

ROLE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION FOR AHRC COUNCIL MEMBER VACANCIES IN 2011

The Council

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is an executive non-departmental public body, incorporated by Royal Charter. The Higher Education Act (2004) contained provision for this Research Council which came into existence on 1 April 2005, succeeding its predecessor body the AHRB. AHRC is sponsored by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, alongside the other Research Councils.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council's vision and aims are:

Vision

To be a recognised world leader in advancing arts and humanities research.

Strategic Aims

1. To promote and support the production of world-class research in the arts and humanities.
2. To promote and support world-class postgraduate training designed to equip graduates for research or other professional careers.
3. To strengthen the impact of arts and humanities research by encouraging researchers to disseminate and transfer knowledge to other contexts where it makes a difference.
4. To raise the profile of arts and humanities research and to be an effective advocate for its social, cultural and economic significance.

Further information on the AHRC is available from www.ahrc.ac.uk

The Role of the Members

The role of AHRC's Council is to establish and agree the overall strategic direction of the AHRC within the policy and resource framework agreed by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. This includes agreeing AHRC's mission, aims, objectives and targets and monitoring that it operates within the terms of its Charter and other statutory and legislative requirements associated with the use of public funds. Responsibility for implementing Council's strategic decisions is delegated to the Chief Executive, Professor Rick Rylance.

The AHRC Council is chaired by Sir Alan Wilson and Council members share collective responsibility for AHRC's actions and performance. AHRC is accountable to Parliament, the users and beneficiaries of its work, and individual citizens for the delivery of high quality research and training, the stewardship of public funds and the extent to which key performance targets and objectives have been met. The Chair, members of Council and the Chief Executive are appointed by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and must work within broad guidelines set by him.

Council members are drawn from the academic and user communities served by the Council. They should be able to reflect and express authoritatively the perspective and views of their research or user community, while contributing corporately to the Council's successful pursuit of its strategic aims. They must at all times observe the highest standards of probity, impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to stewardship of public funds and management of the organisation; and ensure that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times. Members are expected to observe The Seven Principles of Public Life, see annex A.

Council members are expected to be active advocates for the AHRC and be willing to engage with, champion and lead on AHRC projects and activities as and when required.

Current Vacancies

The Council has 1 member vacancy.

1) Business or user (non-HEI sector) – Ref AHRC1

Applications are sought from individuals with high level management experience and a first class record in leading organisations.

Essential Skills

- Proven successful experience at Director level in a private/public/not for profit organisation, preferably within the Museums and Galleries or Creative and Performing Arts sectors.
- Proven management and leadership experience, including financial management, at board or equivalent level.
- Experience of high level policy development, in areas related to the AHRC's strategic aims, preferably at national level.
- Willingness to act as an advocate for the AHRC and for the value of arts and humanities research more generally.
- Proven ability to address difficult issues with enthusiasm and diplomacy and work with colleagues to reach conclusions.
- Proven ability to contribute to shaping the AHRC's strategic development.
- Empathy for and a strong interest in the arts and humanities disciplines, together with a willingness to champion them.

Highly Desirable Skills

- Experience of influencing decision-making and policy-making at government level.
- Significant financial management knowledge with experience of scrutinising and approving accounts.

General Issues

It is essential that candidates should be able to commit the necessary time and attention to the role, and have the full support of their employing organisation in doing so.

Membership of the AHRC Council is a part-time position for which an honorarium of £6,850 per year is currently paid. Travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed. The Council meets four times a year. Meetings are held in London, Swindon and once a year in another regional location. Occasionally, meetings require attendance over two consecutive days. Council members are also expected to contribute to related business through membership of Council's advisory committees and working groups, according to their experience and abilities. Members are expected to contribute around 20 days per year to AHRC business, including attending at least two AHRC events and acting as an advocate for the AHRC and for the value of arts and humanities research.

The new members will commence their appointment in 2011. It is expected that the appointments will be for four years initially, with the possibility of reappointment.

The process for appointing members to the Council is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and is subject to independent scrutiny. The overriding principle is that appointments to the Council are made on merit. Final selection will take account of the need to have a Council with a balance of skills and experience. In order to try and address areas of under representation, applications would especially be welcome from people whose institutions are based in Wales, Scotland, the North East and the North West of England and from women, disabled people and members of ethnic minority groups who are able to satisfy the specifications above.

The process to appoint new members to the Research Councils is being conducted under the Code of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. This is available at www.ocpa.gov.uk. In accordance with the Code a panel, including an independent member, oversees the competition for each appointment. The panel will review all applications and decide who to interview and who to recommend to the Secretary of State for appointment. Those selected for interview will be contacted directly. Once the Secretary of State has made a final decision, offers of appointment will be made to the successful candidates. Following acceptance of these an announcement will be made in a press notice. All unsuccessful candidates will be notified as early as possible that they have not been selected for interview.

Potential candidates should be aware that the Council must avoid conflicts of interest in its work and therefore individuals with significant funding responsibilities in related fields of public research are not eligible to apply. Applicants are asked to declare any potential conflicts on the application form and to that all members of Council are required to declare any private, professional or commercial interests that might conflict with the interests of the Council, or which might be perceived by others as creating a conflict of interest.

Those applicants who attend an interview will be reimbursed for reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred. Interviews will take place on **20 May 2011** and will be held in London.

Further information and the application form are available on the public appointments website: <http://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>

Enquiries about the appointment process including matters relating to conflicts of interest should be directed to Charles Langley or David Wilcox at BIS by phone on 020 7215 1236/1246. Specific enquiries about the AHRC should be directed to Miss Cecilia Sparke at the Arts and Humanities Research Council on 01793 41 6013.