



Institute of Acoustics Limited

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TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY IN COUNCIL

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE INSTITUTE OF ACOUSTICS SHEWETH AS FOLLOWS:

This Petition is submitted on the authority of a resolution of the members of the Institute of Acoustics (hereafter referred to as the Institute) in General Meeting on the 22nd May 2024.

Why are we applying for the Award of Chartered Status?

The Institute is registered as a charity (numbered 267026) with a mission to promote and advance the art, science and technology of acoustics in all its aspects.

As an organisation we have promoted excellence through education, training and regulation of membership standards of competence and ethical practice for over 50 years. We believe that the grant of Chartered status would recognise the public interest in the Institute's continuing demand for excellence from its members to provide a productive environment for cross-fertilisation of ideas and initiatives.

The range of interests of members within the world of acoustics embraces aspects as diverse as aerodynamics, architectural acoustics, building acoustics, electroacoustics, engineering dynamics, noise and vibration, hearing, speech, underwater acoustics, together with a variety of environmental aspects including bio and eco-acoustics.

The Institute of Acoustics requires its members to conduct themselves so as to safeguard the public interest in matters of safety, health and the environment, exercise their professional skill and judgement to the best of their ability, discharge their professional responsibilities with integrity, honesty and diligence and treat all persons fairly and with respect.

The Institute will rank alongside other chartered bodies and attract a widening pool of talented individuals, aspiring to ever higher standards of expertise and professionalism. Chartered status is a public endorsement of the value of the service given by members for the public good.

The Institute works closely with other professional bodies in related fields, including the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, and the Association of Noise Consultants (the trade body for the acoustics consultancy profession) and is regularly consulted by Government departments on relevant regulations and standards.

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Chartered Status would help to consolidate and promote the Institute's position of influence as the leading voice of the profession in matters of statutory supervision and control, environmentally sustainable development and economy, in the public interest.

### **History of the Institute**

The Institute has been a professional body since 1974, with its members working in both private and public sectors. It was formed from the amalgamation of the Acoustics Group of the Institute of Physics and the British Acoustical Society. Over the years the environment in which we operate has changed dramatically, likewise the technology and specialist skills have been developed to meet those changes.

### **Role of the Institute**

1. To assess the initial and continuing competence of those seeking admission to the Institute, and to require them to abide by the Institute's Code of Conduct while practising their profession.
1. To hold, promote or support conferences, lectures and symposia for the discussion, promotion or advancement of the art, science and technology of acoustics. Branch meetings are open to members and non-members alike at no cost.
2. To stimulate interest in, and advance the study of, the art, science and technology of acoustics in all their aspects.
3. To encourage theoretical, experimental and applied research directed towards the advancement of the art, science and technology of acoustics.
4. To promote, assist and advise on elementary and advanced education in the art, science and technology of acoustics.
5. To co-operate with any national or international bodies, societies, organisations, associations, companies or persons whose objects are to advance the study and understanding of the art, science and technology of acoustics, or which include the advancement and application of such study and understanding.

### **Membership of the Institute**

The Institute currently has approximately 3100 members. Membership grades include Student, Technician, Affiliate, Associate, Member, Fellow and Honorary Fellow.

Institute members contribute to, and volunteer on, British and international standards and outreach. They participate in STEM festivals and school partnerships and have close links with other international acoustics institutes and associations.

### **Management organisation of the Institute**

The Institute is a company limited by guarantee constituted under a governance model with a member-elected Council, chaired by the President, which determines the strategic aims and objectives of the Institute that are to take place over a rolling two-year period.

The Institute's Executive Committee, formed of the Honorary Officers (President, President Elect, Immediate Past-President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer) and the Chief Executive, with the assistance of permanent staff at HQ, is responsible for delivering these aims and objectives. An active structure of specialist groups and regional branches throughout the UK and overseas (Ireland and the Middle East) assist the Institute in delivering regular and localised events which can be included as Continuing Professional Development and support for members.

## **Finances**

The Institute is financed from two principal sources: annual corporate membership income and fees for the provision of education services. Further income can be generated through events, although the Institute aims to run most events at cost in order to make them as accessible as possible to both members and non-members.

The Institute's finances are very stable, with membership being maintained at similar levels over many years and both the short courses and longer Diploma programmes being well-subscribed on an ongoing basis.

Our reserves are maintained at a minimum level in accordance with our Reserves Policy, enabling us to plan on a long-term basis and, where necessary, to respond to more immediate requirements, as appropriate, in pursuit of the charity's mission and objectives.

## **Qualifications required for membership of the Institute**

Membership of the Institute is open to persons who satisfy the Council as being suitably qualified academically in acoustics or have an appropriate period of experience in acoustics in lieu of such qualification.

Historically, membership of the Institute would have been open to professionals holding a degree in acoustics as this was the traditional route into the field. In more recent years, it has been possible for applicants to provide evidence of their suitability for membership through professional skills and experience over a number of years. In the case of the lowest level of Corporate membership, for example, a candidate is required to show a minimum of seven years of responsible work which demands a knowledge of acoustics or its application. The study of other acoustics courses, for example, the Institute's own Diploma in Acoustics and Noise Control, can also be used as part of a mix of experience and non-degree academic study.

