



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure



**Royal College of Pathologists
Lay Chair and Lay Trustee
Candidate Pack 2026**

Welcome Message

Thank you for your interest in joining the Trustee Board of The Royal College of Pathologists.

As one of the UK's leading medical Royal Colleges, we play a vital role in advancing the science and practice of pathology, supporting our members and helping to improve patient care. Pathology underpins the vast majority of healthcare decisions, from diagnosis and treatment to screening, prevention and research.

We are seeking to appoint a Lay Chair and Lay Trustees who can bring independent perspectives, strategic insight and constructive challenge to our governance. We welcome applications from individuals with a broad range of professional backgrounds and experiences who share our commitment to excellence, inclusion and public service.

This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to the leadership of an organisation that influences healthcare policy, professional standards, education and innovation both within the UK and internationally. At a time of significant change across healthcare, strong governance and diverse perspectives have never been more important.

We hope this information pack provides you with a helpful introduction to the College and the roles available, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Bernie Croal

President

The Royal College of Pathologists



About the Royal College of Pathologists

Introduction

The Royal College of Pathologists is a professional membership organisation dedicated to advancing the science and practice of pathology. The College sets standards in training, assessment, professional development and clinical practice, and promotes excellence in diagnostics and patient care in the UK and internationally.

We are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within our organisation, and to ensuring that our governance reflects a broad range of perspectives and experience. We welcome applications from all backgrounds.

The College

The College plays a key role in supporting high standards in pathology services and improving patient care. Through education, professional standards, examinations, workforce advice and public engagement, the College contributes to healthcare policy and practice across the UK and internationally. The College's Trustee Board provides strategic oversight, ensures effective governance, and supports delivery of the College's charitable objectives.





Our Vision & Mission

The Royal College of Pathologists' Strategy for 2024–2029 sets out our vision for promoting and advancing excellence in pathology. The College's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of pathology and to be responsible for maintaining standards through training, assessments, examinations and professional development.

Our Values

Teamwork: We achieve excellence by working together.

Service: We support members to deliver the best patient care.

Ambition: We aspire to provide the best quality services and lead innovation for pathology.

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within our organisation, as well as using our voice and platform to help make pathology as a profession more inclusive. This means reflecting critically on issues of diversity and inclusion within all that we do, identifying and taking appropriate actions to reduce inequality, and welcoming challenge.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of their disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion or socio-economic background.

We are committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within our organisation, and to ensuring that our governance reflects a broad range of perspectives and experience, so during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a guaranteed first stage interview with Inclusive Boards for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.

If there is anything else you're concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.





Our Structure

The College is constituted as a Registered Charity and incorporated under Royal Charter.

The College is governed by a Trustee Board. Members of the Board, as trustees, have the ultimate legal responsibility for the College.

The Trustee Board comprises the President, four Vice Presidents, Registrar, Treasurer, the chairs of the regional councils for each of Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland and currently three Lay Trustees.

The College Council, which reports to the Trustee Board, is focussed on the practice of pathology as a profession, which includes all the professional, clinical and educational functions of the College. Council members are not trustees of the College.

About the Opportunities

We are seeking a new Lay Chair and two Lay Trustees to join the Board of Trustees. In addition to the core competencies required for these roles and outlined in the About the Lay Chair and About the Lay Trustees Page Number 8, we are seeking the following expertise to support The College's development:

- Finance and commercial
 - To support the long-term sustainability of the College.
- Digital and technology
 - To support the ongoing delivery of our IT project and help us scope further opportunities to modernise.
- Fundraising
 - Particularly experience in corporate fundraising.
- Customer Insights
 - To support us to deliver the best service to our members and fellows.



About the Lay Chair

Appointed by: Trustee Board

Responsible to: The President & the Trustee Board

Accountable to: The President & the Trustee Board

The Chair

The Chair of the Trustee Board is the senior lay governance office-holder of the College and provides leadership to the Trustee Board in ensuring effective governance, strategic oversight and organisational performance.

The Chair works closely with the President, Chief Executive and Senior Management Team to support delivery of the College's charitable objectives, while maintaining appropriate independence and accountability on behalf of the Board.

The Chair is responsible for fostering an inclusive, constructive and effective Board culture, enabling appropriate challenge and ensuring that trustees can contribute fully to decision-making.

The Chair plays an important role in ensuring clarity between governance and operational management responsibilities, supporting effective relationships between trustees, honorary officers and senior staff.

