

FEMS President 2027-2029

Recruitment pack

Become President of the FEMS Board

The Federation of European Microbiological Societies (FEMS) is seeking a dedicated individual to serve as President of its Board of Trustees from 2027-2029, with the values, commitment, and passion to advance its mission and vision.

As Chair of the Board, you will join a network of dedicated colleagues from across Europe and beyond, working together to guide the Federation's activities and uphold its values of collaboration, integrity, and service to the microbiology community.

This is an exciting moment to join FEMS. The organisation has entered a new strategic phase focused on strengthening connections across its global network, deepening its support for microbiologists, and driving long-term impact across science and society.

Serving as President offers a unique opportunity to apply your experience and leadership in service of the microbiology community, shaping the Federation's future and contributing to the continued growth of microbiology worldwide.

About FEMS



FEMS is a global network connecting over 50 Member Societies from 40 countries and representing more than 30,000 individual microbiologists. As a UK-registered charity and not-for-profit organisation, it is led by passionate microbiologists who volunteer their time and supported by a professional team based in the Netherlands.

FEMS exists to advance microbiology and support scientists at every stage of their careers, driving scientific development by bringing microbiologists together in purposeful ways to create impact. Currently, it does that through fostering scientific communities online and in person, and uplifting the next generation of microbiologists through meetings, webinars and summer schools, grants & awards and its journals.

The Board works closely with the FEMS Office team to ensure that the Federation's activities have real impact for microbiologists across Europe and beyond.

In 2024, FEMS celebrated its 50th anniversary, marking five decades of bringing microbiologists together to collaborate, share knowledge, and create lasting impact. Today, it continues to strengthen connections across the global microbiology community, shaping the future of the field and supporting the scientists who drive it forward.

The Board of Trustees

The FEMS Board is composed of the President, the Secretary General, the Treasurer, and five additional Board members. Together, they guide the Federation by co-creating strategy and ensuring that the organisation's charitable objectives are met.

FEMS strives to have a diverse Board with geographic representation, gender balance, and diversity in experience and microbiology specialisation.

Meetings and time commitment

Serving as a FEMS Board member is a commitment requiring attendance and active participation in scheduled meetings, and a willingness to travel and represent FEMS through participation in projects and conferences. Attendance at the FEMS MICRO: Congress & Exhibition is also required.

The Board typically meets for three two-day in-person meetings per year (February, May, November) and a shorter meeting in September alongside the FEMS Council. Meetings are held in Delft, the Netherlands, with three to four online meetings per year. Additional ad hoc business may arise between meetings.

Key responsibilities

The Board is responsible for the governance and financial oversight of FEMS, evaluating programmes and services, and working collaboratively to set strategy. Board members:

- Set the strategic direction of FEMS, guiding its work and priorities to support the Federation's mission and long-term goals.
- Act as a FEMS representative, promoting the organisation and its work within the wider microbiology community.
- Maintain the financial viability of FEMS, ensuring that resources are used effectively in pursuit of its charitable mission, including the proper investment of funds.
- Work closely with the Executive Director, the FEMS Office, volunteers, and the wider microbiology community to strengthen the organisation's impact.
- Serve as champions and liaisons to sub-committees based on their expertise.

The role of President

The President of FEMS provides strategic leadership and represents the organisation externally, ensuring effective governance and alignment with its mission, values, and charitable objectives. Working closely with the Executive Director, the Board of Trustees, and the wider FEMS community, the President promotes openness, accountability, and impact across all areas of the Federation's work.

Meetings and time commitment

In addition to the meetings and time commitment as outlined in the role of the Board, the President also has regular meetings with the Executive Director. Once elected, the President serves for a term of three years.

Key responsibilities

In addition to general governance responsibilities, as outlined in the role of the Board of Trustees, the President:

- Chairs the Board meetings, working with the Executive Director to prepare agendas and ensure meetings are effective and strategically focused.
- Serves as an ambassador for FEMS, promoting and representing its interests to key partners, stakeholders, and the broader microbiology community.
- Chairs the Annual General Meeting of the FEMS Council, maintaining strong communication between the Board and Council.
- In collaboration with the Secretary General, ensures the Board operates in accordance with the Articles of Association and Bylaws.
- Oversees sound governance and risk management, ensuring compliance with legal, regulatory, and organisational standards.
- Upholds the distinction between the Board's governance responsibilities and the Executive Director's role, ensuring alignment between strategy and implementation.
- Serves as a member of the Finance Committee and the European Academy of Microbiology Steering Committee.

Benefits of the role

Being the President of FEMS provides a central leadership role within the organisation. Individuals gain professional recognition, visibility, and opportunities to expand their networks while contributing to a meaningful cause.

Key benefits include:

- Personal and professional development, including experience in high-level decision-making, governance, and strategic oversight.
- Opportunities to acquire new skills through training and information sharing.
- Collaboration with a diverse, multinational, and multicultural group of colleagues who share a common passion for microbiology.
- Working closely with the professional FEMS staff based in the Netherlands, to deliver the Federation's programmes and initiatives.
- Contributing expertise and experience to strengthen professional networks and advance microbiology worldwide.

As with Board membership, the role of the President is voluntary. Board members are not financially compensated for their service, except for reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in performing their duties, in accordance with the FEMS expenses policy.

Essential skills and attributes

The President plays a critical role in guiding FEMS and advancing microbiology across Europe and beyond. To be effective in this role, the President must bring a combination of leadership, strategic insight, and personal integrity, as well as a commitment to collaboration and the values of FEMS. The following skills and attributes are essential for success in this position:

Proven performance as a leader

The President demonstrates effective leadership and sound judgment across a broad range of strategic and management issues. They communicate persuasively and seek to win hearts and minds, even when delivering difficult or unpopular decisions needed for the long-term benefit of FEMS. They guide organisational change, foster collaboration across the community, and are recognised within the European microbiology field for their professional scientific leadership.

Strategic and generative thinking skills

Board members, and the President in particular, are visionaries. They identify and articulate opportunities for FEMS, recognise the relationships among its various bodies, and work to ensure synergy wherever possible.

Strong problem-solving and decision-making skills

Experience of adapting to unexpected circumstances combined with the ability to think critically and make swift, sound decisions regarding a course of action.

Essential skills and attributes

Commitment to teamwork

It is essential for the President to have well-developed interpersonal and intercultural communication skills, collaborating with the FEMS Office and consistently attending Board meetings.

Sound judgment and integrity

The role requires a commitment to the wider goals of FEMS, which may involve subordinating special interests for the greater good of the charity, including making decisions that may not be popular.

Commitment to FEMS values

A strong commitment to the values, mission, and goals of FEMS, dedicating the necessary time and effort to serve the organisation.



How to apply

Apply by
10 June

Applicants should submit the following to the FEMS Nomination Committee via the form

[Apply now](#)



- CV (no longer than three pages and with a focus on candidate roles and achievements that demonstrate the skills relevant to the position).
- A supporting letter from two FEMS Member Societies.
- A candidate statement explaining why you are applying and how your skills and experience can contribute to FEMS (max 500 words).

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to continue in the nomination process, which may include an online interview and submission of a candidate video for Council consideration.

FEMS Council, representing the FEMS Member Societies, will vote on the final candidates during the Annual General Meeting taking place 3-4 September 2026.