

ProShare Membership Benefits 2020

ProShare was established in 1992 by HM Treasury, a group of FTSE 100 companies and the London Stock Exchange to promote wider share ownership. Today, we work with companies of all shapes and sizes helping to promote employee share ownership in the UK, as the voice of employee share plan practitioners and professionals. ProShare is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organisation, and we are funded solely through membership and our events.

Our Gold level members each have a seat at our **Advisory Panel**, which helps set ProShare's strategy and make key decisions. We are delighted that, over the years, a number of existing members have decided to upgrade to Gold membership.

Our **flagship events** of the year are the Annual Conference which, in normal years, attracts more than 350 share plans professionals and industry experts, and our Annual Awards night, attracting 550+ members and guests. Our Summer Social is a very popular addition to our calendar of events. All three events offer ample and varied opportunities for sponsorship, client hospitality and networking. We also run informal social and networking events for our members throughout the year. Our annual Celebrating Excellence event was also attended by a record audience in 2020 and was a fantastic opportunity to hear success stories from our award winners. In a COVID-19 environment, we have just completed our first virtual conference, with more than twenty sessions, almost fifty speakers and just short of 250 registered attendees.

Sponsorship opportunities for our flagship events are made available in Q1 each year and, in addition to significant discounts, our Gold level members have a priority booking period for these before they are offered to our other members.

Focus groups & Forums

We run various members-only focus groups for several different core interest areas including:

- BREXIT
- Global Share Plans Share Plans in Financial Services
- SMEs (including private company valuations) , and
- Tax Advantaged Plans.

We also run additional focus groups where the need arises and last year established an Administrator Forum – where our plan administrators can get together and discuss issues of professional interest.

These groups enable plan issuer, provider and advisor members to come together (by telephone or in person) to discuss issues in a confidential forum, to share best practice and to identify practical solutions. All focus group meetings and calls are conducted and minuted under 'Chatham House' rules to ensure compliance with relevant competition law.

ProShare also host WEG (worked example group) meetings from time to time.

Liaison with HMRC, HM Treasury and fellow industry bodies

As a member-led organisation we are always keen to hear views from our members on all areas of employee share ownership. We meet regularly with HMRC, HM Treasury, Members of Parliament, and other regulatory and industry bodies, to express our members' views and to ensure that the benefits of employee share ownership continue to be understood and appreciated by those in positions of influence.

ProShare has a strong track record of influence at the heart of Government. We successfully lobbied the European Commission for a relaxation of the Prospectus Directive/Regulation requirements and were one of the original lobbyists for the creation of a new form of all-employee share plan - the Share Incentive Plan (SIP) – which came into being in 2000/2001. We helped secure compensation guarantees from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) for SAYE shareholders in 2008 and we led a five year campaign to increase the maximum saving limits for employee shareholders. This resulted in a doubling of the SAYE savings limit from £250 a month to £500 a month in April 2014, as well as significant limit increases for SIP participants.

ProShare continues to campaign for the modernisation of SAYE and SIP, the UK's flagship all-employee plans with 2.5m participants currently. Our most recent 'wins' were to gain HM Treasury's support for extending the SAYE contributions break period from 6 months to 12 months for all participants, with effect from 1 September 2018 and, in July this year, the extension of the disqualifying event rule for EMI option holders who can no longer meet the relevant working time requirement because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We lobby on a range of ad-hoc issues affecting member companies, their employees, and the broader share plans industry, and we are always happy to field technical queries to HMRC for members on a 'no-names' basis where required. Technical detail on our current policy change objectives can be provided separately on request.

Member discounts & offers

Members receive substantial discounts when booking:

- Seminars, training courses and workshops
- Conference delegate places
- Tables at the Annual Awards
- Exclusive member-only events

Members also benefit from FREE webinars and FREE advertising of share plan-related vacancies on the ProShare website.

Working in share plans

ProShare is committed to helping share plans professionals to develop their own skills and capabilities (and those of their workforces), and to advance their careers in share plans. Our close relationship with the Chartered Governance Institute training team means that members can also benefit from the Institute's wider training and development programme.

ProShare offers bespoke, on-site training sessions which our members with larger workforces engaged in the operation or administration of share plans find especially useful. This is an extremely cost-effective and efficient way to train groups of employees whilst minimizing impact to 'BAU' operations.

Our members have the opportunity to post their share plans-related roles and vacancies on our website, we also promote them through our newsletters, LinkedIn group and via our social media channels.

Webinars

Opportunities for members to get involved in speaking at quarterly webinars on hot topics – offered free to members to join. Previous webinars include Cyber Security for Share Plans, Share Plans and COVID-19 and IFRS2 a Beginners Guide.

Research

All members receive a free copy of the Annual ProShare SAYE & SIP report. No other UK survey covers as much of the UK share plans market as this, which makes it an ideal tool for benchmarking your own or your clients' plans against best practice and market trends.

From time to time we commission additional independent research, working with carefully selected partners and academics. In 2017 we undertook research focussed on Millennials and their engagement with all-employee share plans and share ownership – the 'Attitudes to Employee Share Ownership' report.

For 2020-21 ProShare has commissioned the Social Market Forum to undertake research to support our lobbying objectives and to inform and support the Share Plan industry.

Regular newsletters

Our monthly e-mail newsletter now reaches 600 industry contacts and provides up-to-date information and opinions on hot topics and technical developments, including topical articles from members. Our supplementary 'Get Involved' e-mailing helps members to engage with our events, know what's coming up and plan and book their attendance in advance. Within our newsletters we offer members the opportunity to feature resources they are offering in the '*what our members are doing section*'.

Branding

New for 2020 – ProShare are issuing e-banners for use in our members social media, websites, communication documentation and email signatures. They are *Proud members of ProShare* or *Gold members of ProShare*

Social media

ProShare is active on LinkedIn and Twitter, helping to spread the word on employee share ownership and related topics. We issue 'thought leadership' pieces via LinkedIn, and we also run a fast-growing LinkedIn group which serves as a helpful additional communication channel for all those with an interest in employee share ownership. Our Twitter handle is @ProShareUK. We try to support members' social media campaigns by sharing and liking posts.

Membership levels

Membership level	Best suited to:	Annual fee (exc. VAT)
Sole	Sole or independent practitioner or individual connected to the share plans industry.	£110.00
SME	SMEs & companies with 500 or fewer employees; small advisory firms with three or fewer ESO practitioners.	£595.00
Standard (company / plan issuer)	Companies issuing share plans.	£1,000.00
Standard (service provider / advisor)	Service providers and advisors.	£2,610.00
Gold	Large organisations.	£11,000.00

The Future

We're looking to build on the success of our first virtual conference and to host more virtual events – potentially introducing additional webinars on a more frequent basis than quarterly.

We continue to integrate our back office systems with those of the Chartered Governance Institute, to take advantage of the Institute's greater reach and resources.

We are also working on upgrades to our website including a new, exclusive members-only content area in 2021, in which we plan to launch 'ProShare On Demand', a new Podcast channel, where we'll be debunking technical jargon, interviewing key industry figures and sharing our views on the hot topics influencing share plans and the economic and business environment in which they operate.

To see how you can get the most of your ProShare membership please contact:

team@proshare.org