

ROLE DESCRIPTION: CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Responsible to: The Board of Trustees of the charity and the Charity Commission

Overall purpose

To provide leadership to the Board of Trustees and oversee the governance and strategic direction of the charity.

Trustees are collectively responsible for strategic oversight of the charity. Under the leadership of the Chair, they will support and hold to account the Chief Executive and directors of Centre for Mental Health to ensure that the Centre meets its charitable aims and objectives and that it uses, builds and sustains its resources to fulfil its charitable purposes.

The Board's collective responsibilities

The Board's collective responsibilities include:

- To ensure the Centre fulfils all legal and governance obligations and that it applies its resources solely in pursuit of its charitable objects
- To set and uphold the vision, purpose and values of the Centre
- To ensure the Centre is able to raise sufficient income to carry out its business
- To support the operational management of the organisation by ensuring that effective policies and practice are in place for management & financial accounting, people development (including equality and diversity, health and safety and grievance and disciplinary procedures) and controls
- To ensure that appropriate risk assessments for all aspects of the charity are carried out
- To safeguard the reputation of the Centre

The Chair's role and duties

The Chair of the Board of Trustees of a charity is responsible for leading the board in setting strategic direction, ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards, and overseeing the Centre's governance. The role involves facilitating board meetings and supporting the CEO and other team members to define and achieve the charity's goals.

Other responsibilities include:

- To lead and facilitate board meetings.
- Oversee the recruitment and orientation of new board members.
- Evaluate the performance of the board, its committees, and individual trustees.
- Act as a mediator to resolve conflicts within the board.
- Regular availability for informal time with the CEO to provide advice and guidance.

The role may also include representing the Centre in public engagements and supporting fundraising efforts.

The Board of Trustees will meet at least four times per year, and the Chair will ensure that the agenda covers all matters of business, including, but not limited to, risk management, financial management, income generation, staff wellbeing, staff performance and the completion of regulatory duties and Trustee responsibilities.

Trustees' roles and responsibilities

Every trustee, including the Chair, brings a distinctive set of skills, experience and knowledge to the charity. Individual members can fulfil their role as trustees through a balance of the following contributions:

- To support strategic planning, bringing own perspectives through questioning, appropriate challenge, contribution of ideas and links to personal networks
- To participate in the Centre's trustee meetings. This may include participation in committees and sub-committees set up for specific purposes, such as finance, HR and fundraising.
- To support and advise Centre directors in developing appropriate income generation opportunities and ensuring that income generating activities are in line with the charity's purpose, values and strategy
- To act as an ambassador for the Centre in discussions with external partners, potential funders and other key stakeholders.

Person specification

Essential qualities

- Commitment to the aims, values and the work of the Centre
- A commitment to becoming a genuinely antiracist organisation, and demonstrating diversity, equity and inclusion
- An understanding of the role of a charity trustee, which may have been gained through experience of being a trustee, volunteer or staff member within a charity
- Ability to manage own actual or potential conflicts of interest or duty.
- Proven leadership experience in a nonprofit or similar context.
- Strong understanding of nonprofit governance, fiscal management, and strategic planning.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and interpersonal skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with other board members and mental health sector leaders.
- Commitment to the organization's mission and ethical integrity.
- Strategic Thinking: ability to lead strategic planning processes and think long-term about the charity's goals and how to achieve them.
- Financial Acumen: understanding of financial management and budgeting, especially as it relates to charity operations and fundraising.

- **Communication:** strong interpersonal and communication skills to effectively manage relationships within the board, with the CEO, staff, and external stakeholders.
- **Conflict Resolution:** skills in mediating disputes and navigating conflicts within the board or organization.
- **Integrity and Ethical Standards:** high ethical standards and integrity, as they will be setting the tone for the organization's culture and public image.
- **Diplomacy and Tact:** ability to handle sensitive issues diplomatically and foster a positive working environment.
- **Inclusivity:** commitment to promoting diversity and inclusivity within the board and the organisation.
- **Networking Skills:** ability to leverage personal and professional networks across the mental health sector for the benefit of the charity, especially important in fundraising and forming partnerships.
- **Personal experience or understanding of mental health difficulties.**

Expectations and commitments

The Chair is expected to spend approximately six hours per month on duties including board meetings, committee meetings, planning sessions, and special events.

The Chair will be appointed for a fixed terms of three years, which may be renewed for up to a total of nine years in all but exceptional circumstances.

Board meetings are held four times a year during working hours. The majority of meetings are held online, with some in person meetings at the Centre's office in central London. Travel costs and other out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed. The Centre will make reasonable adjustments to enable participation for all board members.