

Oxford Women in Chemistry Constitution

1. Name

The society shall be known as Oxford Women in Chemistry, hereinafter referred to as OxWiChem or the society.

2. Department of Chemistry

OxWiChem functions as a society within the Department of Chemistry. However, chemistry is an incredibly interdisciplinary subject that has aspects across many departments. With this in mind, anybody in a department within the Mathematics, Physics, Engineering and Life Sciences (MPLS) division may be eligible for committee membership, at their request and on a case-by-case basis. Hereinafter when the Department of Chemistry is referenced, presume that any member of MPLS may be eligible, at their request.

3. Aims

The aim of OxWiChem is to lead initiatives that support, connect and celebrates women working across chemistry and related STEM disciplines. OxWiChem aims to achieve this by completing and facilitating the following:

- i. Provide a platform for all women (cis/trans) and non-binary individuals in the department to come together and be given opportunities to develop professionally.
- ii. Celebration of the research and achievements of chemists who identify as women (including both cis and trans) and non-binary within the community.
- iii. Advocation for an inclusive and diverse community within the Department of Chemistry.

4. Code of Conduct

All members of OxWiChem are subject to the University of Oxford's relevant regulations, as well as applicable regulations made by the Department of Chemistry. All disciplinary or welfare issues beyond the scope of internal resolution will be referred to the relevant Departmental or University authorities.

5. Annual General Meeting

An annual general meeting (AGM) shall be held after the completion of the annual chemistry symposium Oxford Women in Chemistry Day, at the end of October. The main purpose of this meeting shall be formal election of the new Committee. Any member of the Department of Chemistry may attend the AGM.

6. The Committee

- A. The committee shall conduct the affairs of OxWiChem as a whole, and shall consist of those individuals elected at the AGM to the positions listed below:

- i. Chair (with option for 2 Co-Chairs if preferable)
- ii. Secretary
- iii. Treasurer
- iv. Webmaster
- v. Development Officer
- vi. Events Coordinator
- vii. Events Team (no max number)

Each person on the committee is entitled to one vote in committee meetings, no individual may have more than one vote.

- B. Nominations for positions i-vii may be made by any member of the Department of Chemistry, including the individual standing for the position.
- C. All members present at the AGM shall vote for the candidates for each position. Voting shall be carried out according to the following rules:
 - i. A provisional list of nominations shall be disseminated by the Secretary 48 hours before the AGM. Elections for each position shall proceed one-at-a-time in the order in which positions appear in section 6.A. Nominations for each position shall remain open until the election for that individual position commences.
 - ii. The election will be run by secret ballot using the alternative vote (instant run off) system. Voters will be asked to rank the candidates, 1 being their most preferred candidate, 2 their second most preferred candidate, etc., where “reopen nominations” counts as a candidate. The first preference votes for all candidates will then be counted. If one candidate has a majority of votes then that candidate wins the election. If no candidate has a majority, then the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and their votes are redistributed. Votes are redistributed by adding the votes from the eliminated candidate to the tally of the candidate that is listed as the second preference on the ballot. If one candidate now has a majority, they win the election. If no candidate has a majority (which will only occur if there are more than two candidates remaining) this process is repeated, eliminating the candidate with the fewest votes, until one a candidate has a majority of votes. If the request to reopen nominations has the majority of votes in any round, then nominations will be reopened and the election run again.
- D. The committee term of office shall commence after election at an AGM, and run till selection of the next committee at the AGM of the following year.
- E. Between AGMs, a vacant committee position may be filled by nomination as follows:
 - i. An individual may be nominated for the position by a majority vote of committee members. The secretary will publicise the nomination to the Department of Chemistry via Departmental email. At this time, any member of the Department of Chemistry may, within two weeks of the secretary’s announcement, make an alternative nomination. If

one or more alternative nominations is received, then at the end of the two weeks a special election will be held, by whatever means the committee deems appropriate, and the nominee receiving the most vote is duly elected. If there are no alternative nominations, the committee's nominee will be deemed elected.

- ii. Any committee member elected in this way will be a full voting member of the committee for the duration of that term of office (*i.e.* until the next AGM).

