveness is one of IPEM's strategic values and is understood as meaning "*enabling a diverse and inclusive professional community*". This principle should be considered in all decisions, actions and areas of the organisation including the membership of its committees. Diverse groups make better decisions and by being more representative of patients and the public we can achieve our charitable objective.

[IPEM's EDI policy](#)

#### 10 National Office contact

*The dedicated contact in the National Office for this committee is the Professional Knowledge and Innovation Manager. Their [name and contact details](#) are listed on the IPEM Website.*