

FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL – TERMS OF REFERENCE

(approved by the Trustee Board on 16 November 2011)

1. Mission and Purpose

1.1 The Fellowship Council is a representative forum for Fellows of the RSA, with the core aim of promoting more effective working relationships between all aspects of the RSA, and specifically ensuring that the Fellowship's voice is heard by the Trustee Board and by RSA staff.

1.2 The Fellowship Council will actively support, promote and broaden the awareness of the work of the RSA and its Fellows.

1.3 The remit of the Fellowship Council will evolve in conjunction with the strategic direction of the RSA, in partnership with and as directed by the Trustees. The Fellowship Council is advisory only.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Fellowship Council are to:

- (a) further the values, aims and objectives of the RSA and its Fellowship;
- (b) Support effective working relationships between the Fellowship and Trustee Board, RSA staff and national, regional, local and interest-based groups of Fellows, with mutual communication and accountability. In particular the Fellowship Council will liaise closely with and support the Fellowship Department in all aspects of its work;
- (c) raise the profile of the RSA through the activities of its Fellowship;
- (d) identify, encourage and support best practice Fellow network development, projects and activities;
- (e) engage Fellows in the development of, and ensure Fellow understanding and endorsement of, RSA programmes, projects and activities; and
- (f) underpin and give additional credibility to the work of the Fellowship.
- (g) Working with leaders of regional groups, support the range of activities by Fellows in their region, and the needs of regional committees/panels, local networks, project groups and other groupings of Fellows.

3. Function

The Fellowship Council will:

- (a) represent the interests of the Fellowship, within the wider strategic context and direction of the RSA;
- (b) work with RSA staff to encourage activities among Fellows which contribute to the RSA's aims and values, and discourage those that do not;
- (c) Act as a consultative body for Trustees and management, discussing and advising on strategy, policy, project development and operational matters as appropriate;
- (d) hold stimulating, constructive and outcome focused discussions on Fellow and Fellowship related issues;
- (e) Facilitate two-way communication with the Fellowship in the regions, liaising closely with regional committees/panels and other groupings as appropriate
- (f) provide recommendations on Fellow-led activities and outputs; and
- (g) At the request of the Trustee Board, advise on appropriate standards of conduct to be applied by the Trustee Board where the conduct of individual Fellows or groups of Fellows could be damaging to the reputation of the RSA and the Fellowship.

4. Project Working Groups

4.1 The Fellowship Council will establish project working groups to undertake detailed work in priority action areas determined by members of the Fellowship Council, in partnership with RSA staff and Trustees and in consultation with the wider Fellowship.

4.2 Membership of the project working group will reflect knowledge, skills and perspectives required to inform and advance the project streams. The project working groups will:

- (a) be convened by a member of the Fellowship Council and include at least one member of RSA staff;
- (b) develop project plans specifying actions, milestones, output measures and outcomes; and
- (c) provide regular briefings and progress reports to the Fellowship Council.

5. Membership

5.1 The membership processes and arrangements for the Fellowship Council will be determined by the RSA Trustees in consultation with the Fellowship Council, in accordance with Bye-Law 7.1.

5.2 In accordance with Bye-Law 7.2, the Fellowship Council will consist of no more than 40 members, all of whom will be RSA Fellows.

5.3 The Fellowship Council was initially composed of 20 members appointed by the Trustees and 20 members elected by the Regions under a scheme of election prescribed by the Trustees. With effect from elections held in Summer 2012, the Fellowship Council will have up to 35 members elected by the Regions/Nations (including up to 14 elected Regional/National Chairs and up to 21 other Fellows elected) and up to 5 appointed Fellows.

In the event that a Regional/National Chair does not wish to take up the position on the Fellowship Council, the Regional/National Team will invite one of the elected Fellowship Council representatives for the Region/Nation to take on the role of liaising between the team and the Council.

5.4 If at any time there are less than 20 elected members the Nominations Panel may make arrangements for the election of new Fellowship Councillors. If there is an insufficiency of nominations or a casual vacancy on the Fellowship Council, the Trustees may restore the number of the Fellowship Council's members to 40 by appointing additional appointments.

5.5 In accordance with Bye-Law 7.3, terms of office for Fellowship Councillors will normally be two years, and may be followed by another consecutive two year term. Any Fellowship Councillor who has served for four consecutive years may not be re-appointed or re-elected until after an interval of at least one year.

5.6 The Fellowship Council will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair from its membership, at least one of whom must be an elected Fellowship Councillor. These positions will have a non-renewable term of two years and the Chair and Deputy Chair will continue to hold their office for the full duration of their appointment notwithstanding Bye-law 3.

5.7 The Fellowship Council Chair and Deputy Chair may, on completion of their term, remain as Fellowship Councillors if appointed by the Trustees or elected by the Regions.

6. Fellowship Council representation on the Board

Two members of the Fellowship Council will be co-opted by the Trustees to represent the Fellowship Council on the RSA Trustee Board. One of these will be offered ex-officio to the Chair, or, if he/she does not wish to take on the role, to the Deputy Chair, with the other Trustee representative being elected by members of the Fellowship Council. If neither the Chair nor Deputy Chair wishes to take on the role, this will be also filled by election from the Fellowship Council. The Nominations Panel shall consider the eligibility of potential nominees and shall recommend to the Trustees nominees for appointment to the Board as representatives of the Fellowship Council. Fellowship Councillors who have previously been RSA Trustees will not be eligible.

7. Governance

7.1 The Fellowship Council will meet formally on at least three occasions each year.

7.2 Any decisions or recommendations of the Fellowship Council must be passed by a majority of the Fellowship Councillors present at a quorate Fellowship Council meeting.

7.3 No decisions or recommendations shall be made at a meeting of the Fellowship Council unless a quorum is present. A quorum will be at least 15 Fellowship Councillors.

7.4 The Chair or, in his or her absence, the Deputy Chair shall preside at every meeting of the Fellowship Council and shall be responsible for the proper conduct of those meetings in accordance with these Terms of Reference. In the absence of both the Chair and the Deputy Chair, the Fellowship Councillors present shall elect one of their number to chair the meeting.

7.5 The Fellowship Council will report to the Board of Trustees via the Fellowship Council co-options to the Board to Trustees

7.6 Trustees, the Chief Executive, Director of Fellowship and other senior management staff may attend meetings of the Fellowship Council, with other staff and Fellows invited when appropriate and with the agreement of the Chair of the Fellowship Council.

7.7 The Director of Fellowship will act as secretariat to the Fellowship Council.

7.8 The Fellowship Council will also work closely with the Chief Executive of the RSA, and the Chair of the Trustees.

8. Resignation and removal of Fellowship Councillors

8.1 A Fellowship Councillor shall cease to hold office if:

(a) he or she gives written notice of his or her resignation to the Chief Executive and such resignation has taken effect in accordance with its terms;

(b) he or she submits a written offer to resign to the Fellowship Council and that offer is accepted by the Fellowship Council;

(c) is convicted of a criminal offence and receives a custodial sentence (whether immediate or suspended);

(d) the Nominations Panel decides that he or she be removed from office on grounds that his or her conduct has materially disrupted the working of the Fellowship Council or has brought (or, on a reasonable view, has risked bringing) the Fellowship Council into disrepute or is otherwise inimical to the best interests of the Fellowship Council. Such a decision shall not be taken unless he or she has been given at least 14 clear days' notice that the resolution is to be proposed, specifying the circumstances alleged to justify removal from office, and has been afforded a reasonable opportunity of either (at his or her option) being heard by or of making written representations to the Nominations Panel. The Chair or Deputy Chair of the Fellowship Council may make a recommendation to the Nominations Panel that a Fellowship Councillor be removed from office where they consider that circumstances exist justifying his or her removal from office (and where the recommendation relates to the Chair or the Deputy Chair, 15 or more Fellowship Councillors may make the recommendation); or

(e) he or she ceases to be a Fellow.

(f) he or she is absent without good cause from two consecutive meetings.

8.2 For the avoidance of doubt, a Fellowship Councillor who ceases to hold office under paragraphs 8.1(a) to (f) above shall continue to be a Fellow of the RSA unless he or she is otherwise expelled as a Fellow in accordance with the Charter and Bye-laws.

8.3 If a Fellowship Councillor is a Trustee and ceases to hold office as a Fellowship Councillor, he or she will be invited by the Chair of the Board of Trustees to resign as a Trustee.