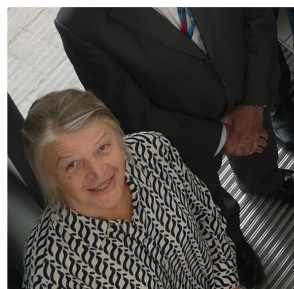


Volunteer handbook

You are the foundation of our success



July 2025

Contents

Welcome to IChemE volunteering	3
Introduction from the President 2023–2024	4
Introduction from the CEO	5

About volunteering	6
Introduction	7
Why volunteer?	7
Getting started in your role	8
Support in your role	8
Keeping safe in your role	9
Recognition	10
Communication	10
What if there is a problem?	10
Ending your role	11
Mutual expectations	12

Useful information	13
Volunteer roles summary	14
About IChemE	16
Core policies and procedures for volunteers	16
Volunteer group organisation chart	16
Latest Annual Review and accounts	16
IChemE acronym list	16
Virtual meeting guide	16

Document control

Version no.	Date issued	Changes
V1.0	January 2024	
V2.0	January 2025	New introduction from current IChemE President Intellectual Property – page 16
V2.1	April 2025	Updates to Volunteer Roles Summary – page 14
V2.2	July 2025	New introduction from current IChemE President

Welcome to volunteering at IChemE

“Together we can advance
chemical engineering’s ability
to benefit society.”

Raffaella Ocone OBE FRSE FREng CEng FICHEME
President 2025–2026



Introduction from the President

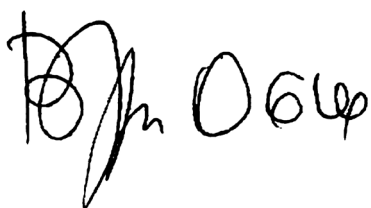
Volunteering is the foundation IChemE has stood upon since 1922. As we look ahead, it is our volunteers who will continue to lay the groundwork for future generations to meet society's challenges and make a positive impact. Quite simply, we wouldn't be here without you.

It is important that members are engaged and participate in the delivery of IChemE's services, thereby ensuring support is sustainable through the generations. By working together, we can provide the expertise and resources to set and uphold professional standards, share specialist knowledge, and champion good practice.

Collectively, we can genuinely provide the diversity of gender, socio-economic backgrounds, cultures and ideas that represent the Institution – working together and driven by common purpose so that we can be trusted in our thought leadership. Together we can advance chemical engineering's ability to benefit society and make chemical engineering relevant and attractive to the next generations.

With the support of you, our valued volunteers, we are able to provide the broad range of activities we deliver year on year and IChemE has a duty to support you in your volunteering. This handbook provides the first line of that support and should be your starting point if you have any questions.

I would like to thank all volunteers who get involved with our activities and hope that whilst volunteering for others, you also find the experience rewarding for yourself. I invite you to inspire others to volunteer so that we can really sustain our Institution's mission and embed diversity across everything we do. I look forward to working with you and continuing to deliver our vision of engineering a sustainable world.



Raffaella Ocone OBE FRSE FEng CEng FICHEME
President 2025–2026



Introduction from the CEO

I am so pleased you have decided to volunteer with IChemE. As IChemE CEO and a long-time member, I am delighted to have such a dedicated and passionate group of professionals who are willing to lend their time and expertise to help put chemical and process engineering at the heart of a sustainable future – benefitting members, society and the environment.

IChemE has always recognised the immense power of collaboration and community engagement, with volunteers playing a pivotal role in driving innovation, knowledge sharing, and professional development within our industry.

This volunteer handbook serves as a comprehensive guide, designed to provide you with essential information about the Institution, the support we can provide, and the expectations we have for our volunteers.

Within these pages, you will also discover the various types of volunteer opportunities, ranging from technical committees and working groups, to assessment and mentoring programmes. We encourage you to explore these avenues and discover where your passion and skills align, as we believe that when you contribute in a way that resonates with you, the impact is always greater.

As volunteers, you are not only contributing your time, but you are also ambassadors for our Institution's vision and mission. Your dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to excellence inspires others and exemplifies the spirit of service that defines IChemE.

We deeply appreciate the voluntary nature of your work and recognise the immense value you bring to our Institution. In return, we are committed to providing you with a positive and supportive environment, opportunities for personal and professional growth, and a sense of belonging to a global community.

Thank you for embarking on this remarkable journey with us, where we collectively strive to make a positive difference.



