

BioSoc Structure & Governance

A BioSoc needs to be structured and governed appropriately in order for it to be a success. This involves:

- A Committee
- Meetings
- Finance

Committee

Every BioSoc needs a committee to ensure that it runs smoothly and that tasks can be delegated appropriately. The structure of each BioSoc committee will vary depending on the number of members you have and what you want to achieve but below are some of the possible roles with the key roles highlighted in bold:

Committee Roles

- **President/Chair** - they will provide leadership to the committee, delegating tasks and checking progress of other committee members. They should guide discussion and resolve any issues that might crop up.
- **Secretary** - they will organise meetings and events, providing meeting agendas and minutes
- **Treasurer** - they will be responsible for the finances of the society so they should be good with numbers and be able to organise funding and sponsorship
- **Year reps** - having representatives from each year group will help ensure the society is known to biology students in every year
- **Staff/Departmental rep** - a member of staff will help legitimise your society within your department and can be a useful source of advice and support
- **Social rep**-they will be responsible for organising socials
- **Marketing/publicity rep** - they will be responsible for promoting the society and publicising events and activity
- **Editor**- they may produce and commission content for a magazine, website, blog or social media.

There may be other roles not listed that you want to recruit for your committee or you may want to combine some roles into one position. Remember your BioSoc is what you make of it and so it is up to your members to decide the roles that are required to make your society a success.

In order to fill these roles, your committee members can be elected or nominated. This could be by voting at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or decided more informally. It is important to be inclusive to all students in your department as this will encourage more members to join and ensure better attendance at events.

Remember, if your committee members are elected they will be more credible and more accountable to their members.

Now that you have a committee you will need to arrange meetings to get things done.

Meetings

The secretary should organise regular meetings in order to keep the committee alive and communicating. Every week or two is recommended.

The meeting will be more productive if an agenda is prepared and circulated beforehand. The Secretary should ensure that all committee members are given an opportunity to add items to the agenda. The Chair should have input into the agenda and approve it before it is circulated.

The location of the meeting should be somewhere where all members can get to easily and where you are able to have a discussion without interruption.

Recording what has happened in the meeting and any outcomes are important to keep committee members informed and to provide action points for committee members to carry out. It is often preferable for the Secretary to just record the agreed actions points but if your committee would like to take full minutes some useful guidelines can be found here.

Now you have decided what events/activities you will be organising you will need to decide how to finance them.

Finance

Each student BioSoc will be funded in a unique way. Here are the main financial sources your BioSoc might rely upon:

- Membership Fees – charging annual or life membership fees will be a source of income
- Students' Union – some SUs provide societies with funding. Please do check with the SU at your institution to find out what financial support they can offer and if there are any terms and conditions you need to abide by.
- Your department - your biology department may be able to offer some financial support. It is worth contacting your head of department so see if they can help.
- External sponsorship – You can contact local or national companies to see if any are willing to offer financial support in exchange for some brand recognition. They may wish to be a main sponsor for your BioSoc or to offer sponsorship for a particular event or activity.
- Royal Society of Biology – BioSocs have the opportunity to apply to their local branch for sponsorship of an event.
- Fundraising – BioSocs may want to raise funds through fundraising activities such as bake sales, quiz nights or sponsored runs etc.
- Public events – Charging a small fee to the public to attend an event might help cover costs. It should not be too high that it puts people off attending.