Tips for Applying

Contents
1. General information .................................................................................................................. 1
   University Committees and Governance Structure................................................................. 1
   Other opportunities .................................................................................................................. 2
   Information for New Members ............................................................................................... 3
2. Submitting expressions of Interest ...................................................................................... 3
3. Further information ............................................................................................................... 5
4. Guiding Principles for Committee Memberships ............................................................... 5

1. General information

University Committees and Governance Structure

The University actively seeks and encourages staff to nominate themselves for a range of roles on committees, in order that University Governance and decision making is informed by the diverse range of opinions, skills and backgrounds found in the University.

This call for Expressions of Interest is for roles on central committees of Council (the governing body of the University) and Senate (academic matters). For more information regarding these committees, see the Governance and Management webpages and the University Committee Structure.

Roles on Council committees included in the call for Expressions of Interest are open to all staff, of all grades with the necessary skills and experience.

Roles on Senate committees included in the call for Expressions of Interest are open to all staff, of all grades (unless otherwise stated in the person specification for example; “academic staff”).

The University encourages Expressions of Interest from all staff with the appropriate skills, experience and enthusiasm. However all appointments are required to be approved by Council or Senate nominations Committee as applicable. There is an agreed a set of Guiding Principles (see guiding principles section) to which Council and Senate Nominations Committees will have regard when considering appointments to committee vacancies.
The Application Process

Applications to join a committee are made by completing the Expression of Interest (Google Form). The Google form collects personal details and statements to support applications.

In addition for the role on Senate Research and Innovation Committee the Google form requires that the applicants CV and a covering letter are uploaded; as these are required as part of the application review process (see also section 2, paragraph 4, below).

When completing your Expression of Interest form please ensure that you clearly set out how your skills and experience will add value to and benefit the Committee.

For further information and tips about what to include in your submission see section 2, Submitting Expressions of Interest, below).

Expressions of Interest for central committees are reviewed by the University Secretary’s Office before Committee Chairs and Secretaries committee are asked make a recommendation to either Senate or Council Nominations Committee for approval, as applicable.

The review process involves looking at candidate’s skills and experience with reference to the person specification that Committees provide for each vacancy. Committees also consider any current gaps in skills, experience and diversity of their existing membership.

Other opportunities

Opportunities to serve on Council and Senate committees vary from year. They are usually advertised in around March or April, when colleagues are invited to consider submitting an Expression of Interest. However, vacancies can arise at other points during the year, for example if a member leaves a Committee or a Committee revises its membership. In such cases there may be a further call for Expressions of Interest.

Shortly after the annual call for Expressions of Interest to serve on Council and Senate Committees there is a call for nominations to stand in the election to Senate in any categories where vacancies have arisen, for eligible staff. In some years there is also a call for nominations to stand in elections to Council, again subject to eligibility.

Within the University there are numerous other groups and networks at department, faculty and professional service or section level, other than the central Council and Senate Committees. You may wish to be involved with those first to increase your experience before submitting an Expression of Interest for a central Committee.
Information for New Members

The University Secretary's Office provides support for all committees and all members from the application process onwards (please see contact details in section 3, below).

Adaptions and access requests to enable meeting participation can be requested.

Within the information for each vacancy, it is detailed how many meetings there are for that committee each year. In addition to attendance at meetings, there may be preparatory work between meetings, including reading papers (documents) related to items on the agenda to be discussed and minutes from each meeting to review.

The University’s Guiding Principles for Committee memberships are set out in Section 4, below. In accordance with Guiding Principle 7, where a position on a committee is by nomination or election, members of Committees of Council or Senate will be appointed for an initial three-year term, with one renewal possible by re-election/nomination for a further three-year term, followed, by exception (where necessary), with up to three one-year renewals.

The dates, times, locations (usually centrally located university premises) are settled for the whole academic year before the start of the year to help members to plan around the meetings.

Please speak to your manager regarding whether there is provision for you to undertake committee work before submitting an Expression of Interest.

2. Submitting expressions of Interest

Committee roles commencing August 2020, can be applied for by completing the Expressions of Interest Google form.

Take your time to compose your supporting statement for section 3 of the Google form before completing the form itself.

