



Recruitment of Trustees 2021

The Organisation

Down's Syndrome Scotland was established as a charity in 1982 and is the only organisation in Scotland dedicated solely to supporting people with Down's syndrome, their families and carers. In 2009, its legal status was changed to that of a company limited by guarantee.

Our mission is "To support families and people with Down's syndrome to reach their full potential by providing a range of services, influencing public policy and by changing attitudes".

Over the last 39 years the charity has helped support thousands of families and has seen significant improvements in the quality of life for people with Down's syndrome. Our ability to influence policy makers has grown considerably and we are now a trusted delivery partner of the Scottish Government. This is, in part, through our delivery of the national strategy for people with learning disabilities but, importantly, it also reflects our advisory role.

The mission of the charity is brought to life by an employed staff team, currently 22 strong, a number of whom work part-time. In addition, groups of volunteers run nine local branches of the charity which offer invaluable peer to peer support networks in communities across Scotland.

For further detailed information please visit our website: www.dsscotland.org.uk.

Background to the Appointments

The pandemic has transformed the way the charity operates. Connection with our community has moved online and expanded rapidly. Our Family Support Service has increased its reach and accessibility. The capacity of our ABC (Achieving Better Communication) programme has been significantly expanded by utilising technology and a long waiting list has been practically removed. New interactive groups have been established for teenagers and adults and an innovative secure online platform for members, Hub 21, has radically improved the volume and quality of communication and information sharing. All of our staff are currently working from home.

The Board has also changed its ways of operating. All meetings have switched to video conference resulting in increased efficiency and greater flexibility.

Full meetings are held quarterly, in the afternoons of the first Mondays of March, June, September and December. Between each of these there will be an informal evening get together providing information sharing and updating opportunities. Trustees are also expected to attend the Annual General Meeting, normally the last Saturday in November, and we will also allocate some time each year to step back and look at our strategic direction.

The Board has three sub committees:

- Finance and Risk – meets a couple of weeks ahead of each Board meeting.
- Remuneration – meets at least once a year.
- Nominations – meets as required by any senior team or Board vacancies.

Trustees serve for an initial three year term which may be renewed on two occasions up to a maximum term in office of nine years. The Board must have between three and twelve members. There are currently nine.

With all the transformational work of the last year now firmly embedded, a radical overhaul of our financial priorities undertaken and with a strong reserves position to allow ambitious longer term planning, the time is now right to add to the expertise on the Board.

The Roles

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of Down's Syndrome Scotland. In so doing, they oversee its financial health and risk profile as well as the probity of its activities and developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with its articles, legal and regulatory requirements and guidance. All Trustees should be aware of and understand their individual and collective responsibilities.

Principal Responsibilities:

- Ensuring the charity complies with legislative and regulatory requirements, and acts within the confines of its governing document and in furtherance of its charitable objects.
- Acting in the best interest of the charity, beneficiaries and the future beneficiaries at all times.
- Promoting and developing the charity to the benefit of its members and the wider Down's syndrome community
- Maintaining sound financial management and control of the charity's resources, ensuring the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.

- Ensuring a fully effective and appropriate system for the recruitment, appointment and monitoring of the work and activities of the Chief Executive Officer and, where applicable, other members of the senior management team.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the charity and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance.
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all aspects of the Trustees' business, bearing in mind the over-riding legal obligations placed upon trustees.
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To apply a duty of care to paid staff and volunteers.

In addition to the above, Trustees should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focussing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise.

Accountable to:

The Board is responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of the charity. They are accountable to a variety of stakeholders, including members, beneficiaries, funders, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and other regulators. As Down's Syndrome Scotland is a company limited by guarantee all Trustees are filed with Companies House as legal directors.

Person Specification

Trustees should all be:

- committed to the aims of the charity.
- willing and able to devote the necessary time and effort.
- able to think both strategically and creatively.
- willing to speak their mind.
- clear about the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- able to work effectively and collaboratively as a team member.
- committed to the values of Nolan's seven principles of public life.

With the respect to the current vacancies, the skills and experience of the Board would be particularly enhanced by those who have senior level expertise in at least one of the following areas:

- Adult Mental Health
- Government Policy
- Independent Living Frameworks
- Finance
- Further Education and Employment

We value very highly the benefits of having different experiences and points of view on our Board. We particularly welcome applications from those who would enhance the diversity of our thinking.

Application

To apply for this post please submit your CV with a covering letter and short statement of why you wish to join Down's Syndrome Scotland as a Trustee to our Company Secretary, Laura Wright: CompanySecretary@dsscotland.org.uk

Closing date: 31st July 2021