



Becoming a Council member: Frequently asked questions

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Introduction

The current Council wishes to encourage more people to stand for election so that Voting Members are given more choice each year about who's governing the Institute.

We hope that our answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about becoming a CIEP Council member will encourage you to put yourself forward as a candidate.

The election process runs as part of the annual general meeting (AGM) proceedings. This year's AGM will take place at 1.00pm GMT on **Thursday 6 November 2025**.

What is the CIEP Council?

The Council is the team of elected Professional and Advanced Professional Members responsible for the Institute's governance and strategy. The CIEP's Regulations and Bylaws state that there must be a minimum of eight Council members and a maximum of 12.

Council members are elected by Voting Members – Professional and Advanced Professional Members. They serve for a two-year term and can stand again at the end of that term up to three times (ie for a maximum tenure of eight years).

Who is eligible to join the Council?

To stand for election to the Council, you must:

- be either a Professional or an Advanced Professional Member
- not have any previously upheld complaints against you (via any of the Membership Codes or previous conduct policies), nor be part of any ongoing disciplinary investigation into your conduct.

What will I be doing if I join the Council?

You'll be working alongside other Council members, our office staff and member volunteers.

Now that we have a CEO and a larger office team, operational responsibilities have shifted to the staff. That means you don't need any remit-specific skills to join the Council. Instead, you'll focus on strategy and governance.

We've published a role description that tells you more about what's involved, but here's a summary of what you'll be doing.

- **Strategic planning** – setting the goals and objectives that should be prioritised annually and in the longer term.
- **Financial oversight** – ensuring that we spend wisely and stay within budget.
- **Values work** – working to reduce barriers to participation and improve inclusion and accessibility.
- **Risk management** – reviewing financial, operational or reputational events that could affect the Institute.
- **Operational authority** – delegating appropriately so that the CEO and office team can do what they're employed for.
- **Regulatory and best-practice compliance** – ensuring respect for and adherence to the Charter, Membership Codes, Regulations, Bylaws and other relevant legislation and codes of best practice.
- **Leadership, direction and support** – for members, Council colleagues and staff.
- **Performance monitoring** – so that the Council and staff are accountable, and working to agreed plans.
- **Communications** – participating in activities that ensure members are informed and given opportunities to provide feedback.
- **Professional practice** – participating in panels that consider Professional Practice Code complaints.

What are you doing to encourage greater representation on the Council?

We recognise that there's room for improving diversity on the CIEP Council, and we particularly encourage those from underrepresented and marginalised communities to stand for election.

To support this goal, we've made some changes that aim to make participation in governance more accessible. For example:

- Operational work is carried out by the office, so Council duties usually take up no more than 12 hours a month.

- Council meetings and the annual strategy workshop are remunerated according to an agreed attendance allowance.
- In the main, Council members respond to members' questions via the 'Ask the Council' website form rather than in the forums.
- No remit-specific knowledge is required.
- Council members are no longer required to be on call all the time.

Below, we've provided more detail about these changes and what they mean for Council members.

How much time will I volunteer?

Now that we have a CEO and office team running operations, Council members focus on governance and strategy, and volunteer up to 12 hours each month.

We're working towards reducing this further, though some Council members are already doing fewer than 12 hours.

Will I get paid for any Council work?

Any necessary Council work – authorised by the CEO and chair – that takes a Council member over and above the 12-hour voluntary commitment is paid at an hourly advanced subcontractor rate of £41.40 in the 2025/26 financial year.

You'll also be paid separately for the following:

- Council meetings (there are four scheduled meetings a year and these take place on Zoom)
- the annual in-person strategy meeting
- appropriate travel expenses.

And because Council members who attend the CIEP conference are required to carry out certain activities, you'll be issued with a free ticket.

Will I be on call all the time?

The CIEP recognises that Council members need flexibility to be able to meet their business responsibilities and personal commitments. For that reason, no, you won't be on call all the time.

The office team is geared up to deal with any enquiry, and they're usually able to answer queries straight away. Sometimes, they'll seek the advice of the Council if an issue is more complex or nuanced, but this will never require any single Council member to be on call.

