

# Search for the new President

## June 2018 – June 2021

**Royal  
Geographical  
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography  
and geographical learning


## ● President search criteria

### ... **Contextual background**

Given that the circumstances of this appointment are very different from that of previous recent elections, the Society needs to be confident that a new President can support a new Director from the very start. Assuming a significant geographical background at incoming Director level, then a background of organisational leadership will be important amongst the many competencies expected from the incoming President. A confidence in the public eye; adaptable and supportive to the Society's needs; and an appreciation of the breadth the Society's constituencies with no particularly strong sectoral agenda – these are important qualities in this period of transition.

Given this context, the following **criteria guidelines** are to be considered (in no particular order):

- A commitment to geography, the Society and the breadth of the Society's work today in meeting its charitable objective 'to advance geographical science'.
- Experience of organisational leadership.
- Sympathy with the working procedures of the Society.
- Approachability and willingness to engage with the Society's staff, especially the Director and senior team.
- Competence and high degree of respect externally within their field of expertise.
- Willingness and ability to chair Council Meetings of RGS-IBG and the AGM.
- Willingness to chair Monday evening lectures more than occasionally ('acceptable visibility' being perhaps 40-50%) and the confidence and desire to engage with Fellows and members.
- Broad appeal to, and ability to communicate with, the various constituencies of the Society – Higher Education, Schools, Exploration/Fieldwork, Public Policy and Public Engagement, and to the breadth of the membership.
- A person who is seen as an 'understandable choice' by the Society.
- Leadership skills which can inspire and engage all elements of the Society, particularly in relation to the leadership of the trustees.
- An ability to network with Society and personal contacts, among key individuals in the wider world, to help the Society to grow the endowment, to gain the support of major donors and to further develop fundraising.

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- Sympathy with the strategic plan of the Society (2017-2021) and the ability to lead, together with other members of the Executive Committee and inclusively of all key stakeholders, the development of strategic thinking.
  - Intellectual calibre and reputation (professional and/or public) from a geographical or closely allied field.
  - Acumen and connections across the range of policy communities that will be important in the future development of the Society.
  - Experience of, or demonstrable keen interest in, one or more of the Society's main areas of work.
  - Ability to grasp the politics of a complex organisation.
  - Stature in the public eye and the ability to be an influential figurehead.
  - Sympathy with the charitable mission of the Society: to be public-facing and inclusive.

*The Society's Council, October 2017*