

Join our Scientific Advisory Committees

We are inviting applications from experts to join our independent Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs).

The advice of these SACs helps us to ensure our decisions are based on the best and most recent scientific evidence.

Our committees

Expert Committee on Pesticides (ECP)

We are seeking a new Chair of the ECP

The [Expert Committee on Pesticides \(ECP\)](#) is a high-profile committee that provides independent, impartial advice to government on the science relating to pesticides, including advice on the approval and authorisation of pesticides. The Committee deals with some of the most interesting and emerging issues in the field.



Defra places great value on the advice provided by the ECP in supporting delivery of its work, and the Chair is essential to ensuring successful delivery of the Committee's business. The current Chair will complete maximum length of service at the end of 2023, and we are looking for an excellent individual to take on the role. As Chair of the ECP you will have a unique opportunity to help support the development of the GB regulatory regime and shape the role of independent scientific advice in the regime.

You will work with Committee experts to consider issues ranging from detailed technical advice on pesticides applications to broader, policy related issues of importance to society. You will engage with Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser and scientific advisors in the Devolved Governments, and with Defra's Science Advisory Council. You will also represent the views of the Committee to the public and other stakeholder groups.

To deliver this important role we are looking for someone who:

- Has experience of leadership of a multidisciplinary group advising on complex technical questions within an established framework, including the ability to weigh different viewpoints to reach conclusions.
- Is committed to working in an open transparent way and skill in engaging with non-expert audiences.
- Has a proven ability to work effectively with government and regulators and to consider the practical implications of the committee's advice.

- Is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and flexible ways of working.

Applicants with experience in relevant fields in academia and industry are encouraged.

Expert members

Along with a new Chair, we are also seeking three new members as successors of current members who have completed their maximum length of service.

We are also seeking up to ten experts to join our newly formed ECP biopesticides cloud. The group will be made up of experts with specialist knowledge in a variety of areas relevant to biopesticides. Advice will be sought by government on an *ad hoc* basis when required outside of the normal routine of ECP meetings.

The Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF)

The [Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food \(PRiF\)](#) provides independent advice to the government on a monitoring programme that checks food and drink in the UK for traces of pesticide residues.



Defra places great value on the advice provided by the PRiF to support delivery of the National monitoring programme. You will work with a range of experts to consider the presentation of findings, foods to be surveyed each year, likely causes of adverse findings detected within the monitoring programme and wider policy related issues in relation to pesticide residues in food.

You will engage with Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser and scientific advisors in the Devolved Governments, and with Defra's Science Advisory Council. You will also represent the views of the Committee to the public and other stakeholder groups.

We are seeking two new members with expertise in areas which the Committee does not currently have to increase the capacity and capability of the PRiF.

Person specification

We are looking for experts to fill 15 member roles, across two committees. Applicants to the SACs must be able to demonstrate the following:

Required general skills for members

- Experience and evidence of effective contribution to multi-disciplinary groups advising on complex scientific or technical questions.
- Strong analytical and judgement skills, with independent thinking and being open to challenge.

- Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills with a collaborative style and an ability to engage and communicate with non-expert audiences; excellent command of written and spoken English.

Required expert skills for members

For each committee we are recruiting persons with specific expertise, as outlined below. Candidates must demonstrate a high-level of expertise in one or more of these areas, evidenced by a strong record of achievement at a national or international level, with strong networks in the field. For scientific roles this can be evidenced by publication in high profile peer-reviewed journals and/or presentation at international meetings.

Areas of Expertise/Positions Available

We are looking for expertise in a wide range of areas across the different committees and groups covered in this recruitment, detailed below. For more detail on the work of each of the committees for which we are recruiting, please see below:

The Expert Committee on Pesticides (ECP)

- Ecotoxicology
- Toxicology
- Dietary Exposure/Residues

The Expert Committee on Pesticides - biopesticide cloud

- Baculovirus – species/transmission
- Semiochemicals
- Plant extracts
- Viruses/virology
- Fungi
- Bacteria
- Microbials (infectivity, pathogenicity and persistence)

The Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF)

- Human Health Risk communicator
- Products of animal origin

We are committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit and equal opportunities, with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our SACs and encourage applications from individuals from under-represented groups. For further information please [email the Committee Recruitment team](#).

