

Role Description: Trustee (Co-opted Membership role)

AHEP is seeking a co-opted trustee with strong membership expertise and a good understanding of higher education. This role provides an opportunity to contribute directly to the development, relevance and impact of AHEP's membership offer at a time when the sector is changing and professional services practitioners need support, connection and recognition more than ever.

About AHEP

AHEP is a registered charity and professional association representing higher education professional services staff. Through our membership, professional development and consulting services, we enable institutions and individuals to achieve excellence in management, leadership and operational delivery. Guided by our five-year strategy *Reaching Higher (2023–2028)*, AHEP's work focuses on three core strands:

- **Identity, purpose and engagement** – raising the profile and recognition of higher education professionals.
- **Fit-for-the-future development** – providing relevant, high-quality professional development and membership benefits.
- **Strategic sector partnerships** – building collaboration and alignment across higher education.

Our values underpin everything we do. We are credible and trusted, collaborative and inclusive, empowering and member-focused, welcoming and reflective. These values guide how we work with members, partners and one another. AHEP's activities are delivered by a small, dedicated team led by the Executive Director, who reports to the Board of Trustees. The Board provides strategic oversight, ensures good governance and upholds AHEP's charitable purpose.

The Sector Context

The UK's higher education sector is experiencing major reform, as government policy seeks to link education, skills and employment more closely, expand technical learning routes and strengthen financial sustainability. These shifts are changing how universities operate and how professional services contribute to strategy, efficiency and innovation.

For AHEP, this context reinforces the importance of sound governance, strategic clarity and strong financial stewardship. The Board's role is to ensure that AHEP remains a confident, resilient and forward-looking organisation that represents and supports the professional services community through change.

The role of Co-opted Trustee

Co-opted trustees share the same governance responsibilities as all trustees but are appointed to bring specific expertise to the Board. The Co-opted Trustee with Membership Expertise will support the Board in strengthening AHEP's membership strategy, enhancing value for members and ensuring our offer meets the changing needs of the professional services community.

Key responsibilities include:

- Advising the Board on membership strategy, recruitment, retention and engagement.
- Bringing insight into member needs and expectations across higher education professional services.
- Supporting the development of a compelling value proposition for individuals and institutions.
- Strengthening AHEP's understanding of membership trends, behaviours and growth opportunities.
- Acting as an ambassador for AHEP's membership offer within and beyond the sector.
- Contributing actively to Board discussions and decisions as a full trustee.

Person Specification

We welcome applications from both within and outside higher education, provided there is a genuine appreciation of the higher education context and the distinctive role of professional services. Because this is a co-opted position, we are seeking individuals with significant expertise in membership strategy and member-facing organisations.

We are particularly interested in candidates who can demonstrate:

- Experience in membership development, engagement or marketing within a professional body, association or similar organisation.
- Good knowledge of higher education and the needs of professional services staff.
- Insight into membership behaviours, value propositions and audience segmentation.
- Strong strategic thinking and the ability to bring constructive challenge.
- Excellent communication and listening skills, with a collaborative and inclusive mindset.
- A commitment to AHEP's mission to empower, connect and develop higher education professionals.

Prior board or trustee experience is welcome but not essential. Induction and governance support will be provided.

Term and commitment

Trustees are typically appointed for a term of three years and may be reappointed for one further consecutive three-year term. After serving two terms, trustees step down for at least three years before being eligible for reappointment.

The overall time commitment is modest but meaningful. The Board meets quarterly, combining online and in-person meetings, and trustees are also encouraged to attend key events such as the AGM, Annual Conference and Annual Lecture. Between meetings, most trustees give a few hours each month to reading papers or supporting specific areas of AHEP's work, such as a trustee working group or representing AHEP at sector events.

This is a voluntary position. AHEP reimburses reasonable travel and subsistence expenses in line with its policy, and attendance at the Annual Conference is covered.

Equality and Inclusion

AHEP is committed to equality of opportunity and values diversity in all its forms. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, particularly those currently under-represented in leadership positions in higher education and the broader professional community. Appointments are made on merit through an open and transparent process.

How to Apply

Please send your CV and a short covering letter outlining your relevant experience and motivation for joining AHEP's Board to chair@ahep.ac.uk.

Closing date: 31st January 2026