



# CANDIDATE PACK

**Royal College of  
Pharmacy**

**Board Trustee**

**Together we can shape the  
future of pharmacy**





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# 1. Introduction from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Board Trustee of the future Royal College of Pharmacy (RCPharm).

As the professional leadership body for pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) is on an historic journey of constitution and governance change to become the future Royal College of Pharmacy and a registered charity.

The original body, the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, was founded in April 1841 as an independent association. In 1843 the Society was granted a Royal Charter of Incorporation by Queen Victoria with an ambition to advance chemistry and pharmacy and promoting a uniform system of education for the protection of those who carry on the business of chemists and druggists. In 1933 it became compulsory for all registered Pharmaceutical Chemists and Chemists & Druggists to become members as the Society became the professions regulator. In 1988 the late Queen Elizabeth II agreed that the title 'Royal' should be granted to the Society and in 2010 the Society transferred its regulatory function to the General Pharmaceutical Council for it to focus on professional leadership.

In March 2025 the membership of the RPS voted in favour of becoming both a registered charity in England, Scotland and Wales, and become the Royal College of Pharmacy. The ambition was to support professionals to drive excellence in patient care and create greater recognition for pharmacy with the public, policy makers and other healthcare professionals. Having sought preliminary agreement from Privy Council, Charity Commission and Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), we are currently in the process of bringing about the necessary changes to our structure and governance with an ambition to secure formal approvals and to launch in Spring 2026.

We are looking for 2-3 talented individuals to bring wider expertise to our board and complement the skills of our elected pharmacists and me as Chair. As we already have expertise in pharmacy, this is not a requirement for these newly appointed trustees. However, one of the new trustees must have strong specialist knowledge of charity finances. And all must demonstrate a good grasp of charity governance, strategic leadership, risk management, performance monitoring, financial oversight and the other essential requirements of being a charity trustee.

It would also be desirable to bring expertise in any of the following areas: change management, marketing and communication, commercial success of a trading subsidiary, safeguarding, education, professional accreditation, or knowledge of the inner workings of membership organisations. Knowledge of the wider healthcare environment and in particular patient voice would also be an advantage.

We are creating a trading subsidiary for our very successful publishing business, Pharmaceutical Press. As the knowledge business of the current RPS, Pharmaceutical Press supports health professionals across the world with evidence-based pharmaceutical knowledge to improve patient safety and as a not-for-profit organisation, we invest all our resources into creating trusted products and workflow tools that promote best practice in medicines use. The subsidiary will be wholly owned by the charity, and the Trustee Board will have an important role in oversight of the performance of the company.

Pharmacy is the third largest workforce in healthcare after doctors and nurses. With a membership of approximately 38,000 comprising Pharmacists, Pharmaceutical Scientists, foundation trainees and students, we are building a royal college on the success of the RPS.

With a mission to put pharmacy at the forefront of patient care and a vision to be the world leader in safe and effective use of medicines, we believe now is the time to create a College that supports pharmacists to advance the science, research and practice of pharmacy for the benefit of patients and the public, and take its rightful place amongst other prestigious royal colleges.

As a member of the Trustee Board you will help support the CEO and executive team to achieve the College's mission and strategy. In line with our commitment to ethical practice, all trustees must abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life. We aspire to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and to have a broadly representative board. We welcome applicants for every background- race, gender, age or socio-economic background. We also will require a commitment to EDI good practice. All our new trustees will be offered induction and appropriate training with a session earmarked for June 2026.

We hope that you too will consider this an exciting challenge and want to be an important part of our journey.

**Joe Irvin OBE, Chair of the Trustee Board**

## 2. About the Royal Pharmaceutical Society

### Who we are

We are the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, the professional leadership body for pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. We champion the safe and effective use of medicines and support the profession for the benefit of patients and the public.

- *Our mission* is to put pharmacy at the forefront of healthcare.
  - *Our vision* is to become the world leader in the safe and effective use of medicines.

### What we do

We support pharmacists in their education and development, promote pharmacy in the media and government, and lead the way in medicines information across Great Britain and around the world.

### Our values

At the core of our culture, our Values Focus, Agility, Quality, Collaboration and Respect describe the way we work to achieve our organisational goals.



### Equality, inclusion and diversity

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society is serious about inclusion and diversity, both for our members and within our own organisation. We're committed to making inclusion and diversity central to pharmacy, celebrating and encouraging diverse voices across the pharmacy workforce.

Central to this aim is our **Inclusion and Diversity Strategy**. This is a plan for, and by, pharmacy, with three priorities:

1. Create a culture of belonging
2. Champion inclusive and authentic leadership
3. Challenge barriers to inclusion & diversity.

### Leadership in pharmacy practice

We define best practice for pharmacy professionals and help them achieve this through professional development, career support and training. We are here to support professionals with the challenges of pharmacy practice, and advocate for the role of pharmacy by setting professional and ethical standards, producing policy papers and responding to consultations with government and industry.

