COPE TRUSTEE - ROLE DESCRIPTION

COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics, publicationethics.org) was established in 1997 by a small group of journal editors in the UK but now has more than 13,500 members worldwide from all academic fields. Membership is open to publishers and editors of academic journals, as well as universities and research institutes, and organisations and individuals interested in publication ethics.

COPE provides advice to members on all aspects of publication ethics and, in particular, how to handle cases of publication misconduct. It also provides a forum for its members to discuss individual cases. COPE does not investigate individual cases but encourages editors to ensure that cases are investigated by the appropriate authorities (usually a research institution or employer).

Background
A general background in scholarly publishing, editing, or activities related to scholarly integrity.

Purpose of role
- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- With the other Trustees, to set the strategic direction of COPE.

Appointment and length of tenure
- The Trustee will be elected by the COPE membership.
- The Trustee will be appointed for three years, with the possibility of an additional term of a further three years.

Key responsibilities
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives (ie, the organisation must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are).
- To contribute actively to the board of Trustees’ role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a Trustee.
- To represent COPE externally when required to do so (eg, speaking on behalf of COPE at conferences and meetings, responding to media requests).
• In addition to the above statutory duties of all Trustees, each Trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience they have to help the board of Trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of the organisation’s work in which the Trustee has special expertise.
• To attend meetings, and to read papers in advance of meetings.
• To attend subcommittee meetings as appropriate.
• To keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues which affect its work.

General
• Attend an in person ‘retreat’, usually lasting 3-4 days, held once a year (this year in October).
• Attend and take part in meetings of the Trustee Board (four times a year, held by webinar with one being held at the retreat), Council (three times a year, held by webinar with one being held at the retreat) and the quarterly Forum (all by webinar).
• Act as liaison from the Trustee Board to other COPE subcommittees as required (or requested) by the Trustee Board or Executive Officer.

Person specification
• Experience and understanding of publication integrity issues, either as an editor of a scholarly journal, as a publisher or from within a university or research institute.
• An informed view on scholarly publishing across different disciplines.
• High level understanding of and judgement on business matters.
• An ethical framework with which to judge scholarly publishing in general and editorial activities in particular.
• Understanding of, and preferably experience with, a committee-led organisation.
• Presentation and communication skills.
• Negotiation skills.
• High level of integrity.