

Scientific and Clinical Advances Advisory Committee member

Background

The [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority](#) (HFEA) is an arm's length body (ALB) of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that regulates UK fertility clinics and projects involving research with human embryos. This includes licensing, inspections and setting standards. The [Authority](#), our board, meets regularly throughout the year to discuss and determine policy and practice. The members of the Authority are non-staff members appointed by the Government to bring an objective point of view to our board and committees.

The Scientific and Clinical Advances Advisory Committee (SCAAC) is a subcommittee of the Authority. You can read previous meeting papers and minutes of this committee [here](#). The SCAAC meets three times a year to consider advances in science and clinical practice which are relevant to the Authority's work. [Members of SCAAC](#) include those appointed from the membership of the Authority (board members) and a number of external advisers recruited via an open and transparent recruitment process.

Vacancy description

The HFEA is looking to appoint one new External Adviser to the SCAAC with expertise in one of the following areas:

- **The use of artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data in healthcare or biological science/research**
- Or
- **The use of automation and robotics in healthcare or biological science/research**
- Or
- **Biostatistics and assessing the quality of research in fertility treatment**

External Advisers are appointed to the SCAAC for a term of three years, with a maximum of two terms. A fee of £325 per day is paid to external advisers for their attendance and contribution to committee meetings. Applicants for the role of External Adviser must have [the right to work in the UK](#).

The remaining SCAAC meetings dates for 2025 that the successful candidates will attend are Monday 9th June (anticipated online) and Monday 6th October (anticipated in person). In person meetings are held in the HFEA offices in Stratford, London. Travel and expenses will be paid in accordance with our travel and subsistence policy.

Role and responsibilities of an external adviser

To give your professional opinion to assist the SCAAC in reaching its conclusions on matters before it. In addition, you must assist the SCAAC by providing truthful, unbiased opinions on matters within your expertise in an independent and impartial manner.

Specifically, the role of SCAAC is to:

- make recommendations to the Authority on the safety and efficacy of scientific and clinical developments (including research) in assisted conception, embryo research and related areas
- make recommendations to the Authority on patient information relating to those scientific and clinical developments
- advise the Authority on significant implications for licensing and regulation arising out of such developments, and
- where required, work with the Authority members to consider the social, ethical and legal implications arising out of such developments.

As an External member of an HFEA advisory committee you will not possess any voting powers on matters. The majority of business brought to this committee serves to advise the Authority, which retains decision-making powers over that business. The only exception is that the SCAAC is responsible for making decisions regarding authorised processes, which are the processes clinics can use to carry out licensable activities. Further information on the role of the SCAAC can be found in the [HFEA Standing Orders](#) (pages 36-37).

Whilst occupying the role of External Adviser to the SCAAC, you must adhere to the HFEA's Code of Conduct.

Personal specification

The HFEA values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community. The committees of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Committees also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates with either public or private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

Essential Criteria

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

- ability to actively contribute to discussions on complex and sensitive issues including, but not limited to, your specific areas of expertise.
- ability to advise on possible outputs required by the HFEA including, but not limited to, patient information, impact on licensing and regulation, and social, ethical, and legal implications of developments in relevant areas.
- ability to provide critical analysis of research papers.
- have the highest professional standards including the ability to provide opinions that are impartial, unbiased and truthful.

and have expertise in one of the following areas:

Senior level experience in artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data including:

- The practical application of AI in a regulated environment (essential)
- Understanding of how new applications of AI are used or can be used in a scientific, health or medical context e.g. large language models versus deep learning versus XGBoost (essential)
- Ability to apply critical thinking to help SCAAC make recommendations to the Authority on the future direction in relation to AI (essential)

- Experience of AI/big data in the fertility sector or lived experience of fertility treatment (desirable)

OR senior level experience in automation and robotics including:

- The practical application of automation and robotics in a regulated environment (essential)
- Understanding of how automation and robotics are used and can be further used in a biological science, health or medical context (essential)
- Ability to apply critical thinking to help SCAAC make recommendations to the Authority on the future direction of robotics and automation (essential)
- Experience of automation and robotics in the fertility sector or lived experience of fertility treatment (desirable)

OR senior level experience in biostatistics including:

- Ability to use biostatistical methods to assess the quality of research in the fertility/reproductive medicine field (essential)
- Ability to help SCAAC make recommendations to the Authority on new research findings in fertility/productive medicine (essential)
- Publication track record in using biostatistical methods to assess the quality of research in the fertility/reproductive medicine field (desirable)

How to apply

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of an External Adviser of the HFEA's Scientific and Clinical Advances Advisory Committee (SCAAC).

To apply please email an up-to-date CV together with a supporting letter (maximum 2 sides A4) outlining how you meet the personal specification outlined above to:

dharmi.deugi@hfea.gov.uk

If you are considering applying and meet the criteria set out, but have some questions, please address them to the above e-mail address.

Applications must be received by **midnight on Sunday 25th May 2025**

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview with the chair of the Authority, Julia Chain, the chair of the SCAAC, Tim Child, and member of the Authority Alex Kafetz. Interviews will take place in early July (dates to be confirmed).

Supporting letter

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet the criteria set out. Please write all acronyms in full first.

Please ensure your full name and the area of expertise you are applying for are clearly stated at the top of your letter.

Please limit your letter to two A4 pages.

Conflicts of interest

If you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of HFEA, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your supporting letter.

If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on appointment.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date.

Additional Information

For more information about our work please visit the [HFEA website](#), including our current [corporate strategy and business plan](#).