Yvonne Baker OBE CEng FIChemE

Chief Executive Officer, Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE)



About volunteering

“ Volunteering helps me give back to the profession.”



Dr Marlene Kanga
Chair IChemE Safety Centre and Chair Major Hazards Committee

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide practical guidance and information to help you with your volunteering activities. Should you need anything else please get in touch with your IChemE contact. We are committed to providing support and ensuring that all our volunteers are equipped with the necessary tools to enable them to perform their roles and contribute to achieving our important mission.

This handbook is for all IChemE volunteers regardless of membership status or grade. Volunteers are individuals who undertake activity on behalf of the organisation which:

- is undertaken freely, by choice;
- is undertaken to be of benefit to the wider membership and society;
- is not undertaken for financial gain.

Work experience placements and internships are not the same as volunteering. Please refer to IChemE's HR Department for further information about these.

The handbook is a resource for IChemE's volunteers, and we would love to have your feedback on it. If you find certain content particularly useful, or identify something that is not included but would be helpful, please let us know. We are always keen to hear what you enjoy most about your volunteering experience and how we can continue to strengthen it. Please contact volunteer@icheme.org to share your thoughts.

Why volunteer?

Volunteering provides an interesting and rewarding opportunity to positively support the advancement of chemical engineering, develop personal skills and network with other professionals.

It is widely accepted that volunteering will help you meet new people, learn new skills, contribute to your continuing professional development (CPD), and even advance your career.

Top five reasons for getting involved

1. The opportunity to play a more active role in giving back to the profession.
2. To mentor and develop the next generation of chemical engineers.
3. Helping chemical engineering have an impact.
4. To broaden skills, experience and knowledge.
5. Career progression and professional development.

(2022 IChemE Volunteer Research)

Read some volunteer stories on the [IChemE blog](#)

Volunteering: personal or professional?

Feedback shows that volunteers are as interested in wanting to give back to the profession and to serve society as benefiting themselves directly. Although, each person has their own reasons for volunteering.

Equally varied are the unique combinations of interests, knowledge, skills, and life experiences that volunteers bring. The mix of these is influenced by their personal as much as their professional backgrounds.

The benefits of volunteering include developing new interests, extending knowledge and skills, gaining new experiences, and meeting new people. Our volunteers benefit from these in their professional and personal lives; again, this varies for each person.

So, whatever your own motivations, whatever you bring, or however you benefit, IChemE views your volunteering as an essentially personal activity and will work with you to get the most out of it both personally and professionally.

Getting started in your role

There is a varied and rewarding choice of volunteering opportunities available to members, ranging from positions on the Board of Trustees and Congress, to participation in key committees, panels, special interest groups and regional member groups. If you are passionate about assisting members to become professionally registered, why not consider a role as an assessor, reviewer or mentor? No matter where you are on your personal journey, or what your area of interest is, there are many opportunities for you to develop new contacts, increase your knowledge, or give something back to the wider chemical engineering community.

See the types of [volunteer roles](#) available on page 14.

All volunteering roles are advertised on the [volunteering opportunities](#) section of our website and promoted through channels such as Member News and social media eg IChemE's Twitter (X) and LinkedIn pages.

The range of opportunities means that you can find what best suits you in terms of commitment, the type of activity, and the induction and training required.

Role descriptors are available for each opportunity which set out:

- the nature and purpose of the role;
- key tasks and responsibilities;
- skills and experience required;
- estimated time commitment;
- selection and appointment methods;
- practical considerations such as location and expenses.

We encourage all members to get involved. Using technology and a sensitivity to time zones, most of our roles can be undertaken from anywhere around the world. Geographic location, for the most part, is not a barrier, however, internet access with a good connection speed will be required.

If you are not able to be placed in your preferred role you will be given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteer roles or signposted to another organisation as appropriate.

Explore the possibilities of volunteering at:
www.icheme.org/volunteer

Support in your role

We know that you may have limited time for your volunteer activity, and you should focus on where your time and expertise will have maximum benefit. Support is always available to you regardless of which role you may take on over time. All volunteers will have a designated staff member and/or lead volunteer (such as committee chair) for guidance and support. Our Volunteer Support Team is also here to assist you at any point of your volunteering.

Contact the Volunteer Support Team at:
volunteer@icheme.org

Training

Volunteers will be given an induction and training appropriate to their role. For some roles all you need to do is join in and get going. Others require specialist training, in which case there may be extra support to help you navigate our systems or processes. This may be provided by e-learning, online live training sessions, guidance papers, introductory presentations or mentor support.