7. Committee Duties

A. Chair

- Committee spokesperson for the society to the Department of Chemistry, University of Oxford and other external parties.
- Organise and chair the AGM, including the facilitation of elections and publication of election results (*via* Departmental email).
- Chair committee meetings.
- Organise and set an agenda for committee meetings in conjunction with the Secretary.
- Organise sponsorship for OxWiChem with assistance of the Development Officer.
- Ensure the long-term stability of OxWiChem.
- Correspond with the Department of Chemistry when required.
- Should usually be elected having previously served in another position on the committee.
- Write OxWiChem overviews for the website.
- Liaise with the events team about organisation of events.
- Identify and reach out to candidates for the RedOxWiChem series.
- Monitor the OxWiChem Email.

B. Secretary

- Maintain the constitution in an up-to-date format.
- Assist the Chair in organisation and planning tasks.
- Assist the Chair in monitoring of the OxWiChem Email.
- Chair meetings in the absence of Chair.
- Aid the Chair in producing agendas and organising committee meetings.
- Take minutes at the AGM and committee meetings and ensure they are distributed to members.
- Maintain an up-to-date list of committee members.
- Support the chair in the general oversight of the organisation, including ensuring all obligations are met.

C. Treasurer

- Work closely with the Events team to organise funding for events.
- Liaise with the Development Officer and Chair regarding sponsorship.
- Ensure funds are properly allocated and used within the stipulated timeframe.
- Produce a termly report on budget and accounts.
- Manage the bank accounts.
- Generate and oversee OxWiChem budgets.
- Provide a budget review at each committee meeting.
- Handle reimbursement claims from members.
- Maintain proper records and receipts of OxWiChem expenditure over the course of their tenure.

D. Webmaster

- Maintain the OxWiChem website with up-to-date information on committee members, sponsors, upcoming events and sponsorship opportunities.
- Administrate other internet resources of OxWiChem (Linkedin, Instagram etc.).
- Ensure that the RedOxWiChem series is accurately maintained across all platforms.

E. Development Officer

- Advertise OxWiChem events to alumni and sponsors.
- Liaise with the Webmaster to promote OxWiChem on the internet.
- Identifies and engages potential sponsors for OxWiChem, fostering strong relationships between sponsors, the Chair and the society.
- Assist the Chair in the organisation and submission of grant proposals.

F. Events Coordinator

- Oversee the organisation of events.
- Generate a list of required items to be completed by the events team.
- Delegate tasks across the Event Team.
- Assist the Event Team in completing required tasks.
- Coordinate logistics on the day of the event.

G. Events Team

- Plan and coordinate OxWiChem events.
- Design event posters and promotional materials.
- Prepare event descriptions, announcements and promotional text.
- Liaise with different departments research groups and external organisations regarding events.
- Identify and contact potential speakers.
- Liaise with invited speakers prior to events.
- Manage registrations and abstract submissions when required.
- Coordinate venues, catering and other event logistics.
- Support activities on the day of the event.
- Assist with follow up-communication after events.

H. Associate Member

- A full-time fellow and/or professor within the Department of Chemistry (or related disciplines).
- This position is filled by invitation by the Committee or Chair, not elected as outlined in section 6 C.
- Offer general counsel and aid to the committee running OxWiChem.
- There can be a maximum of 3 associate members at a given point in time.
- Current associate members include are: Prof Kylie Vincent and Prof Fernanda Duarte.

8. Committee Meetings

- Organised at the discretion of the Chair, with a minimum of one meeting per calendar month.
- The Chair and Secretary will produce an agenda to be circulated to committee members at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- Only committee members should attend committee meetings.
- If committee members are unable to attend a committee meeting, apologies should be sent to the Chair and the Secretary.