Role Responsibilities

Charity trustees are responsible for controlling the management and administration of the charity (the Charity Commission, CC23, March 2012). Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the College, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run, and delivering the outcomes for which it has been set up. Trustees must:

- Ensure that the College as a charity complies with charity law, and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator; in particular ensure that the College prepares reports on what it has achieved and annual returns and accounts required by law
- Ensure that the College complies with the requirements and rules set out in its governing documents (Royal charter, ordinances & by-laws) and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and objects set out there
- Comply with the requirements of other legislation and other regulators (if any) that govern the activities of the College
- Act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of charity funds or assets
- Ensure that the college as a charity is, and will remain, solvent
- Use College funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the objects of the College as a charity

Role Responsibilities continued

- Avoid undertaking activities that might place at undue risk the funds, assets or reputation of the College as a charity
- Take special care when investing the funds of the College or borrowing funds on behalf of the College as a charity
- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the College is well run and efficient
- Consider obtaining external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the College as a charity, or where the trustees are in breach of their duties
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees role in giving firm strategic direction to the College, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of the College

In addition to these statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge and experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound and considered decisions. They are likely to include the following:

- Scrutinising board papers
- Chairing and facilitating effective Board discussions
- Focussing on key issues for the College
- Providing strategic guidance and governance oversight on new initiatives
- Ensuring that the College's governance is of the highest possible standard
- Chairing and participating in other committees of the Board as may be required
- Becoming well informed about pathology and the context in which the professional and clinical matters of the College are debated
- Demonstrating active engagement in all aspects of the College
- Strategic planning to forward the College's business development
- Being involved in appointing senior staff as and when required

Trustees will also need from time to time to:

- Attend dinners/events on behalf of the College
- Be available by email or occasionally telephone between board meetings for advice and to make decisions by circulation
- Be available for other occasional College activities

Additional responsibilities of the Chair

In addition to the responsibilities of all trustees, the Chair of the Trustee Board is expected to:

- Chair Trustee Board meetings effectively and impartially
- Support the development and effectiveness of the Board and its committees
- Ensure appropriate standards of governance and trustee conduct
- Facilitate constructive challenge and inclusive participation in Board discussions

Additional responsibilities of the Chair continued

- Support effective succession planning and trustee development
- Work closely with the President and Chief Executive in supporting delivery of strategy
- Oversee, with appropriate colleagues, appraisal and performance review processes where applicable
- Support effective management of conflicts of interest and governance risk
- Ensure the Board maintains appropriate oversight of finance, risk, compliance and organisational performance

Person Specification**Essential Requirements**

- Significant senior level board leadership experience
- A proven track record of sound judgement and effective decision making
- Integrity
- A commitment to the organisation and its objectives
- Strong understanding of charity governance and trustee responsibilities
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- Experience of leading strategic discussions and decision making
- Good, independent judgment
- An ability to think creatively
- Willingness to listen and learn and to provide constructive independent challenge
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Ability to facilitate constructive debate and consensus building

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to communicate effectively and develop effective working relationships on an individual basis with College colleagues and staff
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to make decisions and give guidance
- Ability to present effectively to an audience, using a variety of methods, and to respond to questions and queries
- Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership
- Experience of chairing boards or senior committees

Qualities

- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills
- Flexible and proactive attitude
- Awareness of personal limitations
- Proven experience of working constructively as part of a team
- Proven experience in leadership and strategy development
- Track record of achievement
- Commitment to equality, diversity & inclusion and to inclusive governance

About the Lay Trustees

Appointed by: Trustee Board

Responsible to: The President & the Trustee Board

Accountable to: The President & the Trustee Board

The Lay Trustee

Lay Trustees are full members of the Trustee Board and bring independent external perspective, constructive challenge and strategic insight to the governance of the College.

Lay Trustees contribute to the development of College strategy, support effective governance and decision-making, and help ensure that the College acts in the public interest and delivers against its charitable objectives.

The College particularly welcomes applicants with experience in areas such as fundraising & income generation, finance, digital transformation, customer & stakeholder insight, and communications .

Lay Trustees are not expected to have prior knowledge of pathology, but should demonstrate curiosity, sound judgement, strategic thinking and a willingness to engage with complex professional issues.