There are, however, scheduled events and activities that you'll be asked to participate in if practicable, and these will be planned well in advance. These are:

- Council meetings (via Zoom)
- the annual conference, usually held in September
- the AGM
- the annual strategy workshop with the staff, held in Milton Keynes
- the work of any subcommittees or working groups you volunteer for.

Will I participate in forum discussions about governance and operational matters?

Council members regularly check the forums to see what members are chatting about. However, we ask members to get in touch with the Council via the 'Ask the Council' website form. The Council and CEO then discuss the issue and reply.

This ensures that we have the necessary time and space to consider members' views and suggestions carefully and properly, and respects the fact that Council members have personal commitments and business responsibilities.

Where will my workspace be?

We host our formal Council meetings on Zoom.

We also use Slack – a workspace communications app – for further discussion and decision making, and to keep in touch with the CEO, office staff and external financial adviser on a regular basis.

You'll also have a dedicated CIEP email account.

I'm inexperienced – how will I learn the ropes?

We realise that the idea of being on the Council might seem overwhelming. Please don't let that deter you from standing for election. Most of us came to the Council with little to no experience of governing a professional body.

And the way things are set up means that working with each other and the staff is an incredibly open, warm, collaborative and supportive experience. We support each other so that governance and operations work in harmony.

Plus, we've put in place several mechanisms to help new Council members find their way. These include:

- **a buddy system** – pairing you with a Council colleague who'll answer your questions or concerns

- **governance training** – hosted by external governance experts so that you understand your responsibilities to the Institute
- **the Council Members' Handbook** – a concise guide containing the practical information you need to know
- **Slack channels** – where Council members and the CEO can chat to each other and offer support and guidance. There is also a channel for the whole office team to have discussions with Council.

Do I need to know the governing documents inside out?

Council members are guided by the following documents: the Charter, the strategic plan, the Regulations, the Bylaws and the Membership Codes, including the Council Members' Code. There are also various written processes, policies and procedures that we refer to when necessary.

While you're expected to be aware of the core governing documents, to have familiarised yourself with each one's broad purpose and to be willing to refer to them when required, that's quite enough.

Not being able to cite those documents by heart, or not yet understanding how and why they all apply and in which cases, absolutely shouldn't put you off standing for election. That's something your colleagues will help you with if you join the team.

Will I have any contact with the CEO?

Yes, you'll have regular contact with the CEO. Christine Yeates attends all Council meetings, operations meetings, strategy workshops and risk-management meetings.

She also talks directly with all Council members via the CIEP's Slack workspace on a daily basis.

Can I stand for election to the Council if I'm based outside the UK?

Yes. If you're based outside the UK and you'd like to discuss how you might work as a Council member should you be elected, please email Christine Yeates for guidance: chiefexec@ciep.uk.

Can I talk to someone to find out more?

If you'd like to request a meeting to chat about the role, please email Christine Yeates who can arrange this for you: chiefexec@ciep.uk.

I think I'm a good fit – what do I do next?

To stand for election to the Council, you must be a Professional or Advanced Professional Member.

If you'd like to put yourself forward as a candidate, please download the following from the AGM page on the website:

- **Nomination form:** You'll need to be nominated by a proposer and a seconder, each of whom must also be a Professional or Advanced Professional Member.
- **Meet the Candidate form:** This is where you can tell Voting Members about your motivation for joining the Council and demonstrate how you're a good fit for the role.

We'll publish all the statements on the AGM web page so that Voting Members can make informed choices on the ballot.

Members may also send in advance written questions for you. We'll publish your answers on the AGM web page.

What deadlines do I need to be aware of?

- **Submitting your nomination:** Please submit your forms by **11 September 2025, 5.00pm BST**.
- **Advance questions:** If a member has a question for you in advance of the meeting, you'll need to submit your response by **22 October 2025, 5.00pm BST**.

Summing up

We really hope that the changes we've made to how the CIEP is run will encourage you to stand for election.

Being on the Council has never been more flexible, and while there's always room for improvement – particularly in representing our diverse membership – we have taken some big steps towards making governance more accessible.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Louise Harnby, chair

On behalf of the CIEP Council and office