

BIA Early Career Researchers' Committee

Proposed terms of reference

Aim: To encourage and support entry into infection research, subsequent research activity and research career progression

Target audience: Individuals in medical, nursing or allied health professional roles ('healthcare professionals') and non-clinical researchers with an interest in infection research from undergraduate to level of intermediate fellowship

Objectives:

- To facilitate networking and research opportunities for the target audience
- To develop and maintain a mentorship scheme that links aspiring researchers with those with more experience
- To act as a central point of access for resources relevant to aspiring researchers
- To identify and highlight opportunities for both traditional and alternative career paths within academia and research
- To aid early career researchers with applications for research fellowships and grant funding opportunities
- To be receptive to the needs of the target audience and amend objectives as appropriate

Specific leadership roles within committee:

- **Chair** - Coordinates and manages committee (including meetings), sets meeting agenda, is default representative of the committee to BIA Council and external organisations, and provides overall leadership.
- **Secretary** - Organises the meetings, writes and distributes minutes, is responsible for communication within and outside the committee.
- **Mentorship Lead** - Oversees the mentorship programme and organises any separate meetings with mentorship officers to ensure continued management of the scheme.
- **Website/Content Lead - Oversees** all web content, collates blog posts from committee members and relevant non-committee persons for publication, collates and publishes announcements to the website, arranges website training for new committee members.
- **Networking/Events Lead** - Oversees upcoming events and arrangement of networking/events team meetings (including with external parties) on an ad hoc basis in the run up to ECRC events.

Additional roles:

- **Mentorship Officer(s)** - Supports the Mentorship Lead with administration of the ECRC Mentorship programme.
- **Website/Content Officer(s)** - Supports the Website/Content Lead with administration of the ECRC webpage.
- **Networking/Events Officer(s)** - Supports the Networking/Events Lead with arrangement of ECRC Events.
- **ECRC-NITCAR Liaison Officer** – Facilitates collaboration with the National Infection Teams Collaborative for Audit and Research (NITCAR), promotes effective communication between the groups, and is responsible for project related announcements.

Committee Procedures:

Appointment to the committee

- Committee is expected to consist of Early Career Researchers based within the UK/Ireland – defined here as those ≤ 5 years post-PhD completion. Alternative entries into academia by clinicians are recognised, however typically committee members would not be > 5 years post CCT.
- Size of the committee to be within 10-12 members, to include a minimum of one non-medical trainee
- No term limit on committee, but members without leading roles (i.e. officers under any domain) can resign with immediate effect
- General principle and aspiration to ensure diversity of representation across geographies, demographics and career backgrounds. No stipulations on makeup currently, but this will need to be reviewed, with next review date of June 2026.
- Criteria for consideration of the committee is declared self-interest. If more applicants than places available, then places will be appointed by majority committee decision according to suitability of candidate and ensuring diversity with the aforementioned principles.

Appointment to specific leadership roles

- Nominations by one committee member are required. Individuals can nominate self.
- Appointment to position automatic if single nomination; committee-wide majority vote to decide if multiple nominations.
- No term limit, notice to be given for stepping down from leadership roles to allow renomination and appointment as well as handover period
 - Chair/Secretary: 2x meetings notice required in order to facilitate handover period
 - Mentorship, Website/Content, and Networking/Events Leads: 1x meeting notice required
- Positions are reconfirmed at six monthly intervals.

Meetings:

- Committee meetings expected to be a minimum of bi-monthly between mid-August to late November and late January to mid-June. Between these periods, meetings frequency expected to be quarterly at minimum.
- Additional meetings called for at discretion of the Chair
- Minutes to be kept by the Secretary and made available to the BIA Council Scientific Secretary
- Decisions passed by majority vote, casting vote by chair.
- Greater than 60% of total committee will be required to be present for quorate