

The Ear Foundation

Job Description for Members of the Board of Trustees

Who are the Charity's Trustees?

The Ear Foundation is a Registered Charity, number 1068077. The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as the people responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity, regardless of what they are called. For The Ear Foundation, the governing document is the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the charity trustees are the Executive Committee known as the Board of Trustees. The Ear Foundation is also a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England number 3482779. The members of the Board of Trustees are also Directors of the Company.

The Role of the Board of Trustees

At its simplest, the role of the Board of Trustees is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them for the charitable purposes as declared in the objects of The Ear Foundation. The Board of Trustees must always act in the best interests of The Ear Foundation exercising the same duty of care that a prudent person of business would in looking after the affairs of someone for whom he had responsibility. The Board of Trustees must act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties of a Member of the Board of Trustees

The duties of a Member of the Board of Trustees are:-

- To ensure that The Ear Foundation complies with its Memorandum and Articles, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that The Ear Foundation pursues its objects as defined in the Memorandum and Articles.
- To ensure that The Ear Foundation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, ie: it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.
- To contribute actively to the role of the Board of Trustees in giving firm strategic direction to The Ear Foundation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of The Ear Foundation.
- To ensure the financial stability of The Ear Foundation.
- To protect and manage the property of The Ear Foundation and to ensure the proper investment of The Ear Foundation's funds.
- To appoint and support the Chief Executive and monitor his/her performance.

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

Minimum Time Commitment

Trustees are expected to attend all Board meetings, which are held in Nottingham. Regular board meetings are held 4 times a year at a time mutually agreed. In addition Trustees are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting. Papers are distributed in advance of meetings. In between meetings, Trustees may be called upon to provide advice to the Chief Executive. Minimum attendance requirement at Trustees' Meetings of 60%, unless prevented from attending meetings through health problems.

Trustees to serve for a maximum of 2 terms, with each term being a maximum of 5 years; initially for one term – extended if agreed.

Person Specification

Each Trustee must have:-

- A commitment to the mission of The Ear Foundation.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Integrity.
- Strategic vision.
- Good, independent judgement.
- An ability to think creatively.
- A willingness to speak their mind.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Members of the Board of Trustees are elected at the AGM. As a Trustee they act as an individual. The Board is particularly keen to recruit Trustees with experience of the issues affecting cochlear implantation in children and young people, and people from black and ethnic minority communities.