Following the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the UK in 2018 and feedback from our volunteers, we have introduced data protection training with IChemE-specific guidance to assist you. This is mandatory for all volunteers to enable us to satisfy our legal obligations and we maintain a record of your attendance. This will need to be refreshed every three years or as appropriate.

Expenses

IChemE values the contribution that its members and volunteers make to the Institution and our policy is to reimburse the cost of any reasonable expense incurred whilst on IChemE business or in the course of your volunteering. The [Member and Volunteer Expenses Policy](#) gives more information on what is defined as reasonable expenses and how to put in a claim.

Please get in touch if you require any additional support in your volunteering, this could be related to a new role or one that you have been active in for some time.

There are many different situations that may arise requiring support, for example:

- difficulties with IT access;
- problems with navigating IChemE structures and departments;
- finding the right person to help;
- getting to know other volunteers;
- vision or hearing impairment;
- feelings of stress and burnout associated with volunteering.

We are here to help and will try our best to resolve issues where we can. This could be by:

- signposting;
- linking you up with other volunteers;
- providing materials in a larger font;
- recommending a break in volunteering.

Keeping safe in your role

Most health and safety legislation only applies to paid workers, but volunteers must still be protected from risks. IChemE has a duty of care towards their volunteers, and an obligation to protect them.

The duty of care is a common law duty to take reasonable care to avoid harming others. This means that reasonable steps should be taken to reduce the likelihood and potential seriousness of injury to volunteers, for example:

- giving volunteers the right information;
- training volunteers;
- appropriate supervision of volunteers.

You should consider your own health and safety, including stress, mental health and welfare, and that of others who may be harmed by your actions while volunteering, in the same way as employees do.

How to raise any concerns

If you're concerned about health and safety (including stress, mental health and welfare) risks to you as a volunteer, talk to:

- the IChemE staff that support your activity;
- lead volunteers such as committee chairs;
- the Volunteer Support Team;
- a health and safety representative.

Read our [Health and Safety Statement](#).

Insurance and risk

The Institution has insurance policies in place covering its activities, this includes a professional indemnity policy covering volunteers when working on IChemE business. Volunteers are required to advise their designated staff member when planning a new activity, that IChemE does not currently provide, as there may be times when this must be relayed to the insurance provider to ensure full coverage. As with most policies, certain exclusions may also apply.

Recognition

Your time and talent are valued and all contributions, however small, make a difference.

We're always looking to improve the way we recognise and celebrate our volunteers.

Look out for initiatives such as:

- digital certificates and badges;
- celebrating volunteer weeks and days;
- volunteer spotlight articles;
- thank you letters;
- volunteer events.

Volunteer medals

There are three medals that recognise the outstanding contribution of volunteers to the work of the Institution:

- the Trustees Medal is awarded to a member volunteer who has given exceptional service on an IChemE special project;
- the Greene Medal is awarded to an individual who has made the most commendable long-term contribution to the progress of IChemE;
- the Ambassador Prize is awarded annually to a member volunteer who has made an exceptional contribution as part of their role as an ambassador for the Institution and/or profession more widely.

For more information on how to nominate, visit the [medals and prizes](#) area of our website.

Employer recognition

Volunteering can be a great way to develop skills and experience that are also relevant in the workplace. For this reason, employers can be pleased to support their staff engaging in IChemE activities. If you have volunteered within the last 12 months and would like us to provide a letter for your employer outlining the importance of your volunteering role, please let us know at volunteer@icheme.org, confirming the contact details for your employer.

Communication

How to stay informed

As well as our social media accounts, you can keep up to date via:

- member newsletters;
- volunteer SharePoint sites;
- update sessions;
- IChemE Connect;
- *The Chemical Engineer* magazine;
- our website;
- keeping in touch with relevant IChemE staff and other volunteers.

Please make sure you let your staff contact know when things change, whether it is an amendment to your details or if you are going to be out of contact for a while. Doing so makes sure that we can keep you updated and helps to ensure that the services we provide run smoothly for everyone else.

We value your feedback

IChemE values and appreciates volunteers, and we aim to make your volunteering experience as worthwhile and rewarding as possible. We welcome your feedback to let us know where we are doing well or to help us improve how we support our volunteers.

Got feedback? Email volunteer@icheme.org

What if there is a problem?