## **Educational role**

The Institute has an active, volunteer led, STEM committee that brings together STEM enthusiasts from all corners of the industry to improve our outreach and arrange attendance at a wide variety of STEM related events. Many of the Institute's members are STEM ambassadors and the IOA has also recently created a film and supporting booklet on careers in STEM.

In addition to the careers fairs, members of the Institute support in-person and virtual outreach activities, such as virtual careers fairs, Crawley STEMFest, the Virtual Science and Innovation Careers



Event and STEM Ambassadors Illuminating Careers Event. This has included the creation of teacher and student factsheets with embedded links to relevant resources, lesson plans and careers videos.

For several years, the IOA has worked closely with other organisations in promoting STEM. This includes being a sponsor of Edinburgh Science, which delivers a programme of STEM Outreach in Scotland and Sheffield and getting IOA material onto EngineeringUK's Neon platform and into its careers booklet.

The Institute is also in contact with and provides activities and career related content for the STEMHub.

Since 2021, the Institute has organised a competition for schools, related to sound in our lives and the places that we live. The Institute has an ongoing collaboration with SpringPod to deliver a 10-hour virtual work experience programme which has reached over 1500 students.

With the Association of Noise Consultants, the Institute provided a response to the Welsh Government as part of the consultation on the new national curriculum for Wales. Subsequently the Institute worked with the Department for Education in Wales to include text for inclusion within the curriculum guidance.

### **IOA courses**

The Institute offers short courses, lasting for five days, and a year-long Diploma recognised in the industry. All training includes theory and practice in specialised laboratories. These are:

- ❑ Diploma in Acoustics and Noise Control: one year, part-time.
  - o Recognised by several UK universities as providing partial exemption from their requirements for the award of MSc degrees.
  - o First awarded in 1978 and available via Distance Learning since 1994.
  - o Attracts an average of over 100 students each year, of which approximately 50% are via a Distance Learning offering. Agreements with laboratories in Dublin and Dubai are in place for those studying the diploma abroad.
- ❑ Certificate of Proficiency in Anti-Social Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004 - Noise Measurements, in partnership with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS).
- ❑ Certificate of Competence in Building Acoustics Measurement, first awarded in 1998
- ❑ Certificate of Competence in Workplace Noise Risk Assessment, first awarded in 1989.
- ❑ Certificate Course in the Management of Occupational Exposure to Hand Arm Vibration, first awarded in 2000.
- ❑ Certificate of Competence in Environmental Noise Measurement, first awarded in 1993.

## Acoustics Technician Apprenticeship

The Institute supported the development of the Acoustic Technician Apprenticeship Standard led by Institute members and working alongside the Association of Noise Consultants, the Institute for Apprenticeships and the Association of Consulting and Engineering.

## Working with others/partnerships

### The Institute

- ❑ Is a founding member of the European Acoustics Association (EAA)
- ❑ Is a member of the International Institute of Noise Control Engineering (I-INCE)
- ❑ Is a member of the International Commission for Acoustics (ICA)
- ❑ Is a nominated body of the Engineering Council, offering registration at Chartered and Incorporated Engineer levels

The Institute works with numerous bodies and is represented on several committees and working groups as shown in the appendix to this Petition.

We endeavour to represent the views of our members by contributing to consultations issued by government agencies and other bodies and participating in inquiries. Over the past year we have responded to a spectrum of consultations with acoustic implications including:

- ❑ England: Changes to various permitted development rights
- ❑ UK: Firearms Licensing (sound moderators)
- ❑ UK: MSC020 Planning Standard for Permitted development of air source heat pumps
- ❑ GB: Updating GB type approval for road vehicles
- ❑ England: Consultation on additional flexibilities to support housing delivery etc.
- ❑ Scotland: Scottish Government permitted development rights Phase 3
- ❑ UK: BRE BREEAM v 7
- ❑ England: Revised National Networks National Policy Statement
- ❑ England: Environmental Outcomes Reports
- ❑ England/Wales Revised draft national policy statements for energy infrastructure
- ❑ UK: Civil Aviation Authority Call Consumer Environmental Information Call for Evidence
- ❑ UK: Changes to the MOT test and research into other MOT enhancements
- ❑ England: Levelling up and regeneration Bill reforms to national planning policy
- ❑ Wales: Revised planning guidance in relation to air quality, noise and soundscape
- ❑ England: Consultation on proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework

In addition, we have presented written and oral evidence to governments – at House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry covering environmental noise, and to the Welsh Government Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee on the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscape) (Wales) Bill.

#### Details of officials who deal with the Institute

- ☐ Adam Spencer (HSE)
- ☐ Hilary Notley (DEFRA)\*
- ☐ Martin McVay (Department of Health and Social Care, Wales)
- ☐ Mark Pratt (DfE)
- ☐ Richard Daniels (ESFA)
- ☐ Ben Fenech (UKHSA)\*\*

\* Member of IOA Council and Vice-President of the Institute for Groups and Branches


\*\* Previously served on the Council of the Institute

YOUR PETITIONERS therefore most humbly pray that Your Majesty may be graciously pleased in the exercise of Your Royal Prerogative to grant a Charter to Your Petitioners in the terms of the draft herewith submitted or in such other terms as may to Your Majesty seem proper.

And Your Petitioners will ever pray etc.

SIGNED AND SEALED this day, the 27/03 In the year 2025

By the President of the Institute of Acoustics:



In the presence of:

