



Royal Irish Academy Multidisciplinary Committees 2022-2026

Purpose and Aims

The mission of the Royal Irish Academy's multidisciplinary committees (MDCs) is to promote co-operation across and within relevant scholarly disciplines; to advise, contribute to and guide Academy's engagement in these areas and on issues of topical interest, on an all-island basis.

The committees will undertake to approach their work from a multidisciplinary perspective while allowing for consideration of important discipline-based issues, should they arise. The committees exist to provide scientific and scholarly expertise and to promote the value of the sciences, humanities, and social sciences. They will strengthen the engagement of these communities in national and international scholarship.

Duties of the Committee

- To address and raise issues, including those of public concern, relevant to its shared expertise
- To contribute to the public engagement programme of the Academy
- To improve the Academy's capacity to engage with the wider scholarly community in Ireland
- To advise the Academy on the formulation of policy at national, European and international levels
- To enhance the Academy's capacity for increasing the engagement of its Members in its activities and affairs
- To provide support for grant and award review panels
- To be the national adhering mechanism for relevant international unions where appropriate
- To propose to Academic Board a programme of work which reflects the full range of disciplines represented by the committee
- To engage with the Young Academy where appropriate
- To adhere to the Academy's editorial guidelines for online content
- To undertake other such activities as might be appropriate.

Membership of the Committee

Multi-disciplinary committees will be composed of members with the knowledge and expertise to shape and deliver work relevant to each committee. The committee will represent a broad range of geographical locations across the island of Ireland, institutions, sectors, genders, and career stages. There will normally be no more than 20 on the committee and there should be a balance of Members and outside experts. In order to achieve this, the membership should normally include a minimum of three to five Members (MRIsAs). The remaining membership will be appointed in a suitably transparent and open manner.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

MDCs will aim to be inclusive, accessible and diverse in their composition and activities. The RIA encourages and supports MDCs to provide for inclusivity and accessibility when planning meetings, activities and events. Events and meetings can typically be made more inclusive by ensuring the accessibility of the following components i) Event or meeting timing ii) Venue and travel arrangements



iii) Event design and programming iv) Information and communication materials and v) Registration requirements and by providing appropriate meeting services. Committees are provided with guidelines around selecting diverse speakers for events which they are asked to adhere to.

Term of Office

Members of the committee will normally serve a four-year term. Members may be appointed for a second term. Committee members will be expected to participate regularly in the meetings and activities of the committee. Members who do not participate regularly may be asked to step down before the end of their term of membership, at the discretion of the Chair in consultation with the Science or PL&A Secretary. The RIA normally re-opens the multidisciplinary committee selection process at the mid-term point to fill available places in committees. Vacancies shall not be filled other than at this point.

Officers of the Committee

The committee will be chaired by an Academy Officer for its first meeting as a newly constituted committee. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary will be elected at the first meeting. Nominations will be sought from committee members at the start of the first meeting. If more than one nomination is received, a secret ballot will be taken. After the election of the Chair, the same process will be followed for the roles of Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Academy Officer will not vote in these elections.

Chairpersons, Vice-Chairs and Secretaries may not serve two consecutive terms in the same role.

Meetings of the Committee

Meetings should be held as often as is deemed necessary and no less than twice per year. Meetings will normally take place in Academy House, or as hybrid meetings but may be held elsewhere. Notice will be sent at least two weeks in advance of a planned meeting.

The Chair of the committee will be a member of the Academic Board (Board) and will represent the committee at meetings of this Board. If the Chair is unavailable another nominated member of the committee may substitute. The Board may suggest themes and activities and may propose public engagement programmes to the committee.

The committee may establish time-limited Working Groups (WGs) for task-specific projects. Membership of WGs may be open to membership outside of the committee. These WGs for task-specific projects will cease on completion of the task. Working Groups will be required to report to the multidisciplinary committee under which they are established.

Standing Committees

Two standing committees (namely the Standing Committee for Archaeology, and the Standing Committee for International Affairs) oversee and carry out specific defined functions, under the auspices of the Historical Studies Committee and Social Science Committee respectively.

Reporting

The Academic Board will review and approve proposals from the committees in relation to the programme of work. The Science and PL & A Secretaries on behalf of the committees report regularly to the Executive Committee and Council.