- Other members of the Department of Chemistry may be invited to committee meetings where relevant at the discretion of the committee/Chair. They are not permitted to vote.
- There must be a minimum 'Quorum' of 50% of current committee members present at a meeting for any motions passed to be valid.
- If a committee member does not attend any committee meetings for a term, a statutory vote of no confidence will be automatically raised at the next committee meeting.
- Motions may be raised by any committee member and shall be decided as follows:
 - Binary votes (yes/no) shall be passed by an absolute majority (>50%) of those voting.
 - Multiple-option votes (more than two choices) shall be conducted by ranked-choice voting; if no option receives an absolute majority from the first preference votes, the option with the least votes is eliminated and the votes redistributed according to next preferences. This process continues until one option obtains an absolute majority.
- Votes on significant decisions, including any single expenditure exceeding £3,000, must be approved by a supermajority (>75%) of those voting. Such motions must be circulated to the committee at least 48 hours in advance of the committee meeting and may be voted on either at the meeting or electronically. Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting are encouraged to submit their vote to the Chair or Secretary within 24 hours of the meeting. Only votes actually cast shall be counted when determining whether the required majority has been met.
- Alternatively, the committee may hold a vote electronically. The announcement of any such vote shall include a deadline and must allow at least 24 hours to vote. The motion shall then be passed by a majority of those voting according to quorum stated above.
- Committee members unable to attend a meeting may register votes on motions set out in the agenda, by emailing the Chair or Secretary before the meeting. It will not be possible for absent members to vote on motions arising during the course of a meeting not initially on the agenda.
- The Secretary will produce minutes and circulate them after meetings.

9. Motion of No Confidence

A motion of no confidence may be raised against any committee members of OxWiChem. The motion must be proposed and seconded by separate members of the committee. The motion must be supported in writing, including a statement of its proposed consequence to the committee. The member questioned by the motion must be notified within 24 hours from the proposal and have at least a week to respond before the vote takes place. The final decision will be reached by secret ballot by committee members to reach a two-thirds majority decision under normal quorum. Under these circumstances committee members must vote in the ballot within one week although they may formally abstain.

10. Liability

The committee shall manage the affairs of OxWiChem. Financial or legal liability incurred in the rightful exercise of their office shall not, however, be the personal liability of the committee, but shall be the responsibility of OxWiChem as a whole.

11. Equal Opportunities Policy

OxWiChem will endeavour to ensure that the talents and resources of all members are utilised to the full and that no member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, disability, marital status, creed, social class, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to general operation.

12. Funds

- A. The funds of OxWiChem shall consist of an Operating Fund, together with any restricted or time-limited funding received for specific activities or purpose.
- B. The Operating Fund may be used for OxWiChem expense including prize money, reimbursements and event costs (*i.e.* catering/room booking/speakers).
- C. Where funding is subject to specific conditions (specific use or deadline, for example) the Treasurer will ensure that the funds are used in accordance with those conditions and, where appropriate, prioritised over unrestricted funds.
- D. The treasurer will report to the committee the current balance of the Operating Fund at least 24 hours before each committee meeting. Where applicable, the Treasurer shall also provide an update on any active restricted or time-limited funding.
- E. Any Committee member may be reimbursed up to £100 from the Operating Fund for reasonable minor or routine expenses associated with the society. The member will report this to the Treasurer, who will liaise with the appropriate committee member.
- F. Expenses shall be charged to the most appropriate funding source. Restricted or time-limited funding should be used where the expense is eligible under the conditions of that funding and, where appropriate, before unrestricted funds. Otherwise, expenses may be charged to the Operating Fund.
- G. At the end of the year, unrestricted funds remaining in the Operating Fund will carry over into the next year.

13. Power of Decision

Any matter not provided for in this constitution, or any question over the interpretation of it shall be dealt with by the committee, whose decision shall be final. Decisions shall be reached by committee members as follows:

- A. In binary matters, by an absolute majority of votes cast
- B. In decisions offering more than two options, by ranked-choice voting as defined in Section 8 above.

14. Constitutional Review and Amendments

A review of the constitution should be made at least every 3 years by the incumbent Chair and Secretary. Any amendments to be made during the review process should be ratified by the committee. Between reviews amendments can be proposed by committee members and passed by:

- A. Absolute majority vote for binary matters.
- B. Ranked-choice voting for multiple option amendments as defined above in Section 8.

This is a new constitution to replace the original constitution. This version of the constitution was generated on Wednesday 23rd of September 2026 by Maria Healy. (This date will be the day that the constitution is voted in to effect).