



ROLE DESCRIPTION PLANT SECTION CHAIR

Role title: Plant Section Chair (Trustee Position)

Role description:

The Plant Section plays a pivotal role in fostering the advancement and dissemination of research in plant biology within SEB. Of the five SEB journals, four are dedicated exclusively to plant biology. The Plant Section actively promotes the publication of high-quality research and advocates for the journals within the community. Moreover, SEB hosts numerous events annually, including an international conference, where the Plant Section actively contributes to shaping the scientific programme to encompass diverse areas of modern plant science. This work is aided by a variety of special interest groups, each focusing on different aspects of plant biology ensuring a diverse range of plant research is represented within the SEB.

Special Interest Groups

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) within SEB serve as sub-communities uniting members with shared interests in specific fields, aiming to advance research, knowledge, and learning in those areas. Currently, there are 23 active SIGs, with 8 focusing on various aspects of plant biology. Each SIG is led by a convenor, and collectively, these convenors form the SEB Scientific Section Committees. Here is a list of the current plant SIGs:

- Interaction of Plants with other Organisms Group
- Plant Transport Group
- Abiotic Stress and Climate Change Group
- Crop Molecular Genetics
- Photosynthesis and Metabolism Group
- Plant Development Group
- Plant Environmental Physiology Group
- Plant Biotechnology and Synthetic Biology Group

The SEB will reimburse expenses associated with carrying out SEB business and will provide an annual £1,000 donation to support the Section Chair's research directly to their institution.¹

Person Specification/ Criteria:

- The Section Chair should be a person with a reputation in some field of plant biology

¹ This £1K honorarium is in keeping with [the Charity Act 2011](#).



- Interested in directly influencing the future activities of the Society, particularly within plant biology and the scientific community more generally.
- Capable of providing constructive input into the development of Plant Section activities, particularly at the annual conference and other SEB meetings, effectively showcasing the impact of Experimental Biology to a diverse audience.
- Have effective abilities in communication and networking.
- Evidence of good leadership and management skills
- Willingness to dedicate significant time to effectively fulfil the responsibilities of a Trustee and actively contribute to SEB's operations.

Role Specific Responsibilities:

OVERARCHING EXPECTATIONS

- To provide enthusiastic and inclusive leadership to the relevant members of the Society, and to effectively coordinate input from the Plant Section
- To maintain the Section's vigor and scientific excellence, aligning efforts with the Society's objectives.
- To work with the staff and other Section Chairs to support their work and ensure the success of the Society.
- Contribute to the future direction of the Society by actively participating in the SEB Strategic Review 2025-2030 and drive forward the resulting implementation plan.

SECTION MEETINGS

- Drive the activity of the section and motivate section members to propose ideas for activities and initiatives that advance the aims of the plant section and the broader objectives of SEB.
- Collaborate with lead SEB staff members to prepare and circulate agendas to section members prior to meetings.
- Finalise minutes of each section meeting and present them for committee approval at the subsequent meeting.
- Review actions arising from Section meetings monthly and take appropriate action as necessary.
- Present a summary of Section deliberations to Council at each meeting.
- Provide feedback on relevant Council deliberations to the section following Council meetings.
- Liaise with the Governance Officer on administrative arrangements for Section meetings.



- Solicit suitable nominations for the SEB Vice President elections, held biannually (next in 2025), with each scientific section having the opportunity to nominate candidates on a rotating basis.
- Coordinate section members in judging funding requests, such as the small conference fund, symposium fund, and section funds.
- Encourage the section to propose a diverse array of plant science-related topics for the annual conference and other SEB events.
- Coordinate voting for SEB plant award winners.

SUPPORT IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF SEB EVENTS

- Facilitate and coordinate proposals for plant-themed sessions, symposia, and satellite events, deliberating on these proposals at the Events Committee.
- To actively promote the work of the plant section, collaborating closely with SEB communication staff to ensure effective promotion.
- Encourage nominations for plenary talks and Presidents medallist awards, with a particular emphasis on encouraging diverse nominations that reflect the wide spectrum of individuals contributing to the field of experimental biology.
- To identify opportunities for SEB engagement at external conferences and demonstration of the impact of plant biology within our events and beyond.
- Review evolving event schedules to prevent topic overlap and ensure a diverse range of themes is represented.

SCIENTIFIC SCRUTINY AND JUDGING:

- To act as a judge on applications for [Company of Biologist travel grants](#) administered by the SEB.
- To manage a transparent application process for the [SEB's Annual Awards](#)
- To act as a judge and/or select relevant section representatives to judge the Section's Young Scientist Award competition at the annual conference.
- To act as a judge for Section's Irene Manton poster prize, selecting relevant finalists during the Annual Conference poster session.
- Scrutinise submissions and act as a judge on applications for plant biology events supported by specific SEB funds including satellite meetings fund, symposia fund, the small conference fund, and the plant section funds.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- Identify new avenues of science falling within the Section's remit and work towards making the SEB's scientific offering more inclusive.



- Contribute to the Society's growing Outreach, Education and Diversity (OED) portfolio by appointing and working with an OED representative who sits on the plant section. This individual will facilitate the plant section's involvement in OED initiatives, including the [awards nomination task force](#) and [OED working group](#).
- Identify scientific projects that readily demonstrate the impact of the science; to allow the Society to promote the impact to wider Society and increase the reach of the Society.
- Actively involve members in the work of the Section.
- Review and advise the SEB Council on potential partnerships with other scientific or relevant bodies, regularly assessing and endorsing support for both existing and new partners.
- To promote and actively support the [Society's journals](#).

General Trustee responsibilities:

As a member of Council (that serves as the Board), your role is to collectively guide the strategic direction of the Society with the other members of Council. The incumbent will be interested in directly influencing the future activities of the Society.

As a trustee, the Plant Section Chair will be required to act in SEB's best interests, by contributing to governance, e.g. monitoring the financial solvency of the charity, reviewing risks, and shaping the future direction of the Society.

Time commitment:

The successful applicant would need to be available to attend the following meetings:

- Council Meetings (2-3 hours, 4 per year and occasionally additional meetings)
- Joint Section Committee Meetings (2 hours, twice a year)
- Charing Plant Section Meetings (2-3 hours, twice a year)
- Events Committee Meetings (1-2 hours, every 2 months roughly)

Training and support

SEB will offer periodic training covering trustee responsibilities, including financial and legal duties, as well as soft skills and EDI training. A comprehensive trustee information pack will be provided, outlining key responsibilities, deadlines, calendar dates, and useful contacts within the SEB executive team.

Appointment and term:

Start Date:

- To abide by the governing Articles of Association of the Society, all trustee appointments need to be ratified by the membership: this will happen in July 2024 and the term date will commence thereafter.

Term length: 4 years