

Research Ethics Committee Lay Member

The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) is currently looking for volunteers to join our School's research ethics committees as Lay members. A Lay member is someone who is not currently professionally qualified in healthcare or who currently works in healthcare research or as a scientist.

About LSHTM and the Research Ethics Committees

LSHTM is a world-leading centre for research and postgraduate education in public and global health. [Our mission](#) is to improve health and health equity in the UK and worldwide; working in partnership to achieve excellence in public and global health research, education and translation of knowledge into policy and practice.

LSHTM is committed to providing a research environment that develops good research practice and nurtures a culture of research integrity. To help achieve this we maintain Ethics Committees who are responsible for considering the ethics of human research.

The primary role of all the LSHTM research ethics committees (RECs) is to safeguard the rights, safety and well-being of all research participants. This includes protecting participants from physical, psychological, social/cultural, economic and legal risks of harm.

For more information on the LSHTM RECs please see the [Terms of Reference](#).

We are currently looking for volunteers for the following:

Observational Committee A

This Committee is responsible for reviewing studies that are observational in nature, i.e. where no intervention that takes place. The Observational Committee A reviews higher risk projects, and those that require FWA-compliant review. High-risk observational studies include all research with vulnerable groups (excluding secondary analyses of existing datasets), and research involving the removal and storage of human tissue.

Commercialisation and Rapid Response (CaRR) Ethics Committee

The CaRR Ethics Committee primarily reviews all projects undertaken under Chariot Innovations, as well as studies undertaken by the Rapid Support Team. This committee is available only for research undertaken by these groups which is of a commercial nature, where Chariot have been contracted to undertake the research, and/or where a research project will be undertaken by the Rapid Support Team which requires a quick review due to the nature of infectious outbreaks.

Role Responsibilities

Each member is responsible for the competent review of all applications and listing any ethical concerns for the research project.

Specifically:

- Undertake review free from bias and influence
- Provide advice to the researchers on all aspects of welfare and safety of research participants

- Check and ensure that all information given to the research participants is clear and easy for them to understand, honest and does not have a negative impact on the participant's autonomy.
- To maintain confidentiality of documents obtained and discussions during the review process
- Develop the necessary skills to understand the scientific and ethical issues for each project, or request that an external expert join for the review.
- Assess the social value of the research, and identify any possible harm that may occur to vulnerable participants.
- To allocate appropriate time for reviewing the proposals
- Monitor the standard and application of research ethics across LSHTM
- Promoting and protecting the interests of participants and the public in research conducted by LSHTM staff and students
- Compliance with Chair's overall views as a consolidated view from the collective review of the committee, incorporating individual responses
- Compliance with the LSHTM policies and procedures for the ethics committee as written by the RGIO, and agreed by the Research Governance Committee
- Commit to reviewing projects each and every month, endeavouring to review at least 10 of the 12 months
- Be willing to attend face-to-face meetings during the academic year (usually 3 meetings per academic year, each meeting lasting roughly 2 hours).
- Have full knowledge of ethical guidelines such as the Declaration of Helsinki, CIOMs and others (eg ICH GCP), as required.

Person specification

The following are qualities needed to be an effective lay member on the Ethics Committee;

- Having a strong personal commitment to the interests of individuals who take part, or are asked to take part, in research.
- Have a commitment to ensuring the highest possible standards in research
- Be able to read, understand and analyse often complex research proposals
- The ability to be objective and consider issues from multiple perspectives
- Have good communication skills
- Be able to discuss issues with people who may have different opinions and listen to the views of others
- Have sufficient time to review applications on a monthly basis and amendments on a twice monthly basis electronically via the LSHTM Ethics Online (LEO) system.
- Be able to attend face-to-face meetings during the academic year (usually 3 meetings per academic year). Meetings can also be attended virtually (via Skype or Zoom) if required.
- Be willing to undertake one of the online ethics training courses recommended by the Research Governance and Integrity Office.
- Be IT literate. This is essential as all reviews are carried out electronically via the LEO system. It is essential for members to have access to a computer, laptop or tablet in order to be able to review applications and amendments on LEO.
- Be prepared to have your full name, profession and affiliation published.

Rewards

As this is a voluntary role we are unable to offer any financial incentive.

However, members will gain valuable experience during their time on the committee which can then be used to enhance their CV and provide valuable examples for interview situations. By becoming a member of the Ethics Committee you can expect to develop a greater understanding of ethical review processes, have an input in the development of new procedures and contribute to ensuring the highest quality research.

We are able to offer reimbursement for reasonable travel costs in order to attend face-to-face meetings.

Location

LSHTM is based across two sites. The main building, and where the majority of face to face ethics committee meetings take place, is based on Keppel street, London, WC1E 7HT, while our second site is based at Tavistock place, only a short walk from the main building.

You can find a map showing our location as well as directions on how to reach us here:

<https://www.lshtm.ac.uk/aboutus/contact/location>

Meetings can be attended remotely via Zoom if required.

Next steps

For more information, or to apply for the role of lay member, please email ethics@lshtm.ac.uk.

If you are interested in the role but feel there may be factors that would prohibit your involvement, please get in touch at ethics@lshtm.ac.uk to talk through any concerns.

If applying, please indicate in your email your preferred committee and include a copy of your CV.