



Scottish Women's Institutes

Committee Application Pack - 2026

We are currently looking to fill vacancies on the following National committee:

- Finance Committee

Complete, sign and mark your application as private and confidential. Please email to diane.cooper@theswi.org.uk or posted to SWI Central office, 1 Carmichael Place, Edinburgh EH6 5PH.



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Section 1. Introduction

Scottish Women's Institutes (SWI) is a membership organisation established in 1917 as the Scottish Women's Rural Institutes (SWRI). It has over 8,700 members, represented by 28 regional Federations and more than 450 local Institutes across Scotland. SWI is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and is governed by a Board of 10 Trustees, including three National Office Bearers: National President, Vice President, and Honorary Treasurer.

There are two standing National committees: the Finance Committee and the Skills & Events Committee, both made up of member representatives.

2.2. Eligibility Criteria

To apply for a national committee position, you must be a current member of the organisation.

2.3. Selection Process

Committee members are selected from the applications submitted. The Board aims to ensure representation from as many areas as possible. If there are more applicants than available places, the Board will appoint the most suitable candidates based on experience, skills, and relevance to the committee's remit.

2.4. Time Commitment

Committee members are required to attend at least four meetings each year, each lasting approximately one-two hours. In the interest of cost and time efficiency, most meetings take place online.

In addition, committee members are expected to attend:

- An induction and training session (online)

Expenses for committee meeting attendance are reimbursed in line with SWI's expenses policy.

2.5. Terms of Office

The term of office is three years. Committee members may apply for a further three-year term but must reapply. The Board will confirm reappointments.

2.6. General Committee Profile

Committees are collectively responsible for supporting the success of SWI's activities by:

- Adhering to the committee terms of reference (see attached TORs)
- Setting, monitoring, and evaluating committee objectives
- Ensuring effective risk management and monitoring processes
- Scrutinising financial performance against agreed budgets
- Acting as ambassadors for SWI

- Ensuring compliance with SWI's constitution and charity law obligations

2.7. Personal Responsibilities

Committee members are expected to:

- Align with SWI's strategy, vision, and values
- Respect and value the skills and experience of staff and fellow members
- Commit to attending committee meetings
- Act as an advocate for SWI and promote a positive image of its work
- Maintain confidentiality of committee discussions
- Disclose any conflicts of interest
- Act with integrity and honesty in all dealings with SWI
- Demonstrate a good understanding of the range and scope of committee activities
- Possess general business and financial awareness

2.8. Benefits of Serving on a Committee

Serving on an SWI committee provides an opportunity to contribute directly to the future of the organisation. It offers a platform to influence positive change, enhance leadership skills, and collaborate with committed members. Committee service also broadens networks, deepens understanding of governance, and builds confidence.

Key Benefits:

- Influence SWI's direction and priorities
- Develop leadership and decision-making skills
- Collaborate with like-minded members
- Broaden personal and professional networks
- Gain insight into organisational governance
- Build confidence and communication skills
- Be formally recognised for your service (e.g., at AGM)

2.9. Guidance Notes

It is important that committees reflect the diversity of SWI's membership and activities, with the right mix of skills and expertise to ensure effective decision-making.

When applying, please highlight your skills and experiences, whether gained professionally, personally, or within SWI, that you can bring to the committee's work.

Section 3. Terms of Reference – Finance Committee

3.1. Purpose

The Finance Committee is a standing committee reporting directly to the Board. Its purpose is to oversee SWI's financial management, ensuring sound governance and sustainability, and to provide strategic financial advice and recommendations to the Board.

3.2. Delegated Authority

The Committee operates in an advisory and oversight capacity only. It does not hold delegated authority to execute financial transactions or enter contracts. Authority remains with the National Treasurer.

3.3. Remit and Responsibilities

The Finance Committee will:

- Review SWI's financial and investment policies and recommend changes
- Assess investment performance annually and advise on adequacy of funds
- Review performance of investment managers, ensuring reappointment or re-tender every four years
- Consider and advise on material changes in accounting policies or standards
- Review proposals involving significant financial risk or commitment
- Consider annual budgets and in-year variations, balancing short-term risks with long-term sustainability
- Monitor financial performance against approved budgets and report to the Board
- Advise on financial parameters relevant to pay reviews

3.4. Membership

The Committee will normally comprise:

- National Treasurer (Chair) and National President
- CEO and Head of Finance
- Up to six members with financial management experience

National Office Bearers serve as ex officio members with full voting rights. A quorum is five members, including at least one Board Trustee. Members are appointed for three-year terms, renewable with Board approval. The Head of Finance acts as Secretary to the Committee.

3.5. Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will normally meet four times per year (March, June, Sept, November).

3.6. Reporting

The Committee reports to the Board through:

- Updates and proposals presented by the National Treasurer
- Submission of meeting minutes
- Specific recommendations requiring Board approval

3.7. Review of Terms of Reference

Next review due no later than July 2026.

Section 5. FINANCE COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the following two sections:

1. Personal details
2. Letter of application and signature

Personal Details

Name:		Membership No:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Tel:		Email:	
Institute:		Federation:	

Letter of Application

Please write a short letter explaining why you are interested in working on the Committee, outlining relevant skills and experience (max. 200 words).

Eligibility *(Please sign)*

I agree that I am willing to be considered to serve on the National Committee.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Committee responsibilities and person specification and the information provided is both true and accurate.

Signed.....Date.....

Thank you.

Complete, sign and mark your application as private and confidential. Please email to diane.cooper@theswi.org.uk or post to SWI Central office, 1 Carmichael Place, Edinburgh EH6 5PH.

For any other enquiries, please email: hello@theswi.org.uk