

Serving on the EMBL Alumni Association Board

About the EMBL Alumni Relations Programme

The EMBL Alumni Relations programme exists to strengthen lifelong connections between EMBL and its global community of alumni, while advancing EMBL's mission and the importance of life sciences research across Europe and beyond.

Working closely with EMBL leadership, current staff and alumni, the programme supports a vibrant international community of more than 11,000 alumni through networking, engagement, recognition, communications and strategic initiatives that benefit both EMBL and the wider life sciences community.

The programme is led by Mehrnoosh Rayner, Head of Alumni Relations, and is overseen by Plamena Markova, EMBL Chief of International Relations.

The success of the programme depends on the dedication and expertise of all EMBL alumni volunteers, and in particular the EMBL Alumni Association (EAA) Board.

The EMBL Alumni Association Board

The EMBL Alumni Association Board is a volunteer board that represents the interests, experience and diversity of EMBL's global alumni community.

Board members act as ambassadors for EMBL, helping to strengthen relationships between the Laboratory and its alumni, while contributing ideas, expertise and networks that support EMBL's scientific mission and community.

The Board works in close partnership with the Alumni Relations Office to shape the direction of the Alumni Relations programme and identify new ways in which EMBL's alumni can contribute to science, society and future generations of researchers.

Board composition

The Board aims to reflect the diversity of EMBL's alumni community, including representation across:

- gender
- nationality
- country of residence
- EMBL sites and units
- former EMBL staff categories
- career stage
- employment sector
- scientific and professional expertise

The Board normally consists of 8–12 members.

Where appropriate, members are co-opted to strengthen areas of expertise or representation that would otherwise be underrepresented.

Election and term of office

Board members must be members of the EMBL Alumni Association.

They are elected by Alumni Association members for a **four-year term** and may serve a maximum of **two consecutive terms**.

The Chair, two Vice-Chairs and Treasurer serve as the Association's legal representatives and work particularly closely with the Alumni Relations Office on Association governance and financial matters throughout the year.

What Board members do

Board members help shape the future of the EMBL alumni community by:

- attending two Board meetings each year;
- contributing ideas and strategic advice;
- providing constructive feedback on Alumni Relations activities;
- acting as ambassadors for EMBL within their professional and regional networks;
- helping to strengthen alumni engagement, events and regional networks;
- supporting EMBL Alumni Awards and other recognition programmes;
- identifying opportunities for alumni to contribute to EMBL's mission and to European life sciences.

Board members are encouraged to contribute in ways that reflect their own expertise, professional experience and networks.

Board meetings

The Board meets twice each year.

One meeting rotates between EMBL's sites (excluding Heidelberg) in February and concludes with a reception bringing together local alumni and EMBL staff.

The second meeting takes place at EMBL Heidelberg in July, alongside EMBL Lab Day and the Alumni Award Ceremony.

Meeting dates are normally confirmed more than a year in advance.

Travel and accommodation

EMBL reimburses reasonable travel (within Europe) and accommodation expenses for Board members attending official Board meetings.

Where Board members choose not to claim reimbursement, EMBL donates the equivalent amount to the EMBL Alumni Association Fund.

Confidentiality

As part of their volunteer role, Board members may have access to confidential information, including Alumni Award nominations, alumni data and other sensitive information relating to EMBL or the Alumni Association.

Board members are expected to:

- treat all confidential information with discretion;
- use such information only in connection with their Board responsibilities;
- return or securely destroy confidential material when requested.

This obligation does not apply to information that was already publicly available, was already known to the Board member before their appointment, or was received lawfully from another source.

All Board members are asked to accept these confidentiality principles as part of their service on the Board.

Statutes

See the [Statutes of the EMBL Alumni Association](#)

Why serve on the Board?

Serving on the EMBL Alumni Association Board is an opportunity to help shape the future of Europe's life science's laboratory and its global alumni community.

Board members contribute their experience, ideas and networks to strengthen EMBL, support fellow alumni and ensure that the impact of EMBL's community continues to grow for future generations.