Recruitment of Strategic Advisory Network (SAN) members

Application Pack

August 2020

Closing date for all applications is: 23rd November 2020 by 16:00 (GMT)

Date of commencement of appointment: 01 March 2021
EPSRC are seeking new members from across EPSRC’s stakeholder groups for the Strategic Advisory Network (SAN), to provide credible advice and strategic insight into EPSRC policy development at a cross-cutting level.

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.

Strategic Advisory Network (SAN),

The Strategic Advisory Network (SAN) provides the EPSRC Executive with advice and guidance on EPSRC policy development at a cross-cutting level. The role of the network is to

- Provide advice in helping EPSRC to develop new cross-cutting strategies;
- Provide an appropriate environment for testing new ideas;
- Provide a means of two-way dialogue with the research and user communities on topical issues, including EPSRC strategy.

EPSRC are looking to recruit up to 10 - 15 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 SAN will include an appropriate balance of expertise from different organisations as well as reflecting a diverse mix of individuals and backgrounds. The current SAN membership can be found on the EPSRC website.

The terms of reference of the SAN can be found in Annex 1 of this application pack.
Role and Person Specification

Applications are sought from candidates who can bring a broad strategic view and act as ‘generous generalists’, provide credible advice and strategic insight into EPSRC policy development at a cross-cutting level. 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:

- Proven experience in developing and implementing strategy or policy in an academic, business, government or other research-intensive environment
- Be able to demonstrate working in a flexible and adaptable multi-stakeholder environment with EPSRC, other UKRI councils or similar organisations to develop, test and constructively challenge policy
- 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

Members of the SAN will be invited to join both formal and informal workstreams (task and finish groups). These can cover a range of strategies and policies within EPSRC and we are looking to recruit SAN members with a diverse range of skills. Skills / experience in at least one of the following areas may be valuable:

- Responsible innovation and ethics
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- International funding agencies and development
- Place, regional funders and engagement
- Research mobility
- Studentships and training
- Innovation, technology transfer and commercialisation
- Futures studies / techniques to anticipate opportunities and challenges

Operation

Appointments to the SAN will usually be for up to four years. All appointments will begin with effect from 1st March 2021.

Members will be invited to join both formal and informal work streams (task and finish groups) throughout their time on the SAN. Members are expected to attend the annual meeting of the entire SAN.

It is expected that SAN members will need to commit between 4 and 10 days to SAN work per year. Every effort will be made to support remote participation to SAN activities, if this is appropriate, and to take into account flexible and part-time working. EPSRC has developed guidelines to highlight the support available to researchers with caring responsibilities.
Recruitment Process for the EPSRC Strategic Advisory Network (SAN)

August 2020

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 SAN 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 ethnic minority groups, and other groups who are currently under-represented on EPSRC's boards.

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.

Application Process

Applications for the SAN should be made through the application form on the EPSRC website before 16:00 on 23rd November 2020.

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 SAN, 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. All applications will be 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 will not be used to determine an applicant's fit to the essential criteria but will be used to consider a balance of gender across the SAN, after the initial sift.

Applications will be assessed solely on the information provided in the application, with the focus of the assessment on the answers to the questions provided. Please use this space to provide as much evidence as possible of your previous experiences. CVs will only be used for reference if further information is needed.

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.
Recruitment Process for the EPSRC Strategic Advisory Network (SAN)
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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 23rd November 2020**. We 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.
Recruitment Process for the EPSRC Strategic Advisory Network (SAN)
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Selection Process

The selection process will consist of two steps:

**Step 1** - 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; with the focus of the assessment on the answers to the questions. CVs will only be used for reference if further information is needed.

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 consideration of gender.

**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 SAN members.

The outcomes of the selection process will be announced following step 2; by at least the **end of February 2021**.

Key Dates

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing date</td>
<td>23rd November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortlisting Panel</td>
<td>Week commencing 7th Dec</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPSRC Senior Leadership Board selection meeting</td>
<td>January 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointments Assurance Committee</td>
<td>January 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicants informed of decisions</td>
<td>February 2021</td>
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Contact

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

Dr Jessica Bonham
Senior Manager – Governance & Planning Team
Email: san@epsrc.ukri.org
ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

EPSRC Strategic Advisory Network (SAN)

Terms of Reference

Vision / Purpose

“Drawing on diverse perspectives to provide credible advice and strategic insight into EPSRC policy development at a cross-cutting level”

Scope

The SAN is intended to:

- Provide advice in helping EPSRC to develop new cross-cutting strategies;
- Provide an appropriate environment for testing new ideas;
- Provide a means of two-way dialogue with the research and user communities on topical issues, including EPSRC strategy.

Membership

Members are drawn from EPSRC’s stakeholder groupings, reflecting a diverse mix of characteristics and backgrounds. They are expected to bring a broad strategic view to bear and to act as ‘generous generalists’, advising across the breadth of EPSRC’s 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.

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 SAN members together with a register of potential conflicts of interest will be published on the EPSRC website.

Recruitment

Recruitment for the SAN 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 SAN Person Specification, the Executive identifies those whom it might wish to appoint. The Appointments Assurance Committee (AAC)\(^1\) acts in an oversight capacity for all appointments of EPSRC’s strategic advisers including the SAN. 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 SAN 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 SAN, EPSRC ensures there is staggering of terms. Some

\(^{1}\) https://epsrc.ukri.org/about/governance/appasscomm/
members may therefore serve for less than four years. If a SAN member’s circumstances should change which may affect their membership, the Executive should be informed as soon as possible.

**Operation**

SAN will most often be deployed in sub-sets, brought together to address specific questions, on which the Executive requires advice, or to explore and test new strategies and policies as they are developed. The size of each sub-set will vary according to need, but groups of six members will be typical.

Each of the SAN’s individual activities or work-streams will be framed by a specification setting out the context, the desired outcomes, and how the outcome will be used.

For each advisory work-stream, a sub-set of SAN will be convened. The sub-set will comprise a range of perspectives from across the representative stakeholder groupings. However, the Executive will select each sub-set membership as appropriate to the topic or issue in question. In some cases, the Executive will bring in additional, external expertise where it is not available from within the current SAN membership. A member of Council or a SAN member will act as chair for each work stream (see below).

For each work-stream, those members involved will be provided with a full briefing in advance. This may include opportunities to pre-review and scope the task through on-line forums. Prior to beginning each task and when the scope has been discussed and agreed, the members will be asked to consider if any additional expertise might need to be co-opted on to the sub-set. At the same time, members will be informed about the levels of confidentiality that will apply. This will be determined on a case by case basis.

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

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 Council member or SAN Member will be assigned as chair of each work stream, primarily to provide oversight of these aspects and to ensure that the reported outcomes accurately reflect the nature of the advice received.

The advisory function of the SAN is separate from the:

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

**Expectations**

The Executive will endeavour to:
ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Identify advisory work streams ahead of need, providing sufficient notice to enable planning arrangements including diary management;
- Provide a clear specification for each advisory work stream;
- Provide the appropriate information so that SAN 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 all SAN activities and of EPSRC strategic thinking and direction. This will be done through regular information flows following each Council meeting and through at least one annual meeting of the whole SAN;
- Be clear about the information SAN members can share more widely and that which is provided in confidence;
- Inform members about the outcome of the advice and how it will be used and in particular to explain the rationale where the advice has not been followed;
- Make public the notes of work stream meetings

The Members of the SAN will endeavor 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;
- Operate flexibly with EPSRC and the other EPSRC advisory groups, making themselves available to participate in sub-groups, SAN work streams (task and finish groups), workshops, pre-activity briefings etc., subject to sufficient notice;
- Use their profile as SAN members in order to sustain two-way communications within their respective stakeholder communities and, where appropriate, with decision-makers. This includes:
  o Gathering intelligence that can be brought to bear in policy development;
  o Explaining EPSRC policies to the community; and
  o Advocating, where relevant, on specific issues on behalf of Engineering and Physical Sciences;
- Attend the annual meeting of the entire SAN.