COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics)

COPE was established in 1997 by a small group of journal editors in the UK and now has over 12,000 members worldwide from all scholarly fields. Membership is open to editors of scholarly journals and others interested in publication ethics. COPE provides advice to editors and publishers 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).

COPE is seeking to appoint a Trustee with in depth knowledge and experience of working with monographs, books, conference proceedings, theses, etc.

Purpose of role

1. With the other Trustees, support COPE’s strategy to develop additional support and resources for publishers of books, conference proceedings, monographs, theses, etc.
2. With the other Trustees, to set the strategic direction of COPE.
3. To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.

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.

Role summary

- Supporting COPE’s strategy for expanding its support for editors and publishers of books, conference proceedings, monographs, theses etc.
- With other Trustees or Council Members, help to ensure that COPE’s resources and direction are appropriate and sufficient for the needs of editors and publishers of books, conference proceedings, monographs, theses etc.

Key responsibilities of a Trustee

- 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).
COPE Trustee

- 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 the organisation at conferences and meetings as appropriate.
- 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 (May/June).
- 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.
- Represent COPE externally when required to do so.

Person specification

- In depth knowledge and proven experience of the books, conference proceedings, and monographs publishing sector.
- Experience and understanding of publishing across different disciplines would be advantageous.
- High level understanding of and judgement on business matters.
- An informed view on scholarly publishing.
- 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.