



Springboard Champions Terms of Reference



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Introduction

The Academy of Medical Sciences Springboard offers a bespoke package of support to biomedical researchers at the start of their first independent post to help them launch their research careers. Funding of up to £125,000 over two years to support their research is available, as well as access to the Academy's acclaimed mentoring and career development programmes.

For more information on the Springboard Scheme, [visit the website](#).

Terms of Reference

1. Eligibility criteria for the Springboard Champion role

- 1.1. Champions must be non-clinical, research-active academics working at the Higher Education Institution (HEI), at Professorial level, with demonstrable expertise in grant writing and research management to support and advise prospective Springboard applicants throughout the process.
- 1.2. Champions should have a high level of authority to speak on behalf of the HEI, and be able to act in the best interests of the Springboard applicants/awardees. We are unable to consider nominations from those at Senior Lecturer level.
- 1.3. Champions should have a solid understanding of the Springboard scheme when they oversee their first HEI-led selection process, and be passionate about supporting the next generation of early-career academics within their department/HEI.
- 1.4. The Academy recommends that Champions have been at the HEI for more than two years. However, individuals who were involved in the HEI Springboard team at their previous institution may assume the role of Champion sooner than two years into their employment.
- 1.5. Champions should have the capacity to fulfil the duties of the role (see section 5). Responsibilities mainly fall between the months of February and June.
- 1.6. The Champion role may be undertaken by a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, though this is not a stipulation of the role.
- 1.7. The Champion role may be undertaken by an alum of the Springboard scheme, provided at least two years have passed since their Springboard award ended and they meet the other eligibility requirements.

Note: The Head of Department and Springboard Champion are both required to submit an independent statement of support for each application. In the instance where the Springboard Champion role is held by a Head of Department, a Deputy Champion must also be appointed. The Deputy Champion should then submit the Champion's statement of support.

2. Eligibility criteria for the Springboard Deputy Champion role

Note: This is an optional role. It is not mandatory for each HEI to appoint a Deputy Champion; however, some HEIs find it useful to have a dedicated individual to support the Champion.

- 2.1. Deputy Champions must be non-clinical, research-active academics working at the HEI, at Senior Lecturer level or above. They should have sufficient experience in grant writing and research management to support and advise prospective Springboard applicants throughout the process.
- 2.2. Deputy Champions should have a solid understanding of the Springboard scheme and be passionate about supporting the next generation of early-career academics within their department/HEI.

- 2.3. Deputy Champions should have the capacity to support the Champion through the Springboard processes (see section 5), responsibilities mainly fall between the months of February and June.
- 2.4. The Deputy Champion role may be undertaken by a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, though this is not a stipulation of the role.
- 2.5. The Deputy Champion role may be undertaken by an alum of the Springboard scheme, provided their Springboard award has ended.

Note: When the Champion steps down from the role, the Deputy Champion may assume the role of Champion provided they meet the eligibility criteria set out in section 1.

3. Length of appointment

- 3.1. It is recommended that Springboard Champions and Deputy Springboard Champions serve in this role for five years or five full grant rounds (note: the Springboard scheme runs one round per year).
- 3.2. Those who are nominated to the role mid-way through the year can be considered as beginning their five year term at the start of the following January, ahead of the opening of the next round of Springboard.
- 3.3. Where the Deputy Springboard Champion has stepped into the role of Springboard Champion the individual's five year term will restart upon assuming the role of Champion.
- 3.4. Springboard Champion and Deputy Champion may step down before a five year term is up. In this instance, the Academy's Secretariat should be notified as soon as possible with the name of a newly nominated Champion and/or Deputy Champion.
- 3.5. Champions or Deputy Champions that wish to step down from the role between the opening of a new round (typically, February) and the application deadline (typically, June) are expected to continue in their role until the application deadline. This is to ensure that stages such as the HEI-led selection process are not disrupted and nominated candidates are provided the appropriate level of support when submitting their formal application to the Academy.

4. Process for changing Champion and/or Deputy Champion

- 4.1. Upon notification of the nomination of a new Springboard Champion or Deputy Champion, the Academy's Secretariat will review the credentials of this person against the eligibility criteria above. The Springboard Panel Chair also has oversight over the appointment of Springboard Champions. The Academy will notify Springboard contacts for that HEI once a decision has been made.
- 4.2. The Secretariat will acknowledge the request for the change of current Champion/Deputy Champion upon receipt.
 - 4.2.1. All ad hoc requests received between the months of June and December will be reviewed in December.
 - 4.2.2. All requests received in January and February will be reviewed as soon as the Secretariat has capacity, and no later than three weeks after receipt.
 - 4.2.3. All requests received between March and June (i.e. during the HEI-led selection process or the application window) will be reviewed with

urgency. As per section 3.5, provided they are able to, the outgoing Champion and/or Deputy Champion will be asked to continue in the role until the end of the formal application window, following which the newly appointed individual will assume the role. In the event that the individual is unable to continue until application submission window closes, the Academy's Secretariat will work with the remaining Springboard contacts at the HEI to appoint an alternative Champion/Deputy Champion as soon as possible.

5. Duties of the Springboard Champion, to be assisted by the Deputy Champion (*if applicable*)
 - 5.1. Promote and share information about the scheme with prospective candidates.
 - 5.2. Oversee the HEI-led selection process to select nominated candidates (maximum 4 candidates per HEI).
 - 5.3. Assist nominated candidates with their Springboard applications and provide a statement of support.
 - 5.4. Meet with both successful and unsuccessful applicants once all outcomes have been released to discuss the feedback received and support them to move forward in their research career.



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