1. The first section of the form is for personal details (name, department etc.)

2. In the second section, please select which committee you would like to submit Expressions of Interest for.

If you wish to apply for more than one committee, you will need to complete and submit a separate form for each committee in which you are interested so that they can be reviewed by the appropriate people.
3. Section 3: this is your supporting statement and is the opportunity to sell yourself. There are four questions to answer with space for 250 words in each, as follows.

Question 1: Tell us about yourself and why you would like to join the committee...

- Why the committee interests you, for example an area you are passionate about or have extensive experience or knowledge.
- Your current role at the University.
- How being on this committee fits into your career path.

Question 2: Relevant experience/interests...

Any combination of some of the following could be included, plus any other relevant attributes:
- Address how you meet the person specification through professional and/or personal experience. For example if the personal specification mentions pastoral experience, please write about any experience you have of supporting others.
- Familiarity in participating in collective decision-making, such as committees/working groups, organisations, teams or other fora.
- Any transferable skills, knowledge or experience relevant to the committee that you have acquired within or outside of working at the University, for example, volunteer roles, social experience etc.

Question 3. Knowledge, experience and contribution to equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I).

Any combination of some of the following could be included, plus any other relevant attributes:
- Do you possess a protected characteristic and/or come from an otherwise underrepresented group?
- Could you otherwise contribute to ED&I, for example through your familiarity with issues relating to BAME, gender, differently abled, neurodiversity, religious or cultural communities?
- Completion or planned completion of relevant ED&I training.
- Experience and perspectives gained as a student or in your interactions with students.
- Experience and perspectives gained outside the University for example family, volunteer or previous employment.

Question 4: What other additional value you would bring to the committee? This section is for anything you feel is relevant that is not covered in previous sections. For example:

- Enthusiasm and fresh perspectives.
- Membership of relevant University staff or external networks
- Willingness to attend training to develop self for benefit of committee.
4. For Research and Innovation Committee Only

- Please upload electronic CV and covering letter. In the covering letter please clarify why you are interested in serving on this committee, the additional value you will bring and please explain your knowledge of diversity (in terms of protected characteristics and/or diversity of ‘thought’ and background).

3. Further information

In addition to the information available via the links in Section 1, General Information, above there is more information around committees on the following webpages.

University Committees

Governance opportunities

For any other enquiries please e-mail:

Sara Whitby: governance-admin@sheffield.ac.uk

4. Guiding Principles for Committee Memberships

Membership of individual committees is agreed by the Council and Senate Nominations Committees, with approval from Council or Senate as required.

The eleven guiding principles to guide the Terms of Reference and membership nominations by the Nominations Committees endorsed by Senate and Council meetings in March and April 2019, are as follows:

**Principle 1:** Where a majority of external members is not required to maintain impartiality, each committee of the Council will have a member of the Council as Chair, who reports on the work of the committee to the Council, and at least one other member of the Council in membership.

**Principle 2:** Terms of Reference and membership documents will clearly refer either to members of the Council, or to lay members of the Council or to external nominees of the Council who are not required to be members of the Council (as ‘lay members as approved by the Council’).

**Principle 3:** Council members receive reports on academic matters from Senate and do not ordinarily sit on Senate Committees, unless they are members in Class 4, elected to Council by and from the Senate.
**Principle 4:** Each committee of the Senate will have a member of the Senate as Chair (see section 7.) and at least one other member of the Senate as a representative of the Senate, with a view to transitioning to a position where all representatives of the Senate are members of the Senate.

**Principle 5:** Where appropriate, each committee of the Senate will have facility for a Sabbatical Officer to be in membership (or for other student representation) should the Students’ Union wish to do so.

**Principle 6:** A category listing those regularly required as ‘In Attendance’ at committee meetings will added to committee Membership documents, where applicable, for the sake of transparency.

**Principle 7:** Where a position on a committee is by nomination or election, rather than ex-officio, then unless otherwise stated in Regulation members of Committees of Council or Senate will be appointed for an initial three-year term, with one renewal possible by re-election/nomination for a further three-year term, followed by exception (where necessary) with up to three one-year renewals.

**Principle 8:** The rule regarding terms of office (above) will apply to Chairs of committees of the Council and the Senate (where the position of Chair is not ex-officio).

**Principle 9:** The Chair of a committee of the Council should be a member of the Council.

**Principle 10:** The Chair of a committee of the Senate should be a member of the Senate.

**Principle 11:** Appointments to Council, Senate, and their respective sub-committees will be made with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion.