Recruitment of Strategic Advice Network (SAN) members

Application Pack

May 2018

Closing date for all applications is: 14 June 2018 by 16:00 (GMT)

Date of commencement of appointment: 01 October 2018
EPSRC are seeking new members, from academia and industry, for our SAN with a strong background in engineering and physical sciences.

Introduction

The Higher Education and Research Act (2017) established a new body, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). UKRI was established from nine Councils, with their own fields of activity, each led by an Executive Chair. Eight of these councils take on the role of the seven previous research councils and Innovate UK and will operate across the whole of the UK. The remaining Council, Research England takes on the research and knowledge exchange functions of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and operate in England. This application pack covers appointments to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Strategic Advisory Network (SAN).

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 provides the EPSRC Executive with strategic advice to develop and implement plans and to make appropriate recommendations to EPSRC Council. The Network is a flexible resource, enabling the Executive to obtain the advice required in a timely fashion, drawing on a range of perspectives from across EPSRC’s key stakeholder groups including academia, business, third sector and Government.

This advice stream has increased relevance to EPSRC as part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). EPSRC needs ever more timely advice in order to adapt and react to the new landscape, funding streams and in preparing for a new Strategic Delivery plan (as required under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017).

EPSRC are looking to recruit around 8 new members in this exercise. Through this exercise, we have a particular aspiration to increase the diversity of the Network.

The terms of reference of the SAN are published on the EPSRC web site.
Role and Person Specification

Members are drawn from the breadth of EPSRC's stakeholder group. They are expected to bring a broad strategic view and to act as ‘generous generalists’, advising our 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.

Applications will be assessed based on the evidence presented in their applications which addresses the person specification. For advice on how to present evidence against the criteria mentioned, a helpful guide is available on the UK Government Competency Framework Guidance.

The specific requirements sought in the person specification are:

Essential criteria

- A first class record in conducting and leading internationally respected research either in an academic or in a research intensive commercial/industrial environment or an understanding of the processes and pressures of delivering world class research activities, or the commercialisation of such research;
- Credibility in the research community, in either academia or the user base;
- Previous record of working with EPSRC, other research councils or similar organisations to provide advice in either a strategic or peer review capacity.

Other criteria

- An interest in engineering and/or the physical sciences;
- An understanding of the policy environment in which UK scientific research is funded and managed, for example within the academic or business sectors and/or public sectors;
- An understanding of UK Research and Innovation’s (UKRI) mission and priorities;
- An ability to reflect the perspective of EPSRC, as part of UKRI, to stakeholder groups;
- A willingness to act as an advocate for EPSRC and its activities;
- An ability to work flexibly and adapt to different ways of working;
- Willingness to help with two-way communication between EPSRC and the research and/or business community;
- Willingness to devote sufficient time to the role, given appropriate flexibility of arrangements;
- An interest in or experience of engagement with the public on scientific issues;
- An appreciation of ethical issues and the need for responsible innovation in the conduct of research.

OPERATION

Appointments will generally be for three years initially, with the possibility of
extension. All appointments will begin with effect from 1 October 2018 and run through to 31 October 2021.

Members are paid a fee for each activity they are involved with and, when attending physical meetings, are reimbursed for travel and subsistence expenses.

An annual meeting of the whole Network is convened in the autumn (the next meeting is scheduled for 6 November 2018 and will focus on EPSRC’s draft Strategic Delivery Plan), however the Network is most often deployed in sub-sets, brought together to address specific questions and/or to explore and test new strategies and policies as they are developed.

The size of each sub-set varies according to need, but groups of around six members are typical. The sub-sets bring together 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 Network membership. It is expected that SAN members will need to commit to between 2 and 8 days to SAN work per year. Every effort will be made to support remote participation to SAN activities, if this is appropriate.