Resolving concerns

If you have a problem or concern about any aspect of your volunteering role it is important that you speak to us as soon as possible. We take the concerns of our volunteers very seriously and will make every effort to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

Conduct

Regardless of membership status and grade, all volunteers are expected to adhere to the [Volunteer Conduct Principles](#), operating within our expected values and behaviour as outlined in [Core Policies and Procedures for Volunteers](#). In addition, Trustees and Congress members have their own tailored code of conduct. Ultimately, all members' conduct should align with the [Code of Professional Conduct](#).

We have a guidance document entitled [Responding to concerns about a volunteer's conduct](#) which sets out the procedure to be used when good management and working relationships cannot resolve concerns about a volunteer's conduct.

Ending your role with IChemE

We understand that your availability can change over time; please speak to us if you would like to change your role or time commitment. We aim to support our volunteers through this stage of their volunteering, helping them to transition out of their role seamlessly.

Taking a break

Volunteers are free to withdraw or take a temporary break from their volunteer role at any time and IChemE will try to support requests for flexibility from volunteers. However, for some key roles we may not be able to keep the volunteer position open and will need to recruit a suitable replacement to ensure continuity.

We will provide support and assistance to volunteers who wish to resume volunteering.

Stopping volunteering

If you are no longer able to carry out your volunteering role, please let us know as soon as possible.

If we wish you to stop acting on behalf of IChemE at any time, then you will be notified by your IChemE contact or the appropriate head of department. Some of the reasons that may lead to this are:

- there is no longer a need for your role, eg IChemE decides not to continue with the activity you have been helping with;
- the terms of office of your role have expired;
- there is a conflict of interest with the activities you are involved with outside of your volunteering role;
- significant breaches to conduct expectations outlined in the [Volunteer Conduct Principles](#).

Succession – terms of office

IChemE maintains a healthy succession of talent to inform our governance by applying a standard three-year term to many of the roles. This brings a pipeline of new volunteers with innovative ideas. However, those with valued abilities and a desire to continue can remain part of the team, by developing other areas within a different role.

After stepping down, we ask all volunteers to continue to act as an ambassador for volunteering and encourage other members to get involved.

To seek assistance when you wish to recruit a new or replacement volunteer please speak to your key IChemE staff contact, or contact the [Volunteer Support Team](#) who will be happy to help you in this process.

Mutual expectations

As volunteers contributing to IChemE, volunteers should expect to receive support in their role(s). Similarly, we require volunteers to conduct themselves appropriately. Those mutual expectations are set out below.

Volunteers can expect us to:

- provide clear information about what is and is not expected of them;
- provide adequate support and training;
- insure volunteers and provide them with a safe environment;
- treat them with respect and in a non-discriminatory manner;
- reimburse 'out of pocket' expenses;
- provide opportunities for personal development;
- recognise and appreciate their contributions;
- understand and accept it when a volunteer says 'no' to anything that they consider to be unrealistic or unreasonable;
- make clear what happens if something goes wrong;
- handle their personal data responsibly and in line with our GDPR policies.

What we can expect from our volunteers:

- act reliably and with honesty and integrity;
- carry out your role(s) in a professional manner with care and attention;
- take responsibility for the work that you do and act within your area of expertise;
- undertake appropriate training;
- declare any conflict of interest or loyalty that may influence decision making;
- respect confidentiality for any information that has been shared in confidence;
- contribute positively, trying to work considerately and respectfully with everyone;
- treat others fairly, seeking to include without bias or prejudice;
- uphold the Institution's values and comply with its policies.

Useful information

“ I am at my best when my volunteering and my interests align. ”



Dr Kai Seng Koh
Membership Engagement Committee Member and ICP Reviewer

Volunteer roles summary

This summary gives you an overview of the types of volunteer roles available within our main areas of activity. Please get in touch with the [Volunteer Support Team](#) or check out the [volunteer opportunities](#) page of our website for more information.

Membership and Qualifications – the Institution as a qualifying body

- **reviewing and assessing** activities for each stage of the professional registration journey:
 - Stage 1: Educational Base;
 - Stage 2: Initial Professional Development;
 - Stage 3: Professional Review;
- **university accreditation** assessments;
- **Accredited Company Training Scheme (ACTS) managers and mentors** – helping companies offer their graduates the right type of training and experience during their IPD as they work towards Chartered Chemical Engineer status;
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Assessor** – reading a sampled member's submitted CPD record and deciding whether it meets the respective CPD requirements;
- experienced reviewers and assessors can serve on the relevant **leadership committees** for the membership and accreditation processes, standards and appeals panels, including:
 - Membership & Qualifications Committee;
 - Education Subcommittee;
 - Professional Development Subcommittee;
 - Registration Subcommittee.

