

Appointment of Trustee

(finance and commercial background)





Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in a Trustee position on the Board of Trustees at Sightsavers.

Our vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where visually impaired people participate equally in society. We are an international organisation working with partners in developing countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Our vision and mission are compelling, and in the last few years we have seen some important landmarks in the work we do:

- In 2015 the world came together to agree the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have disability front and centre both in the 'leave no one behind' theme and the drive to report progress in a disaggregated way. Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) and universal healthcare were both highlighted prominently.
- We have played a leading role in neglected tropical diseases, acting as the grant manager for major grants (totalling well over £100m), which enabled us to hit a cumulative figure of 1 billion treatments delivered in 2017. We celebrated this with the late Professor Stephen Hawking at his last public engagement. We also host the Uniting to Combat NTDs Support Center, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- We are reaching increasing numbers of people through our eye health programmes across the world, strengthening health systems and increasing the number of sight restoring operations.
- We are working closely with DFID and others on disability programmes having recently been awarded contracts worth over £40m to lead consortia in this area.

- Our DFID funded programmes have recently been assessed as A+ or A++, demonstrating our commitment to excellence in implementation and enabling us to create a strong and ongoing partnership.
- Our advocacy both globally and at national level has been increasingly successful – successes range from enabling visually impaired people to vote in Cameroon to getting eye health indicators included in the health management information system in Bangladesh. We successfully campaigned to persuade DFID to create a Disability Framework, through our ‘Put us in the Picture’ campaign, and a member of our staff was elected onto the UN committee overseeing the Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Our income exceeded £300 million last year (including a substantial amount of gifts-in-kind, mainly donated drugs), and overall Sightsavers continues to prosper and most importantly to deliver for our beneficiaries. This would not be possible without our generous supporters of all kinds from governments, to companies, to those individuals who give loyally month after month and those who remember us in their wills. Around half of our non gifts-in-kind income comes from individual supporters. We raise money in the UK, Ireland, India, Italy, US and Scandinavia.

I am also very grateful to our partners, our staff and volunteers (including our trustees), who work so hard to help us achieve our goals.

If you share Sightsavers’ vision and believe you have the necessary skills and qualities to being a Trustee and active member of our Audit and Investment Committees, we very much look forward to receiving your application.

Martin Dinham, CBE, Chair of the Board



About us

Sightsavers' vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where people with disabilities participate equally in society.

We prevent avoidable blindness in some of the poorest parts of the world by diagnosing and treating conditions such as cataracts and refractive error. We're also fighting to eliminate debilitating neglected tropical diseases such as trachoma and river blindness.

We promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities so everyone has the chance to learn, earn and be happy. We provide vocational training, help children with disabilities to go to school, and campaign to raise awareness of disability rights.

Sightsavers works in more than 30 countries around the world. We work with local, regional, national and international organisations, ministries, governments and nongovernmental organisations to tackle problems at the root of avoidable blindness, such as access to clean water and education. We work alongside local communities to make changes for the long term, to support people who need it most.

Further information

For more information on our activities or organisation, please visit our website at: www.sightsavers.org





The context

The Sustainable Development Goals, launched at the UN in 2015, placed disability, universal health coverage and the elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases at the heart of the global development agenda.

The statistics indicate the scale of the need:

- Over a billion people, about 15% of the world's population, have some form of disability.
- 253 million people across the world are visually impaired; 36 million are blind and 217 million have moderate/severe vision impairment.
- Over 80% of all visual impairment can be prevented or cured. We have long been known for having clarity of vision, measurable impact and an outstanding return on investment. This reputation has been strengthened further over the last five years with programmes that have been in the vanguard of innovation and effectiveness within the field of development, neglected tropical disease elimination and disability.