Role Responsibilities

Purpose of the role

Charity trustees are responsible for controlling the management and administration of the charity (the Charity Commission, CC23, March 2012). Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the College, and ensuring that it is solvent, well run, and delivering the outcomes for which it has been set up. Trustees must:

- Ensure that the College as a charity complies with charity law, and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator; in particular ensure that the College prepares reports on what it has achieved and annual returns and accounts required by law
- Ensure that the College complies with the requirements and rules set out in its governing documents (Royal charter, ordinances & by-laws) and that it remains true to the charitable purpose and objects set out there
- Comply with the requirements of other legislation and other regulators (if any) that govern the activities of the College
- Act with integrity, and avoid any personal conflicts of interest or misuse of charity funds or assets

Purpose of the role continued

- Ensure that the college as a charity is, and will remain, solvent
- Use College funds and assets reasonably, and only in furtherance of the objects of the College as a charity
- Avoid undertaking activities that might place at undue risk the funds, assets or reputation of the College as a charity
- Take special care when investing the funds of the College or borrowing funds on behalf of the College as a charity
- Use reasonable care and skill in their work as trustees, using their personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that the College is well run and efficient
- Consider obtaining external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to the College as a charity, or where the trustees are in breach of their duties
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees role in giving firm strategic direction to the College, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of the College

In addition to these statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge and experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound and considered decisions. They are likely to include the following:

- Scrutinising board papers
- Leading or facilitating discussions
- Focussing on key issues for the College
- Providing guidance and opinion on new initiatives
- Ensuring that the College's governance is of the highest possible standard
- Chairing and participating in other committees of the Board as may be required
- Becoming well informed about pathology and the context in which the professional and clinical matters of the College are debated
- Demonstrating active engagement in all aspects of the College
- Strategic planning to forward the College's business development
- Being involved in appointing senior staff as and when required

Trustees will also need from time to time to:

- Attend dinners/events on behalf of the College
- Be available by email or occasionally telephone between board meetings for advice and to make decisions by circulation
- Be available for other occasional College activities

Person Specification

Essential Requirements

- Successful experience of operating within a board in a charitable, public sector or commercial organisation
- A proven track record of sound judgement and effective decision making
- Integrity
- A commitment to the organisation and its objectives
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- Ability to think and apply knowledge strategically
- Good, independent judgment
- An ability to think creatively
- Willingness to listen and learn and to provide constructive independent challenge
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to communicate effectively and develop effective working relationships on an individual basis with College colleagues and staff
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Ability to make decisions and give guidance
- Ability to present effectively to an audience, using a variety of methods, and to respond to questions and queries
- Ability to take responsibility and show evidence of leadership
- Experience of chairing committees

Qualities

- Excellent interpersonal and communications skills
- Flexible and proactive attitude
- Awareness of personal limitations
- Proven experience of working constructively as part of a team
- Proven experience in leadership and strategy development
- Track record of achievement
- Commitment to equality, diversity & inclusion and to inclusive governance

Additional Information

Term of office:

Three years from the date of appointment, term may be extended for a second three-year term by agreement between the postholder and the trustee board.

Time Commitment:

The time commitment is typically equivalent to 1–2 days per month on average, including preparation for meetings and occasional additional activities.

Trustees are expected to attend:

- Trustee Board meetings (typically five per year)
- Strategic development sessions and occasional additional meetings
- Relevant College events where appropriate
- The Board has 4 sub committees, lay trustees will be asked to attend some of these

Meetings are generally held in hybrid format, although in-person attendance is encouraged for key governance meetings and strategy sessions. Trustees may occasionally be asked to contribute between meetings by email or virtual discussion.

Location:

Board meetings are preferred to be held in person at our offices in London although the ability to join any meeting via Teams/Zoom is acceptable.

Remuneration:

The role is not remunerated but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed in line with our expenses guidelines.

Conflicts of Interest:

All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.

Conduct and responsibilities

Trustees are expected to uphold the Nolan Principles of Public Life, comply with the College Code of Conduct and relevant governance policies, and manage conflicts of interest appropriately.

Trustees are expected to act collectively in the best interests of the College and its charitable objectives.



How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of The College. If you wish to apply for these positions, please supply the following by **11.59pm on 02/08/2026**:

- A detailed CV, setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements;
- A cover letter (maximum two sides of A4) highlighting your suitability for the role for which you're applying and how you meet the person specification. Please note that the cover letter is an important part of your application and will be assessed;
- Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent

Interview Dates

Chair Interviews: Wednesday 9th September: 3 - 5pm
Friday 11th September: 10am - 1.30pm

Trustee Interviews: Wednesday 16th September: 10am - 5pm

Please consider filling out our diversity monitoring form. The information provided to us is confidential, stored securely and separately from your application, and is only used to ensure we are meeting our obligations for equal opportunities under the Equality Act 2010.

If you have further questions after reading this pack, please email RCPath@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0207 267 8369.

Please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities to apply online or send your CV and cover letter to RCPath@inclusiveboards.co.uk.