Elected Trustee – Role Specification

The Royal Institution of Great Britain

The Royal Institution (Ri) is at the forefront of public engagement with science, guided by our vision of a world where everyone is inspired to think more deeply about science and its place in our lives. Our charitable purpose has always been to create opportunities for everyone to discover, discuss and critically examine science and how it shapes the world around us. Building on our heritage and success in creative and innovative ways, we continue to be inspired by our founding ‘prospectus’ from over 200 years ago:

‘The speedy and general diffusion of the knowledge of all new and useful improvements in whatever quarter of the world they may originate; and teaching the application of scientific discoveries to the improvement of arts and manufactures in this country, and to the increase of domestic comfort and convenience.’

Over the last two centuries the Ri has been home to eminent scientists whose discoveries have helped to shape the modern world. The likes of Faraday, Davy, Tyndall not only conducted their research at the Ri, but just as importantly shared this work with a wide public audience.

Today, scientists around the world are making equally ground-breaking discoveries that enrich our culture and have countless positive effects, but also possible consequences, that need to be discussed by wider society. This means that our relevance is greater than ever before – we must continue to open up the world of science and technology, not just by providing a platform for the public to gain access to credible information, but also by genuinely involving them in discovery, innovation and discussions about the future.

This commitment drives everything we do – from the intellectually stimulating public events and the world famous CHRISTMAS LECTURES® to activities specifically tailored to capture the imagination and curiosity of young people. For example, our nationwide programme of problem-solving masterclasses in maths and engineering, our enquiry-led educational activities at the L’Oréal Young Scientist Centre and our policy discussions with science students.

Our highly rated YouTube channel enables us to engage with people around the world. We make short films to tell the stories at the heart of cutting-edge science, as well as streaming talks from leading scientists and thinkers. Developing new and innovative partnerships with the world’s best scientists, institutions and film-makers, our mission to diffuse knowledge is now a truly global one.

Governance structure

The Royal Institution of Great Britain is a registered and independent charity governed by a Board of Trustees (Charity no 227938). The Ri was established in 1799 and granted a Royal Charter in 1800.

The Board of Trustees comprises a maximum of 13 Trustees, made up of not less than five and not more than nine Elected Trustees, elected by the Members from their own number, and includes provision for up to four appointed positions to fill skills gaps on the Board. The Chair of the Board of Trustees is elected annually by the Trustees from amongst their own number.
The Board of Trustees is empowered to oversee the affairs of the Ri, in accordance with the Governing Documents, Byelaws and associated Regulations. In turn, the Trustees delegate the leadership of the Ri to the Ri Director. The Board of Trustees delegates some of its functions to Standing Committees (Audit, Finance and Nominations) and establishes other Sub-Committees when required.

The Annual General Meeting of Members of the Royal Institution is held before the end of May annually for the presentation of the Trustees Annual Report, financial statements and report of the Audit Committee.

**The Board of Trustees**

As a registered charity it is the Board of Trustees’ collective responsibility to ensure the charity is well managed, and abides by the charity’s governing documents, charity regulations and law. Trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public.

**Role Duties**

Trustees must:

1. Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
2. Comply with the charity’s governing document and the law
3. Act in the charity’s best interests
4. Manage the charity’s resources responsibly
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Ensure the charity is accountable
7. Act with integrity

Further guidance on the duties and responsibilities of Charity Trustees can be found on the Charity Commission website at [gov.co.uk/charity-commission](http://gov.co.uk/charity-commission)

The Board of Trustees meets a minimum of four times each year (February, June, September and December) for approximately two hours each time. Trustees are expected to attend all meetings, which are held at the Royal Institution in Mayfair, London as well as virtually. Trustees who Chair a Committee, or sit as a Trustee Representative on a Committee will also attend the relevant meetings of that Committee a minimum of four times a year.

**Person Specification**

**Trustees should be able to demonstrate the following abilities and attributes:**

- An understanding of and an enthusiasm for the Ri’s vision and mission
- The ability to contribute at Board level regarding current and future initiatives, within the context of the Ri’s overall strategy
- The time required in order to attend quarterly Board, Committee meetings (if relevant), and other ad-hoc meetings as necessary
- The ability to work constructively and collaboratively with others on the Board, Committees and Ri Team
- Excellent communication and ambassadorial skills
- Shares the Board’s commitment to widening equality, diversity and inclusion across the Ri.
**Key relationships**

- Board of Trustees
- Ri Leadership Team (Ri Director, Director of Finance and COO, Director of Science Engagement, Director of Development, HR Director, Director of Strategy and Business Planning, Head of Marketing & Communications, Head of Collections and Heritage)
- Standing and Sub-Committee members
- Existing donors and prospects and key Ri contacts

**Terms of appointment – Elected Trustees**

Those successful in the election to the Ri Trustee Board must successfully complete the following procedures before their election can be proposed to Ri Members at the annual AGM:

- Completion of an enhanced DBS check – facilitated by the Ri’s Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers (DDSOs).
- Signed declaration stating they are not disqualified to serve as a Trustee of a charity (further information can be found here)
- Signed agreement confirming that they have read and will abide by the Ri’s governing documents and policies.

In addition Trustees will:

- Commit to attend a minimum of four Board of Trustees meetings a year, held at the Ri in Albemarle Street, London W1 with provision to attend remotely
- Commit to attend training events relevant to the role as necessary.

An Elected Trustee shall hold office for a term of three years, retiring at the AGM that concludes the three-year period, or at the time of their earlier retirement or removal (according to the rules laid out in article 13.6 of the Royal Institution’s Byelaws).

Elected Trustees are required to be Voting Members of the Ri and are nominated from the Ri Voting Membership by other Voting Members effective the date nominations must be submitted. Elected Trustees will be invited to join the Patron scheme of the Royal Institution, on election, and will be regularly informed of Ri news and developments and invited to a range of public and invitation-only social and networking events throughout the year.

The rules regarding benefits to Trustees are outlined under article 22 of the Royal Institution’s Byelaws. The role of Trustee is unpaid but reasonable expenses are payable in line with the Ri’s Byelaws and standard expenses policies.