Typically, volunteers are Chartered or Fellow grades.

Learned Society – sharing knowledge and expertise

- **special interest groups** are communities of IChemE members from around the world sharing common expertise and interests by organising physical and virtual events. **Committee** roles include: Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Committee Member;
- **peer review** of publications, books and journals;
- **judging** nominations for medals and prizes;
- serving on the **Learned Society Committee** which gives strategic direction to IChemE's technical priorities and steers IChemE's activities as a learned society;
- other **working groups** and committees driving activities aligned with the Learned Society priorities.

Supporting other members and outreach activities

- **member groups** are regional communities supporting local engineers. They organise events, provide networking opportunities and coordinate local mentoring and continuing professional development CPD support. **Committee** roles include: Chair, Secretary and Committee Member;
- **mentoring** – providing mentor support for members on their journey to Chartered Chemical Engineer, or general career and development mentoring.;
- **Corporate Partner Assessors** – recognising and rewarding companies that demonstrate a sustained commitment to the process industries;
- **National Early Career Committee** – committee member roles and other opportunities for involvement;
- serving on the **Membership Engagement Committee** which supports the development of initiatives and activities that maximise member participation, improve outreach and collaboration, and support all members across the full member lifecycle;
- **schools engagement** volunteers.

Commercial – resourcing the Institution's activities

- **judges for awards** such as the Global Awards;
- **reviewing** papers for technical conferences;
- commercial course **reviewers**;
- serving on the **Commercial Panel** which has oversight of the Institution's commercial activity and delivery of its commercial strategy.

Governance and leadership

- **Trustee** – our Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of IChemE. All top-level decisions are approved by the Board. In addition, IChemE's annual budget and financial decisions are scrutinised and signed off by the Trustees. Trustees have a joint responsibility to work together and drive the Institution forward. Trustees are required to be voting members (ie Chartered Members or Fellows);
- other **governance committees** and groups, such as:
 - Audit and Risk;
 - Professional Conduct Pool;
 - Nominations and Succession Planning Committee;
 - Finance and HR;
- **Congress** is the member advisory body of the Institution, comprising up to 40 volunteer members elected by their peers split into functional and regional colleges to ensure inclusive representation. It acts a sounding board and advises the Board of Trustees on matters of interest to IChemE and its members.

Explore the possibilities of volunteering at IChemE at www.icheme.org/volunteering-opportunities

About IChemE

Read our [About IChemE](#) guide for volunteers which gives an overview of IChemE's governance and people.

Core policies and procedures for volunteers

[Policies, procedures and guidance](#) are available to help us all work together consistently and effectively.

Volunteer group organisation chart

IChemE has many different committees and groups. [This organisational chart](#) provides an overview of the committee structure and how the groups relate to each other.

Latest Annual Review and accounts

IChemE submits its Annual Review and Accounts to the Annual General Meeting each year. The Annual Review provides an overview of the Institution's activities over the year and showcases the impact we have made. The review also provides a summary of the financial results. The latest report can be found at www.icheme.org/annual-review

IChemE acronym list

In all our written documents we try to write the full wording at least once, before using an acronym. However, we appreciate that you might find yourself in other situations, for example, in meetings and hearing some acronyms for the first time. Whilst not exhaustive, [this acronym guide](#) seeks to list some of the most prevalent.

Virtual meeting guide

IChemE regularly uses conference call facilities for virtual meetings because participants are often spread geographically and remote working in this way can be very efficient. This [virtual meeting guide](#) contains a set of suggested guidelines to facilitate conference calls.

Intellectual property

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, IChemE will own all Intellectual Property and Inventions produced by members in their capacity as volunteers for IChemE.

For the purposes of this section, 'Intellectual Property and Inventions' means patents, trademarks, service marks, registered designs (including application for and right to apply for any of them) unregistered design rights, trademarks or service marks, trade or business names, copyright, or know how and any similar rights in any jurisdiction.

Rights and obligations under this section in respect of Intellectual Property made during a member's role as a volunteer shall continue in force after a member stops their volunteer role.

Contact us for further information

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Incorporated by Royal Charter 1957. The Institution of Chemical Engineers (trading as IChemE) is a registered charity in England and Wales (214379) and Scotland (SC039661). The Institution also has associated entities in Australia, Malaysia and New Zealand.