



# General Council Elections

*Candidate Information Pack*

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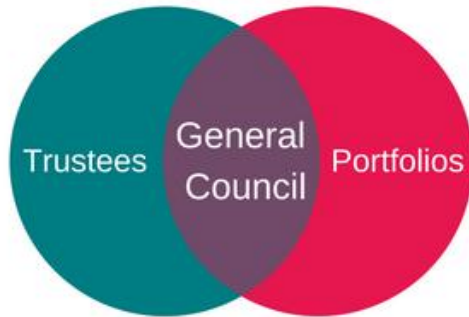


*Some of the current General Council at the February 2025 GC meeting.*

# What is General Council?

General Council (GC) is the decision making body of the Student Christian Movement. GC are elected by the membership of SCM at the Annual General Meeting, and serve for a two year term beginning in August that year.

General Council is the group that makes sure that all of the different parts of the movement fit together, representing the members of SCM and influencing areas of SCM's work. Some members of General Council have portfolios, which correspond with aspects of SCM's work or represent people within the movement, and some members of General Council are also the trustees of SCM.



## Why should I stand for election?

SCM is a member led organisation. The knowledge and experience of our members is important as it helps us to root everything we do in the values held by students, whether they are currently enrolled or recent graduates. By being on General Council you will help to shape the future of SCM.

Being on General Council provides lots of opportunities to develop and learn new skills. You'll learn about what's involved in running a small charity, how to work as part of a team and a whole host of practical skills like budgeting and project planning. Training will be provided and will be ongoing throughout your time on General Council.

# Being on General Council

Being on General Council is a big commitment. You'll need to be able to attend the meetings and any training sessions, as well as the Annual General Meeting. You will have a responsibility to the movement, to the rest of General Council and to the staff team.

## Induction and Training

All new members of GC receive training at the start of their term of office which covers everything from the duties of being a trustee to getting to grips with SCM's strategic plan and annual budget. There are also additional training sessions throughout the year to help members of GC develop their skills and to ensure that they can be effective in their roles. These include in-house sessions run by members of the staff team as well as external training provided by other organisations. All trustees will also be booked onto a Safeguarding for Trustees webinar run by an organisation called thirtyone:eight.

All trustees must commit to attending training sessions to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

## Support

Each member of GC will have a dedicated contact person on the staff team who they can get in touch with about anything relating to being on General Council.

There is also an advisory group called the Council of Reference, who provide advice to the trustees on matters relating to strategy, finance and human resources. Members of the Council of Reference include former members of SCM, previous SCM staff, and other professionals with areas of expertise such as Safeguarding, finance management and charity governance. In addition there is a sub group called the Finance and Staffing Advisory Committee made up of members of GC, the Council of Reference and staff, who provide more in depth support in this area.

## Meetings

General Council meets three to four times per year to discuss how things are going, receive updates and make decisions about future work. A typical agenda will include an opportunity for each member of General Council to feed back about their own portfolio, reports from staff and financial reports, and there may also be proposals that General Council or the Trustees need to make a decision on. Each meeting has a distinct focus to respond to the rhythm of the SCM year:

**Autumn term (Sept/Oct): Projects** - to receive updates on project work and discuss future plans.

**Spring term (Jan/Feb): Policies** - to review SCM's policies to ensure that they are in line with any legal requirements and that they are fit for purpose, and to receive updates on how the policies are being implemented.

**Summer term (May/June): Finance** - to approve the annual budget and the Investments and Reserves Policy.

General Council meetings normally take place on Saturdays starting at 10.30am, and are held at the SCM office in Birmingham. SCM will cover travel expenses to meetings and provide lunch too. If members of GC are unable to attend the meeting in person then there is the option to join all or part of the meeting via video conferencing.

From time to time there may be additional meetings relating to your portfolio, such as events planning meetings or editorial meetings for publications.

## Keeping in touch

Between GC meetings it is expected that all members of GC keep in touch through a weekly update email. The weekly update contains information to note, action points to complete, and occasionally decisions to be made. Each member of GC is given an @movement email address to use during their time on GC, and an Outlook calendar shared with other members of GC and the staff team to note events, deadlines and busy periods.

# General Council Roles - Trustees

The trustees, as a body, have overall legal responsibility for the work of the movement. They act in a voluntary capacity, and the duties of trustees include:

- **Being responsible for the administration of the charity.** This involves making sure that SCM's assets and resources are being used correctly and that SCM is being run in line with its constitution and any relevant laws and regulations.
- **Being responsible for the vision, mission and management of the charity.** This involves ensuring that SCM is working towards the strategic plan, ensuring that there are adequate line management procedures in place for the CEO and setting targets.
- **Acting reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to SCM.** This means that trustees must use reasonable care and skill in their role as trustees, using personal skills and experience and seeking advice where it is needed. General Council appoints a Council of Reference, which is a body of advisors that General Council can consult on matters relating to staffing, finance and strategy.
- **Safeguarding and protecting the assets of SCM,** including money, intellectual property, staff and the reputation of SCM. This involves setting and monitoring budgets, being responsible for the employment of staff and ensuring that the appropriate policies are in place.
- **Acting collectively.** All decisions and responsibilities are shared by the trustees, so all trustees should take an active role.

- **Acting in the best interests of SCM.** Trustees should act independently, and not allow their personal views or interests cloud their judgement.
- **Avoiding any conflict between any personal interests and those of the charity.** Trustees cannot influence any decisions in their favour, or receive any benefit from SCM such as money.