Ways of working

The SACs use Microsoft Teams and Huddle as a platform to share documents and information and to hold virtual meetings. Members will be required to access and use Microsoft Teams and Huddle effectively as part of their roles, so will need access to a computer with a stable internet connection and a webcam.

Time Commitment

The ECP hold up to seven two-day meetings a year, usually virtually, with occasional travel to York, and members provide additional input between meetings. The Government may also request advice from the committee on an ad hoc basis or in emergencies. The overall time commitment will depend on the extent of members' participation in the groups' meetings but a minimum commitment is expected to be around 14 days a year.

The PRiF hold up to four one-day meetings a year, usually virtually, with occasional travel to York, and members provide additional input between meetings. The overall time commitment will depend on the extent of members' participation in the groups' meetings but a minimum commitment is expected to be around 4 days a year.

The ECP biopesticide cloud is a newly formed group. Whilst attendance at meetings will be required when appropriate, it is envisioned that advice will be sought on an *ad-hoc* basis outside of meetings from the relevant experts within the cloud. The overall time commitment will depend on the government's requirement for specific biopesticide expertise but commitment is expected to be around 5 days a year.

Public Service Values

Successful applicants will be expected to act in accordance with the [seven 'Nolan' principles of public life](#) in fulfilling the role of independent adviser to UK Government. Candidates invited for interview will be asked about any issues in their personal or professional history that could draw into question their ability to fulfil this role, and it is important that candidates bring any such issues to the attention of the panel.

Fees and expenses

These positions are not salaried, but members may claim fees and reasonable travel and other expenses, for work on and for the SACs.

The current members fees for ECP and biopesticide cloud are:

Chair: £400 per day's work on committee or expert group business plus £150 preparation fee

Members: £300 per day's work on committee or expert group business plus £150 preparation fee

The current members fees for PRiF are:

Members: £146 per day's work on committee or expert group business.

Members of both committees may, in agreement with the Secretariat, make a cumulative claim for work between meetings if a significant amount of time is spent on a single piece of work or on a series of short pieces of work.

Eligibility

Members cannot hold any paid or high-profile unpaid posts in a political party, and not engage in specific political activities on matters directly affecting the work of this body.

We welcome applications from existing members of government Scientific Advisory Committees; however, applicants must list relevant current appointments in the application to identify any cross-membership and assess any potential conflicts of interest.

We encourage applicants from a broad range of backgrounds and expertise. Defra is committed to expanding the diversity of membership across the SACs and would welcome applications from individuals from groups not currently represented on the Committees.

How to apply

Please get in touch with the [Committee recruitment team](#), who will be able to provide the relevant application pack. This should be completed and returned alongside a CV and/or list of publications.

Please note if you require a copy of the Chair application form.

Please read the person specification before completing your statement of suitability. Please note if you require the forms in an alternative format, please get in touch with the [Committee recruitment team](#).

Each applicant must complete and provide:

- Application form
- CV and/or list of publications
- Other information form
- Diversity questionnaire
- Political Monitoring questionnaire

A webinar and questions and answer session will be held to provide more detail on the work of each committee and the roles we are seeking to fill. The webinar will be held on the 17 May 2023 from 11:00 – 12:30, to register please visit

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/9aea08a8-a71f-453b-9883-300049ae8867@6b5953be-6b1d-4980-b26b-56ed8b0bf3dc>

Important

Submission closes at noon 16 June 2023.

Please do not print the forms, they must be completed digitally and returned to us via email. Please also avoid saving the forms in PDF format wherever possible.

Please email completed application forms to [the Committee recruitment team](#).

Timeline for appointments

Interviews for shortlisted applicants will take place July 2023.

Appointments will be confirmed in August 2023.

Induction will take place in September 2023.

Location: Chair interviews will be held in Nobel House, SW1P 3HX, London. Others will be held via MS Teams.