For instance:

- We have emerged as a lead partner and intellectual thought leader in a number of complex, high profile coalitions, such as the International Coalition for Trachoma Control. Working collaboratively, we have secured grants worth over £100m which will enable us to make great strides in eliminating an ancient disease that has left millions blind.
 - Our now completed Programme Partnership Agreement from DFID has enabled us to invest in the redesign of our education programmes and innovation in health financing mechanisms in Africa, such as the launch of the Cameroon Cataract Performance Bond aimed at scaling and replicating effective eye health delivery models in West Africa and beyond.
 - We have continued to perform strongly on programme implementation. DFID awarded us an A+ or A++ assessment on a range of funded programmes demonstrating our track record of meeting and in many cases exceeding targets and outcomes. Excellence has been acknowledged in our supporter engagement work too with a 'Best in Charity Sector' award in both the 2016 and 2017 Top 50 Companies Customer Service Awards.
 - Additionally, another mark of our growing reputation is our newly granted independent research organisation status, something very rare in the NGO world, which recognises our ability to contribute to the furtherance of knowledge and enables us to apply for grant funding from the Medical Research Council.
-

Last year our income had grown to just over £300m (approximately £230 million of which is gifts in kind in the form of Mectizan for the treatment of river blindness and some Zithromax for the treatment of trachoma in Sudan). We are now attracting a diversity of high profile and demanding funding partners including DFID, The Commonwealth Summit Fund, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, Big Lottery Fund and a constellation of global philanthropists. This year we have secured grants worth over £100m for a number of ambitious and game-changing projects.



While institutional funding has grown especially rapidly in recent years, it is complemented by a mass donor base of more than 155,000 individual donors whose giving has held up well despite the strong headwinds facing the wider charitable sector. We fundraise in Ireland, Italy, Scandinavia, US and India, and have a presence in the UAE. The Executive Team is led by Dr Caroline Harper CBE who joined Sightsavers in 2005. Caroline's background was in the oil and gas industry. She shares a commercial background with many of her leadership team where she has fostered a culture of professional excellence, collaboration and transparency. The Board is similarly high calibre and functions extremely efficiently and in a collegiate fashion.

Looking to the future we are determined to push on and free generations to come from the threat of blindness from trachoma and a number of other NTDs. We are now in striking distance of this historic achievement. Through our leadership of the Global Trachoma Mapping Project and extensive partnerships we have seen resources directed quickly to the places of greatest need.

With our vision directly aligned to DFID's current strategic commitments to disability inclusion, Sightsavers is perfectly positioned to be a partner and leader in implementing programmes that support the underlying theme of the SDGs to 'leave no one behind'. This represents an exciting opportunity to join the Board and contribute to the leadership of a growing and dynamic organisation.

Sources:

Bourne RRA, Flaxman SR, Braithwaite T, Cicinelli MV, Das A, Jonas JB, et al.; Vision Loss Expert Group. Magnitude, temporal trends, and projections of the global prevalence of blindness and distance and near vision impairment: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Glob Health*. 2017 Sep;5(9):e888-97.

World Health Organisation. Disability and Health. Fact Sheet January 2018, available at <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs352/en/>

Governance

Sightsavers is the working name of the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. Originally founded in 1950, it is now a company incorporated by Royal Charter dated 28 February 1990, as amended on 8 July 2009 (company number RC000706) and is a charity registered in England and Wales (207544) and Scotland (SC038110). It is regulated by the Charity Commission.

We have a governing Board of trustees (currently 15), which is often referred to as the Council. The Council is committed to maintaining a high standard of corporate governance. Council members, all of whom are non-executive and unremunerated except for the reimbursement of essential expenses, are drawn from diverse, international backgrounds. They bring a broad range of relevant experience and skills to Council discussions. A Trustee is appointed to the Council for an initial term of four years, extendable by mutual agreement by one further term of four years. The following link will take you to the section of our website where you can read the profiles of our existing Trustees:

www.sightsavers.org/how-were-run/uk-board

There are four committees of the Council:

- Audit, which reviews audit activities, the risk and control framework, the effectiveness of our processes and the annual report and statutory accounts;
- Investment, which monitors investment performance and treasury activities;
- Remuneration, which monitors remuneration policy, succession plans and key salary decisions; and
- Governance, which monitors legal and registration issues and advises on the appointment of trustees and honorary officers.



This Trustee will sit on both the Audit and Investment Committees.

Committees may also include external specialists who volunteer to use their expertise to assist the committees on an ongoing basis. In addition to the formal governance committees, a Programme Expert Group meets twice a year and provides advice and insights on more detailed programme matters.

There is a clear distinction between the oversight role of the Council and the responsibility of senior management for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Matters such as policy and strategic plans are prepared by senior management for consideration and approval by the Council.

It is anticipated that the individual appointed to this Trustee position would join the Council in December 2018.

