

SAIC Science Panel Expression of Interest: Guidance Notes

To submit an Expression of Interest for the SAIC Science Panel, **please submit a covering email and supporting documents no later than Friday 29 May 2026.** See below for details.

OVERVIEW

The Science Panel provides independent, expert scientific advice to the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Cluster Ltd. (SAIC). Established under SAIC's Articles of Association, it will play a central role in shaping SAIC's R&D and innovation portfolio by offering advice to SAIC's Board of Directors, reviewing project proposals, and supporting impactful collaborations across aquaculture.

Up to 12 members will be appointed in 2026 for a term of two years. Appointments will reflect a broad cross-section of expertise aligned with SAIC's strategic priorities.

NB: the Science Panel operates in an advisory capacity only, making recommendations but not approving funding or directing SAIC activity.

By joining the Science Panel, members will:

- Influence future-focused, sector-led innovation.
- Help ensure public and private investment is informed by robust science.
- Contribute to collaborative research with real-world impact.
- Engage with a national and international network of scientists, innovators, and decision-makers.
- Support SAIC's mission to deliver credible, independent, and applied science across the aquaculture sector.

PURPOSE

The Science Panel's work directly supports SAIC's mission to deliver innovation that contributes to responsible, sustainable sector growth and to Scotland's economic development. The Panel exists to:

- Provide independent scientific opinion to SAIC's Board of Directors and executive leadership.
- Support evidence-led decision-making across SAIC's activities.
- Evaluate the scientific merit, innovation value, and commercial potential of project proposals.
- Ensure SAIC remains aware of relevant global research and innovation, identifying opportunities for synergy and partnership, and avoiding duplication.
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- Act as ambassadors for SAIC within the wider scientific and technical communities.
- Contribute to horizon scanning, identifying emerging trends, technologies, and challenges relevant to aquaculture.

SCOPE OF WORK

Project proposals: review and evaluation

- Assess project proposals submitted from SAIC funding calls.
- Provide written evaluations within agreed timelines.
- Participate in discussions to reach consensus where reviewer opinions differ.
- Contribute constructively to strengthening the scientific and innovation quality of SAIC-supported activity.

All SAIC-funded projects must align with SAIC's strategic focus areas and demonstrate potential commercial value. Science Panel members play a key role in ensuring that funded projects meet these criteria and contribute meaningfully to Scotland's aquaculture sector.

Scientific advice

- Advise SAIC's Board of Directors and senior leadership on scientific matters relevant to the sector.
- Highlight relevant developments in other scientific fields or regions.
- Support SAIC in identifying emerging opportunities and risks.

Advocacy and sector engagement

- Promote SAIC's work within professional networks.
- Contribute to horizon scanning and strategic discussions at Science Panel meetings.

GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

Appointment and tenure

- Members are appointed by the SAIC's Board of Directors.
- Members serve in an advisory capacity only.
- Tenure will be two years.
- The Board may consult SAIC's membership during appointments.
- The Board may ask a member to step down with one month's notice.
- Conflicts of interest will be actively managed in line with SAIC governance procedures.

Meetings

The Science Panel will meet at least twice per year. These are expected to be virtual but may be held in person at SAIC's offices in Inverness. Additional virtual meetings will be held as required.

Meetings will be chaired by SAIC's Principal Officer. SAIC staff will provide administrative support.

The Chair of SAIC's Board of Directors may attend any Science Panel meeting, and Science Panel members may be invited to attend meetings of SAIC's Board of Directors. Panel members may attend SAIC Board meetings by invitation.

Science Panel leadership

Once established, the Science Panel will appoint one of its members annually to serve as its Chair.

Reporting

Draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated to the SAIC's Board of Directors within one month.

ELIGIBILITY & EXPERTISE

SAIC seeks independent, highly credible experts with deep experience in aquaculture science, innovation, and applied research. The Science Panel shall comprise members to reflect:

- Breadth of scientific disciplines
- Balance across all sectors and aspects of aquaculture (finfish, shellfish and seaweed)
- International perspective
- Strong understanding of Scottish aquaculture

Applications are welcome from **individuals worldwide with expertise relevant to aquaculture innovation**. SAIC is interested in specialisms aligned with its current focus areas:

- Fish health and welfare (including veterinary science)
- Genetics and breeding
- Virology and disease management
- Environmental science and ecosystem interactions
- Shellfish aquaculture
- Seaweed cultivation (and other emerging species)
- Applied technology and innovation, e.g., IoT, sensors, imaging
- Environmental sustainability
- Climate change, resilience, and net-zero

Applicants should bring:

- Recognised scientific expertise and professional networks.
- Experience in research, innovation, or industry collaboration, though an academic role is not a pre-requisite for joining the Panel.
- Ability to provide objective, constructive evaluation of projects.

TIME COMMITMENTS & REMUNERATION

Science Panel members are expected to commit to:

- Two Science Panel meetings per year (likely virtual).
- Additional meetings (virtual) as required.
- Time to review project proposals and contribute to discussions.

Details of remuneration/compensation will be confirmed in due course.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST & NEXT STEPS

To submit an Expression of Interest, email info@saicinnovation.org.uk with 'Science Panel' in the subject line. **Closing date: Friday 29 May 2026 at 23:59.**

In your email please address:

- Your relevant expertise and experience
- Your motivation for joining the Science Panel
- Details of any specific areas of interest or technical strength.
- **Please attach a short CV** (maximum two pages)

Applications will be assessed against:

- Expertise
- Independence
- Balance of skills
- Alignment with SAIC's purpose.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to an informal discussion with SAIC's Board of Directors prior to appointment.