



## Board Members/Trustees - Recruitment Pack

Thank you so much for your interest in North East Edinburgh Counselling Service.

This document contains:

- Role description & responsibilities
- Who we are looking for
- How to apply
- A little bit about NEECS and our strategic priorities

### Role description: Board Members

As a member of the board, you'd be shaping our strategic vision, providing good independent judgement and making sure that everything we do is underpinned by strong governance. You'd also act as an advocate for NEECS.

The Board of Trustees will review the services provided and develop a new strategic direction for the service. Key skills to support this work will include team-working and collaboration, combined with strong and supportive leadership.

The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for the management and administration, but operational delivery of the NEECS' vision is delegated to the CEO. The CEO is accountable to the board for the efficient management of the charity and for the implementation of board-agreed priorities and business plan.

To lead, support and review the sustainable development of NEECS

- To ensure that NEECS operates in line with its purpose and principles
- To review and approve key staff appointments, business plans, policies and budgets
- To be an advocate for the work of NEECS
- To make sure NEECS complies with the law and all requirements set out by OSCR
- To review and manage risk
- To ensure that the charity acts within the terms of any grants
- To ensure the production and distribution of accounts
- To review and evaluate the performance of NEECS

Time commitment

- Attendance at approximately 6 meetings a year, either online or in Edinburgh. Each meeting is usually between 1.5 to 2 hours
- In addition, there can be one whole or half day used as an annual board away day, focussing on strategy

- Board papers are sent roughly five days in advance to give members a chance to review
- Papers include a meeting agenda, minutes from previous meeting, updates from the CEO and financial reports
- Between meetings some email conversations about urgent matters (such as funding, recruitment, and other relevant news)
- Occasionally between meetings a phone call or discussion over coffee - where specific/specialist advice is needed

## Who we are looking for

It is important that our Board is made up of people with a range of experiences, skills, backgrounds as well as lived experience, to help us to shape, support and realise our mission and aims.

Please note: we particularly encourage applications from individuals who are historically under-represented on boards due to age, disability, ethnicity, faith or belief, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, education, socio-economic background, or those with caring responsibilities. Candidates who may not think they fit the typical criteria required for Board membership, but who are inspired to contribute to our work, are warmly encouraged to apply.

Previous board experience is not necessary, but you'd be expected to take part in some training to prepare you for the role.

You also need to bring a passion for improving access to counselling across North East Edinburgh - especially for people affected by multiple factors of marginalisation. In addition, we'd love to hear from you if you bring experience in any of these areas:

- Charity management
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Law
- Income generation
- Health / Social Care

## How to apply

If you would like to apply to join our Board, please prepare a short statement or video message, telling us why you are interested and the skills and experience you would be able to contribute.

Please send this to [julia@neecscounselling.org.uk](mailto:julia@neecscounselling.org.uk) com by **Friday 8 December 2023** (recruitment will continue on a rolling basis after this deadline). Once you have submitted your application, please also complete our [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) online. If we're able to take your application forward, we'll invite you for an informal chat, and then to attend a board meeting as an observer, so you can get a feel for the organisations and our board meetings.

If you have any questions about the application process, the Board or NEECS, please contact Julia Ossenbruegge, NEECS CEO at [julia@neecscounselling.org.uk](mailto:julia@neecscounselling.org.uk). Julia can also put you in contact with current Board members if you would like to have a chat with them about the opportunity.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## About NEECS

NEECS was established in 1995 to support the people of North East Edinburgh improve their mental wellbeing. We provide free and donation based one-to-one professional counselling for young people and adults who are experiencing mental health challenges.

Our aims are to reduce anxiety and depression, build resilience, and equip clients with the tools and confidence to make positive choices about their future.

We are proud and privileged to serve the people of Leith, Lochend, Restalrig, and beyond into parts of Piershill, Pilrig, Newhaven, Portobello and Craigmillar. The area is diverse, vibrant and creative, but it also represents some of the most deprived postcodes of Edinburgh.

NEECS is a small charity, but we make a significant difference to local people's lives. Counselling offers a safe space for clients to talk through their mental health difficulties, explore their feelings and process their thoughts without judgement. We teach coping techniques, offer tools grounded in psychological theory, and build clients' self-confidence so that they develop constructive, effective strategies to overcome challenges and make positive decisions going forward.

## Strategic Priorities

### Developing a user-centred, flexible and innovative service

Adding different counselling options around our core service will help NEECS to better meet the needs of the people in North East Edinburgh and allow us to diversify our income streams. This could include group work, trauma-focussed therapy, art therapy or working with vulnerable groups through a tailored programme.

### Working with partners

As a small charity we understand the importance of forging partnerships and pooling our resources. Whether it's sharing premises, developing joint funding bids or receiving referrals through another organisation, we will strive to identify opportunities for partnership working. A collaborative approach will allow NEECS to widen its reach and tackle more complex issues.

### Diversifying the service user base & team

We want our user base to be truly reflective of the area we serve and focus more on reaching those affected by multiple marginalisation and any individuals unlikely to seek help via primary care. We also want to work towards a more diverse workforce and open opportunities to those traditionally under-represented in the counselling and mental health professions.

### Communications & Resources

Alongside a new website we will develop a communication plan to strengthen our presence and position in the community and beyond. By sharing our expertise and using our voice to tackle stigma, we will become a thought leader for mental health improvement in North East Edinburgh. We will also provide resources for those waiting to be seen and develop an engaging profile on social media.