Job description

The role

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring the charity complies with its Charter, associated governing documents and charity law. Our Trustees are part of a group of people who are passionate about Sightsavers' vision and mission. The Board plays a key role by being involved in the strategic development and financial planning of the activities of the charity; and, by providing strategic guidance, expertise and advice to help ensure that our charitable purposes are achieved through the work of our staff and partners.

Trustee Board responsibilities

- Trustees must act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to Sightsavers and must always act in the interests of its beneficiaries.
- Trustees should understand the legal responsibilities of being a trustee. Trustees are jointly and severally responsible in law for the Board's actions and decisions, and all have equal status as trustees.
- Trustees must make decisions together and take joint responsibility for them.
- Trustees must ensure that Sightsavers and all its assets are administered in the interests of current, potential and future beneficiaries.
- Trustees must act with probity and should take and consider professional advice on anything in which the trustees do not have expertise themselves.
- Trustees should hold themselves accountable to the organisation's stakeholders including the public for Sightsavers' decisions, the performance of the Trustee Board and the performance of Sightsavers.
- Trustees are required to declare any private, professional or commercial interest that might conceivably give rise to a conflict of interest. Individuals are required to declare at meetings if they have a significant interest in any item being discussed.





Individual Trustee Responsibilities

- Ensure that the Trustee Board carries out its responsibilities as defined above as well as pursues its objects as set out in the Charter and Standing Orders and that money is spent for the purposes for which it was given.
- With the help of the Chief Executive and Senior Management, formulate and review regularly Sightsavers' vision, mission, values and long-term strategy as well as policies for their fulfilment.
- Familiarise yourself with, and keep under regular review, the rules and constitution of Sightsavers. Any changes must be made in accordance with constitutional and legal requirements.
- Develop a working knowledge of Sightsavers, including visits to Sightsavers' operations in the UK and overseas.
- Oversee compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Provide support and challenge to the executive, particularly within the agenda items of the regular Trustee meetings.
- Maximise your personal contribution through applying your own expertise and through involvement in other activities such as fundraising and PR events. You should also maintain the appropriate level of competencies through training and keep abreast of developments with the charity sector and how these might impact on Sightsavers.

Person profile

In addition to the above broader profile required of our Trustees, we are currently looking for an individual with finance and commercial experience, an accountancy or other financial qualification, preferably London based, and one or more of the following key skillsets:

- Corporate and transaction risk management;
- International finance and treasury;
- General commercial and contract management;
- Investment management;
- Programme management;
- Audit and Assurance including Audit Committee experience.

Personal qualities

- Strategic vision and strong interpersonal and relationship-building abilities.
- Valuing of others, with the ability to foster a collaborative team environment.
- Tactful and diplomatic, with the ability to listen and engage effectively.
- Strong integrity and honesty, with the ability to be proactive.



Time commitment

The time commitment required of this Trustee is likely to equate to approximately 8-12 days per year.

This will include:

- 3 Trustee meetings per annum of at least half a day each, normally held in London (but with options for remote attendance where necessary).
- An annual strategic 'awayday' event over two days.
- Sitting on the Audit and Investment sub-committees.
 - The Audit Committee meets in Central London 3-4 times a year, typically for 4 hours on a Friday morning.
 - The Investment Committee meets in Central London 2-3 times a year, typically for 3 hours.
 - All meeting dates are published well in advance.
- Occasional visits to Sightsavers' operations and programmes overseas.

Term of Appointment

A Trustee is appointed for a term of 4 years extendable by mutual agreement for one further term of four years. The role is unpaid but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.





How to apply

Applications should be sent by email to Mark Powys-Smith at mark.powys-smith@macaulaysearch.com

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Monday 17th September.

Your application should comprise:

- A full CV including a full employment history showing more significant Executive and Non-Executive positions, responsibilities held and relevant achievements;
- A covering note of not more than one and a half pages summarising your motivation and reasons for being interested in the Trustee position at Sightsavers;
- Daytime, evening and/or mobile telephone numbers (to be used with discretion).

The Process

Macaulay Search has been engaged as advisor on these appointments. A selection of candidates will be invited to be interviewed on the afternoon of Friday 28th September by the appointment panel chaired by Chris Kinder (Vice Chair).

You can expect to hear from Macaulay Search if you have been invited for interview by end of the day on Tuesday 25th September.