## Publishing

We're the world leaders in evidence-based pharmaceutical publications and guidance. Pharmacists and other healthcare professionals trust us to provide expert analysis, educational support, webinars and news that informs, supports and enhances their practice. We independently source, evaluate, and communicate and make practical medicines knowledge accessible worldwide.

## Our governance and leadership

Currently, our Assembly provides overall governance and strategic direction for RPS. Our three National Pharmacy Boards provide advocacy, support and strategic leadership for pharmacy practice and developments within England, Scotland and Wales. The Pharmaceutical Press (PhP) Board advises the Assembly on the direction and approach of Publishing, while our Executive Team look after every aspect of our operations.

From April 2026, as the Royal College of Pharmacy, we will be a royal charter organisation with charitable status, this means that our governance will change, and we will be led by a trustee board. Our Assembly will become our senate, and our national boards will become our national councils.

## Royal College of Pharmacy The responsibilities of each governing body

Please note that this information is still subject to final approvals, and will only be finalised within the full Regulations for the future Royal College of Pharmacy

### Board of Trustees

Overall responsibility for all College activities and ensures the College is operated in accordance with charity regulations and the Royal Charter obligations

Takes fiduciary responsibility for the College

Agrees strategy and annual plans with the input of Senate on professional matters

Ensures the College delivers against its objectives

### Senate

Determining the strategic direction of UK pharmacy professional leadership

Advising the Board of Trustees on professional matters

Monitoring College's impact at a GB level

Harmonises the activities of the Councils and all other professional advisory groups and committees

### English Pharmacy Advisory Council

Guiding the implementation of the College's strategy in England

Developing pharmacy policy and practice in England

Supporting professional development activity in England

Engaging with members and representing the College

### Welsh Pharmacy Advisory Council

Guiding the implementation of the College's strategy in Wales

Developing pharmacy policy and practice in Wales

Supporting professional development activity in Wales

Engaging with members and representing the College

### Scottish Pharmacy Advisory Council

Guiding the implementation of the College's strategy in Scotland

Developing pharmacy policy and practice in Scotland

Supporting professional development activity in Scotland

Engaging with members and representing the College



## 3. Our change journey

Our journey to becoming the Royal College of Pharmacy began in 2023 when we commissioned constitution and governance expertise to look at how we may start to structure ourselves to better address the challenges the profession faces. These identified challenges included:

- A rapidly changing pharmacy landscape in the UK
- Professional and care quality repercussions of increased expectations on pharmacists and the wider pharmacy team
- Rapid changes in medicines development
- Impact of accelerating technology change on the pharmacy team and patient expectations.

Additional context and background to this work came from the Commission created by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officers of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on professional leadership, and the UK Pharmacy Professional Leadership Advisory Board (UKPPLAB).

### Why change?

Various factors drove the need for the changes proposed.

- Ensuring our corporate structure and way we are governed is optimised enhances our ability to deliver our ambitions and ensure that we are modernised and flexible for the future
- It enables us to more clearly articulate our purpose and position in the world of healthcare
- As a 'Royal College' we are aligned with other healthcare professions (nurses, GPs, Doctors etc) Becoming a royal college would bring us, as the professional leadership body for pharmacy, into line with other health and medical royal colleges, at a time of change for pharmacy both in terms of the profession, in terms of medicines development, and in technology.
- Becoming the Royal College of Pharmacy, a name easily understood by the media, policymakers and the public, will enable us to remain a strong and effective voice for the profession and for pharmacy.
- Is a positive change for our teams and our organisation

The membership vote demonstrated that our membership also believe this to be the best course of action for a stronger professional leadership future.

All of these drivers were considered in the context of the links between charter change and the fulfilment of RPS's vision for professional leadership and determining the future state.

## 4. Our governance

The Royal College of Pharmacy's Board of Trustees will be responsible for the charity's strategy and financial security and follows Charity Commission guidance on its essential and statutory roles.

While the day-to-day running of the organisation will be delegated to the Interim Chief Executive, who is supported by a senior leadership team, trustees ultimately will be legally and equally accountable.

The trustee board will consist of eight or nine trustees in total. The majority of these will be elected members and we are initially seeking up to three skilled trustees to take up the remaining roles. The trustee board will be led by our Chair, Joe Irvin OBE.

There are also currently four formal board committees: the Audit and Risk advisory Committee ("ARC"), the Financial and Investments Advisory Committee ("FIC"), the Remuneration Committee ("RemCom") and the Membership Committee ("MemCom").

The board sits for formal board meetings four times a year – and meets annually for a full-day strategic review and planning session. The dates for 2026 can be provided on request.

All trustees are appointed for an initial term of up to three years with the option to renew for two further terms.

As well as the trustee board, our Royal College governance structure comprises:

- **The Senate** - for professional leadership, chaired by the president
- **The National Pharmacy Advisory Councils** – leading on practice understanding, chaired by the council chairs
- **The Publishing Board** – who lead our wholly owned publishing subsidiary

## 5. Our future leadership structure

Following our successful special resolution vote, our focus has turned to the delivery of the transition. As part of this, we have defined our future royal college leadership and operating structure, and we are delighted to now be in a position to recruit for our trustee board to lead the Royal College of Pharmacy.