My experience on the SAN by Professor Rachel Cooper, OBE, Distinguished Professor: Design Management and Policy

Being a member of EPSRC SAN is most rewarding, working alongside esteemed academic and industry colleagues, I have been able to discuss, debate and influence decision-making with regard to science policy and investment. EPSRC SAN members are engaged in critical debates on the future of science research, on the importance of both core science and inter-disciplinarily research needed to solve global challenges and on specific issues of strategy and policy. For instance I have been able to contribute specifically to a number of work-streams; on Strategic Opportunities, on CDT Priorities, and PhD impact; all these topics significantly influence the way in which academics and industry gain from investment in science. Membership of the SAN is fascinating, the ideas developed and the insights generated offer conduits to the future, they result in strategies that support creative research that targets critical and global concerns, they often push the boundaries of conventional disciplines and help to create new ones. It is important work undertaken in an effective and efficient manner, resulting in tangible outcomes that have an impact on university researchers, industry, the economy and society.
DIVERSITY

We are committed to a policy of equal opportunities. Appointments to the Strategic Advisory Network are made on merit. However, we are keen to obtain greater diversity in its membership. Applications from women, those with a disability and members of minority ethnic groups, who are currently under-represented on the Network, are therefore especially welcome.

We would particularly aim to retain and improve the current gender balance of the Network in keeping with EPSRC’s overall goal of maintaining at least 40% participation of women (as the underrepresented group) in EPSRC strategic bodies, with a current level of 46%, as a consequence of this exercise and will use increasing diversity as one of our selection criteria – Noting that the quality threshold needs to be met before diversity is taken into account.

NOMINATION PROCESS

Nominations for the SAN should be made through the form on the EPSRC website here before 16:00 on 14 June 2018.

You can self-nominate or be nominated by another person. In cases where nominations are being made on behalf of someone else, that person must be aware of and agree to the nomination. When nominating another person, the details of the nominator will be required.

In both cases the following information is needed:

Nominee details: Basic information and contact details for the nominee, including title, name, current position, organisation, telephone numbers and email address.

Personal qualities and experience: Ten questions which capture why you or the person you are nominating would be suitable as a member of the SAN.

Current Curriculum Vitae: A CV (no longer than 2 sides of A4) containing details of the nominee’s professional qualifications, research, work experience and/or other relevant experience. The CV will need to be uploaded as a PDF file. The maximum file upload size is 10MB.

Diversity information: EPSRC operates a policy of equality and fair treatment. We aim to ensure that all applications are treated fairly, regardless of gender, age, ethnic origin or disability. Individuals are asked to supply equal opportunities information which is not seen by the Selection Committee.

A nominator should leave these fields blank and diversity information will be collected from the on successful appointment to the SAN.

The closing date for applications is 16:00 on 14 June 2018. We anticipate a large response so we will expect applicants to strictly adhere to the text limitations set out
in the nomination form. If it is considered necessary we will approach candidates for further information and/or clarification.
SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will consist of two steps:

**Step 1** - A list of recommended candidates will be developed by the Executive by sifting through the applications. The list will be based on the following considerations:

- **At the Level of the Individual**
  - i. Match to the essential criteria in the person specification, based on the evidence provided;

- **At the Level of the Overall SAN**
  - i. After the evaluation based on the assessment criteria and a quality threshold has been achieved – Consider the diversity of membership;
  - ii. Securing a spread of expertise across the SAN;
  - iii. Achieving an appropriate distribution of membership from academia, business and other stakeholders, including interfaces to other areas where needed;
  - iv. Managing membership on a rolling basis in a way that balances continuity of advice with new perspectives, and in keeping with the expectation that yearly turnover will be up to a third;

**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, and that selection criteria have been appropriately applied.

The outcomes of the selection process will be announced following step 2; by at least the end of August 2018.

**KEY DATES**

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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing date</td>
<td>16:00 on 14 June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sift Panel</td>
<td>20 June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPSRC Executive Team Sign-off</td>
<td>25 June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAC</td>
<td>w/c 9 July 2018</td>
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<td>Inform out come</td>
<td>July-August 2018</td>
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CONTACT

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

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