The Convenor of General Council, who is also a trustee, also acts as a link between General Council and the staff team. They also represent General Council at Council of Reference meetings alongside another member of GC.

Many of SCM's trustees are also portfolio holders, but some do not have a defined portfolio.

# General Council Roles - Portfolio Holders

Portfolio Holders act in a voluntary capacity to assist with aspects of SCM's work (operational), or to represent SCM's members (representative).

There are some portfolios that the current General Council feel are essential to the movement. These include:

Operational:

- **Convenor** - chairing GC meetings, acting as the link between GC and the staff team.
- **Safeguarding** - ensuring that Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and are followed.
- **Finance** - helping to plan the budget and fundraising strategy, and monitoring progress.
- **Members and Communities** - recruiting new members and assisting with implementing strategies for engaging with groups and members.
- ***Movement* Editor** - assisting with the publication of *Movement* magazine.

Representative:

- **LGBTQ+ Rep**
- **UKME/BAME Rep**
- **Access and Inclusion (Disability and Neurodiversity)**  
Representing the views and experience of these groups within SCM's membership and the wider student population to GC, contributing to policies and work to support these groups.

Other desirable portfolios include:

Operational:

- **Events** - helping to plan events with staff, including planning the programme and identifying potential speakers and workshop leaders.
- **International (Issues and Relationships)** - coordinating responses from SCM to international appeals and news, and building links with other national SCMs.
- **Social Justice**- assisting with the coordination of SCM's response to and involvement in campaigns that are relevant to SCM, and being a part of the Faith in Action Project Group
- **Ecumenism** - helping to create links with denominational student organisations, and contributing to resources for groups and members.
- **Theology and Resources** - contributing to the development of resources and the SCM blog, and being part of the Faith in Action Project Group.
- **Comms and Social Media** - acting as a moderator on SCM's social media channels and contributing to content planning and creation (especially TikTok!).
- **Alumni and Friends**—communicating with SCM's alumni network.

Representative:

- **International Students**
- **Ecumenical/Minority Denominations**
- **Regions**

This list is by no means exhaustive, so if there is an area of SCM's work that you're interested in you can create a portfolio that draws on your own skills, interests and experience.

# Who can stand for election?

SCM has a commitment to being student led, which is why General Council is made up of students and recent graduates.

To stand for election to General Council you must:

- Be a current member of SCM (therefore you must be a current student or have been a student in the last three years). To find out more about membership, visit [www.movement.org.uk/membership](http://www.movement.org.uk/membership).
- Be committed to the values and objectives of SCM.
- Be able to commit to being a member of General Council for at least two years.
- Be able to attend General Council meetings, the Annual General Meeting and any training sessions. You can find a list of dates at the end of this pack.

To stand for election as a trustee, you must also be sure that you are not prevented from acting as a trustee because you:

- Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception.
- Are currently declared bankrupt (or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order).
- Have in individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) to pay off debts with creditors.
- Are disqualified from being a company director.
- Have previously been removed as a trustee by the Charity Commission or by the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement.

SCM can make any reasonable adjustments to enable you to be part of General Council, such as ensuring that venues for meetings are accessible, providing large print copies of meeting papers and facilitating involvement in meetings via video conferencing or telephone. If you have any access needs and wish to discuss these before you submit your nomination, please feel free to contact the office.

# How do I stand?

To nominate yourself for election, simply complete the online nomination form(s) at [www.movement.org.uk/GeneralCouncil2024](http://www.movement.org.uk/GeneralCouncil2024) no later than **12 noon on 5th April**.

# What happens next?

After the nominations period closes, all SCM members will be sent a copy of the nomination forms by email to enable them to decide who to vote for.

Voting takes place at the AGM, and the result is announced the following day. Voting is by Single Transferrable Vote, and members will be asked to rank the candidates in order of preference.

For portfolio holder posts there is **one vacancy per portfolio**. To be elected you will need 50%+1 of the votes cast to be elected. If nobody is elected after the first round of counting, then the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated. Their votes are then recounted based on the second preference stated on the ballot papers, and so on. If after all rounds of counting nobody is elected, then the nominations for that position will be reopened. General Council will decide if and when a further election will take place.

For trustee posts where there are **multiple vacancies**, the quota required to be elected will be calculated based on the number of votes received and the number of positions available. After the first round of counting and someone is elected, the quota required will be recalculated and the votes cast in favour of the first person to be elected will be recounted based on the second preferences on the ballot paper. This will continue until all available positions are filled.

Re-open nominations (RON) is a candidate in all elections. Any papers that are 'spoilt' or not completed correctly will not be counted.

# Dates for your Diary

Nominations close	12 noon Monday 7th April 2025
Annual General Meeting 2023 and General Council voting	7pm 28th April 2025
General Council training	TBC
General Council meetings	GC141 7th June 2025 GC142 25th October 2025 GC143 7th February 2026
Annual General Meeting 2024	27th April 2026 (provisional)

# Contact Us

If you have any questions about standing for election, you can contact:

Abigail Hollingsworth, GC Convenor - [abigail@movement.org.uk](mailto:abigail@movement.org.uk)

Lisa Murphy, Secretary to the Trustees - [lisa@movement.org.uk](mailto:lisa@movement.org.uk)

SCM Office - 0121 426 4918