The Board's primary responsibilities include:

- Setting vision, values, mission, strategy, and high-level policy in accordance with charity regulations and the Royal College of Pharmacy's charter obligations and governing documents.
- Monitoring the organisation's financial and service delivery performance against agreed targets.
- Ensuring the continued sustainable financial stability for the organisation.
- Protecting and managing organisational property and investments.
- Safeguarding the organisation's reputation, ethics, and values.
- Ensuring all organisational activities comply with charity regulations and the law.
- Appointing, supporting, and managing the Chief Executive and ensuring performance, and risk, is reviewed regularly.
- Maintaining oversight of the charity's wholly owned subsidiary businesses and their performance in alignment with the agreed target operating model

## 6. Principal responsibilities

Trustees are collectively and individually responsible for everything the College does. This includes ensuring the College focuses on its mission, achieves its strategic objectives, complies with legal requirements and remains financially viable. In practice the day-to-day running of the organisation is delegated to the CEO and the Executive Team. The CEO and Executive Team have the prime responsibility to carry out the agreed plans, monitored by the Trustee Board and also help develop RCPHarm's strategic objectives and budget, for the approval of the Board.

Our trustees are expected to demonstrate characteristics consistent with the Nolan Principles of public life.

As a member of the trustee board of a charity, our trustees have statutory duties to:

- Contribute actively to the Board, in giving firm strategic direction to the charity, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Ensure that the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that the charity pursues its mission, as defined by the objects in its governing document and uses its resources exclusively for the delivery of that mission.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the charity.
- Ensure effective and efficient administration of the charity.
- Ensure the financial stability of the charity.
- Protect and manage the assets of the charity and ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- Appoint the CEO and monitor their performance.

We are seeking up to three trustees for the Board of Trustees to guide the Royal College of Pharmacy effectively and oversee our wholly owned subsidiary. We are looking for individuals who:

- Bring strategic thinking and oversight.
- Can steer the development of clear strategic direction, facilitating positive organisational change.
- Are knowledgeable about pharmacy priorities and their impact on the organisation and wider society.
- Hold executive leaders to account effectively for standards, financial performance, and risk management.
- Demonstrate integrity, transparency, and manages conflicts of interest proactively.

Responsibilities will include:

- Building strong, supportive relationships among trustees, senior leaders, and stakeholders.
- Fostering a culture of openness, trust, and constructive challenge.
- Setting high standards and acting as an exemplary role model in governance behaviours.
- Ensuring compliance with charity law, company law, and regulatory frameworks.
- Demonstrating self-awareness and prioritising the charity's interests, recognising when appropriate to transition leadership.

## 7. Person specification

<i>Experience or Knowledge of</i>	<i>Essential (E) /Desirable (D)</i>
Strategic leadership – with ability to focus on long-term direction and outcomes rather than operational detail	E
Supporting strategic delivery while contributing to forward planning and development	E
Understanding the distinct role of trustees and operational/executive functions	E
Working collaboratively with Boards and Executive Leadership Teams	E
EDI: Commitment to and knowledge of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion best practice	E
Building consensus while contributing independent insight and alternative perspectives	E
Membership-based organisations	D
Change management - Leading or advising organisations through growth, change, or uncertainty	D

<i>Knowledge/ good understanding of:</i>	<i>Essential (E) /Desirable (D)</i>
Charity or not-for-profit governance	E
Financial oversight	E
Performance monitoring	E
Risk management and compliance	E
Good communications skills	E
GB healthcare environment	D
Marketing and communication	D
Commercial success of a trading subsidiary	D
Education	D
Professional accreditation	D
Safeguarding	D

*The principles and personal attributes that individuals bring to our Trustee Board are as important as their skills and knowledge. These qualities enable members to use their skills and knowledge to function well as part of a team and make an active contribution to effective governance. All members of our Board are expected to exhibit the seven principles of public life (the Nolan principles) in all our work.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

## 8. Nature of the role

The position is a voluntary one and successful applicants will be appointed for a three-year term and may be reappointed for a further two terms. Expenses (travel and any necessary accommodation or subsistence) will be paid in accordance with the expenses policy. The estimated time commitment is one day per month. This includes attendance in person or by Teams at four meetings annually, plus reading and preparation time. There will also be an annual awayday and trustees may also serve on one of the sub-committees or subsidiary board, each typically meeting 4 times annually.

## 9. How to apply

To apply, please send a CV or Profile and a supporting statement via the link on our website. We are committed to making the application process inclusive.

1. Briefly describe how your skills, experience and personal qualities make you a good candidate for this role. Refer to the role description and person specification for inspiration. (800-word limit)
2. Your specific areas of expertise that will be beneficial to our board of trustees

Each candidate will be shortlisted based on merit, and interview and appointment selection will be strictly based on the agreed selection criteria. The Equality Act 2010 permits reasonable adjustments that may give preferential treatment to an individual with a disability.

### **Timeline**

Closing date: 08 March 2026

Panel Interview: 01/02 April 2026

