



MATERIALS RESEARCH SOCIETY

Advancing materials. Improving the quality of life.

4.8 Society Agility Council

Purpose: This policy articulates the purpose, structure, and responsibilities of the MRS Council for Society Agility and Chair

Applies to: Volunteers, Members, Staff

PURPOSE/SCOPE

Generating and maintaining innovative topical communities within MRS is the critical path to implementation of MRS strategic objectives and to the success of the Society. Scientific content is brought into and maintained in the society primarily via publications and meetings. The MRS Society Agility Council (SAC) is responsible for ensuring that

- Emerging and high impact materials research topics are incubated within MRS and encouraged to grow and flourish there
- Rapid decisions can be made to accommodate late-breaking topics/unusual programming formats in meetings and publications
- Active and vibrant topics are maintained and adequately represented within the broader scope of MRS meeting and publication activities.
- Strategic guidance for topical areas with metrics for completion is provided to PDSC (meetings) and CDSC (publications).

This responsibility embraces vetting, approving, and programming content that goes beyond MRS's traditional, bottoms-up programming approach, and ensures coordination between MRS Meetings and Publications.

The SAC will establish MRS strategic priorities related to topical communities (e.g. prioritize communities to recruit and retain, to be re-evaluated every 3 – 5 years), and provide an oversight mechanism. SAC will provide strategic advice to publications and meetings committees to help the society build robust meetings and journals, including through collaborations and partnerships. An essential component of this is to both bring in new communities and retain important existing communities within MRS. This will require thoughtful society-wide development of agile processes to advance these objectives. The SAC will coordinate closely with Meetings and Publications to identify formats and flexible procedures that will proactively promote development of diverse new communities and will ensure stability in strategically-important topical areas. These processes will be staged into the normal operation of the society in careful collaboration with Meetings, Publications, Board Leadership, and other Operating Committees following established procedures. The following are tactics to accomplish this:

- Provide rapid decision-making to accommodate late-breaking topics/unusual programming formats and publications in meetings and publications
- Facilitate coordination with other societies in joint programming
- Engage emerging communities that are not yet part of the MRS community
- Ensure that existing topical communities within MRS are appropriately promoted and are represented in MRS Meetings and Publications.
- Inject high quality, timely topical content — both new and established topics — into the Spring & Fall meetings in the “gap” between program development and program implementation.

- Inject high quality, timely topical content—both new and established topics—into the publications portfolio by coordinating and scheduling topics across publications product lines, including in journal articles, MRS Bulletin themes, focus/special issues, and webinars.
- Coordinate promotion of topical communities across meetings and publications in a synergistic manner.
- Develop and suggest operating procedures to ensure that important communities are maintained within MRS and the associated members are not lost due to inattention.

STRUCTURE

The Agility Council shall be comprised of the Chair, the Chairs of the Publications Committee, Meetings Committee, and the Industry Engagement Council, as well as the Director of Programs, the Chief Editor for Technical Content, the chair of the Topical Communities Subcommittee, and other members appointed by the Chair. Furthermore, to improve coordination, the chairs of PDSC and CDSC will sometimes be asked to participate in the calls.

The Agility Council will keep Govcom apprised of their activities through relevant HQ members, and the Board through the SAC chair (or designee) as appropriate.

CHAIR/MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

The Chair of the Agility Council shall be proposed by the standing members of the SAC (Chairs of the Publications Committee, Meetings Committee, and the Industry Engagement Council, the chair of the Topical Communities Subcommittee, as well as the Director of Programs and Chief Editor for Technical Content), reviewed by the Vice President in consultation with the previous chair, and ratified by the Board. It is expected that to improve coordination, the chairs of PDSC and CDSC will sometimes be asked to participate in the calls.

The Council chair shall identify a delegate or back-up, approved by the President, to assist or serve as acting chair in the event that the chair cannot perform his/her duties in an effective and timely manner. Additionally, the chair shall propose a ranked list of possible successors one year prior to the close of the chair's final term.

All members of SAC shall be members of the Society in good standing, unless approved in each instance by the President, including the specific term of appointment.

TERM OF SERVICE

The chair of the Society Agility Council shall generally serve a three-year term, extendable to six years with consent of the Vice President and the Chair, not including time previously served on the Council. Exceptions will be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Committee.

Council members' tenure shall be three to six years, and in line with their continued role as chair of their respective committees, taskforces, or councils (if any). Ideally, tenure should be staggered so that no more than half of the members are replaced in one year.

The council chair shall assure all persons appointed to the council are informed in writing of the term of their appointment. The council chair, with the assistance of the HQ Director(s), shall maintain rosters of council members. Changes to rosters shall be forwarded to the council's HQ Director(s) as soon as possible.

MEETINGS AND PROCESS

The council shall convene meetings or teleconferences as deemed necessary by the chair, or at the request of two or more council members, or as requested by the President. The chair shall give all council members advance notice of meetings or calls. Decisions reached during the council meetings shall be based on a majority vote of a quorum, which consists of at least half of the members of the council, including the chair or acting chair designated by the council chair with the concurrence of the President. If necessary, votes may be conducted via email.

The SAC Chair shall prepare a brief written report for the Board of Directors upon request, but at least on an annual basis, usually prior to the Fall Meeting. The annual report shall outline the principal achievements, directions, and recommendations of the council. This report and other notes describing the activities of the council shall be maintained at MRS Headquarters by the council chair via the HQ Director(s) and made available to the succeeding council chair at the end of the term.

COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Co-developing processes and programming with Publications and Meetings to retain and support active topics and members.
- Vetting and approving meeting content beyond the “bottom up” submission and PDSC vetting process both to capture and nurture rapidly developing new topics and to preserve flourishing existing communities.
- Providing strategic guidance to PDSC to identify “missing topics” in meeting contents early in the programming cycle.
- Approving programming on a much tighter timeline than normal PDSC processes can accommodate.
- Ensuring that top-down, strategic initiatives in support of various communities (e.g. industry, technical, etc.) are implemented in Spring and Fall meetings and coordinated with Publications.
- Ensuring that the communities associated with successful topical task forces are transitioned into and maintained in both meetings and publications for the useful lifetime of the topic
- Approving allocation of funds—designated by the board for the purpose of supporting new symposia being brought into meetings for the purpose of creating new technical topical communities in MRS.
- Developing and proposing to the Board and other Operating Committees procedures that would enhance the development and flourishing of various communities and maintain members by providing continuity for materials research topics in MRS
- Ensuring coordination and communication where needed with affected MRS operating committees/subcommittees, and meeting chairs.

Deliverables: N/A; Review every three years or as needed

Who: Secretary/SAC Chair

When: At least 8 weeks before the Board meeting at which amendments should be considered.

To: President

Policy first adopted: December, 2019

Last modified: August 2020; April 2021; August 2022

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Enacting Legislation: GC:2019:04; B:2020:22; B:2021:08 (S21 Consent Agenda); B:2022:12 (Consent Agenda)

Policy created by: Agility Council Party responsible for this policy: Agility Council

