

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Terms of Reference

Delegated Authority

By-Law 91 Regs 5,6,7	The Board may delegate any of its powers (other than the power to borrow money) to standing or special committees of the Board consisting of members (Voting or Non-Voting) provided that the chairman of such a committee is a Voting member.
By-Law 91	Board of Trustees > Learned Society Committee > Special Interest Groups

Purpose

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) help fulfil IChemE's objective, to advance the contribution of chemical engineering worldwide for the benefit of society, by delivering consistent engaging programmes of activity, and stimulating member involvement within a technical area of interest.

Duties

SIGs operate globally and have an international membership. SIGs organise events, webinars, seminars, and by sharing technical knowledge offer continuous professional development (CPD) support. Their activity programmes offer opportunities for members to develop knowledge and technical understanding, network, share ideas, promote thought leadership, and to promote chemical engineering on a global level. SIG activities are tailored to be delivered virtually where possible, to be as inclusive as possible and to deliver services at scale across the international membership.

Membership

Group management is carried out by a committee. The chair, secretary and treasurer are elected by the IChemE members who have expressed interest in the SIG and are confirmed at the group's Annual Meeting (AM). The chair can appoint members to other roles as required, Committee members must be current members of IChemE, and the Chair and Treasurer must be Chartered Members unless otherwise authorised by the VP/Learned Society. Representation from all membership grades is encouraged.

Nominations

The nomination and election process for SIGs follows the [35 day annual meeting process](#) for SIGs and MGs.

Quorum

Committee meetings will be called by the Chair with an email sent to specialinterestgroups@icheme.org. For the meeting to be valid, the following must attend:

- (a) the Chair (or in their absence, another member of the committee should be elected by the majority of members) to chair the meeting.
- (b) the Secretary (or in their absence, another member of the committee) to record the minutes; and
- (c) at least two other committee members.

Meetings

A minimum of two committee meetings must be held every year. One of these will be the Annual Meeting (AM).

Conduct of members

All members of the SIGs accept the terms of the IChemE Code of Conduct for Members and all relevant policies to apply to their behaviour online, including their participation on any platforms reserved for SIGs, such as member-only forum, official social media accounts or direct online correspondence and in face-to-face interactions.

Any substantial breach of the Code of Conduct may lead to a notification of unacceptable behaviour and a warning or, for any significant breach or breaches (in the reasonable opinion of IChemE), the end to the services to a Special Interest Group or, where appropriate, disciplinary action.

In addition to the terms above, please refer to the IChemE Terms of Reference Appendix A and the IChemE Social Media guidelines

Terms of Reference Appendix A unless otherwise stated in the Terms of Reference

Nominations

The Chair calls for nomination of membership to the committee, giving at least 21 days' notice to the group. These are submitted to the Secretary/Secretariat before the meeting commences. In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Chair, nominations may be taken from the floor of the meeting. Each nomination must have a proposer and a seconder (and the agreement of the nominee).

Voting of committee members can be processed either physically at the meeting or virtually via an online platform, provided by IChemE.

Term of office

The maximum term of office is normally three years with exceptions noted in the Terms of Reference, with the option of re-election for one further term. They cannot serve for more than two terms, consecutively or otherwise, without the permission of the Board of Trustees.

Quorum

There must be 35% of the committee, unless otherwise stated in the Terms of Reference, in attendance for a quorum to be met. A meeting is called by the Chair. Any member of the committee can ask the Chair to call the meeting. If the Chair is not available to attend the meeting, another member of the committee can step in to Chair the meeting, excluding secretariat.

Notice of meetings

Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date, together with an agenda and supporting papers of items to be discussed, will be forwarded to each member of the committee, and to any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the date of the meeting.

All meetings will have the ability to host attendees virtually. Guidance for best practice is available within the Volunteer resources.

Minutes of meetings

Minutes of the proceedings and decisions made will be recorded to include the names of those present, any apologies received, any conflicts of interest declared, matters

arising, safety briefing and the appointment or removal of any committee members.

Any decisions by the committee will be taken by a simple majority. If any member of the committee substantially disagrees with the majority on any proceeding or decision, they have the right to have this recorded in the minutes.

Draft minutes of committee meetings will be circulated within two weeks of the meeting to the committee Chair before being circulated promptly to all other members of the committee. The minutes will be formally approved at the subsequent committee meeting and a final signed copy sent to IChemE to be maintained for the organisation's records.

Other matters

IChemE actively supports good practice and respects equality and diversity. It is open to involving staff and volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities and will seek to commit the necessary resources to make meetings accessible and create an inclusive environment so that everyone can take part in the way that best suits them.

The committee will:

- be provided with appropriate training, both in the form of an induction programme for new members and on an ongoing basis for all members
- give due consideration to laws, regulations and any published guidelines or recommendations of the Charity Commission or other applicable rules as appropriate
- arrange for periodic review of its own performance, and at least annually review the committee terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness and recommend any changes to the relevant board for approval.