



Position Specification

Nuffield Foundation
Trustee Appointment

Introduction

This specification should be read in conjunction with the Nuffield Foundation's website:

<https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/>

The Board of Trustees of the Nuffield Foundation seeks to appoint a new Trustee. This individual should be committed to the mission of the Foundation. They should bring an understanding of how research funded by the Foundation can influence policy making and practice, with an academic authority and wider social relevance, to improve the lives and life chances of those the Foundation serves.

Our Client

The Nuffield Foundation is an independent charitable trust with a mission to advance educational opportunity and social well-being in the UK. It was established in 1943 by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors.

In 2021, the Foundation spent £28.5 million on charitable activities – the highest in its history. This included £7.2 million for three projects from its Strategic Fund, which will address some of the major challenges facing society in the coming decades. Its next strategy is in development; there is scope to be ambitious, with an additional £30 million to spend over the next five years, taking the anticipated grantmaking volume to £130 million for the same period.

The Nuffield Foundation funds research that informs social policy, primarily in education, welfare, and justice. It also provides opportunities for young people to develop skills and confidence in science and research. The Foundation is an open, collaborative, and engaged funder that offers more than money. It works with its grant-holders to engage researchers, policy makers and practitioners with their work. Through connecting the individual projects it funds, it gives voice to an overarching narrative and strengthens their collective impact. The Foundation values academic rigour, and also focused on ensuring that research is relevant to people's experiences, in order to affect change.

The Foundation aims to engage with, and to understand the significance of, new trends and disruptive forces – social, demographic, technological and economic – that are changing the structures and context of people's lives. To do this, it has established three independent bodies to examine areas central to its research agenda in more depth.

- It is the founder and co-funder of the **Nuffield Council on Bioethics**, an independent body that informs policy and public debate about the ethical questions raised by biological and medical research.
- The Foundation established the **Ada Lovelace Institute**, an independent research and deliberative body with a mission to ensure data and AI work for people and society.
- As the largest funder of family justice research in the UK, the Foundation has established the **Nuffield Family Justice Observatory for England and Wales (Nuffield FJO)**, which is using research to support better outcomes for children.

In addition to the research it funds, the Foundation produces publications, briefing papers, and responses to government consultations.

The Nuffield Foundation's work is wide-ranging but is underpinned by a common set of principles: freedom and independence, commitment to quality, connecting perspectives, building trust in evidence, and enabling opportunity.

The Foundation's 2017-2022 strategy is available here: https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Nuffield_Foundation_Strategy_2017_2022v_FINAL.pdf

The most 2021 annual report is available here: [2021 annual report: £28.5 million committed to charitable spending - Nuffield Foundation](#)

Governance

The Foundation's Board of Trustees comprises seven independent Trustees and a Board Chair. Trustees are appointed by other Trustees for a standard tenure of up to two five-year terms. The Board of Trustees meets five times a year and retains overall responsibility for all activities of the Foundation, including its centres. All strategic and policy decisions are taken by Trustees collectively, advised by a number of committees.

The Role

The Trustee will be required to work with their fellow Trustees to provide governance and strategic oversight, ensuring the organisation is well placed, and has the financial stability to deliver on its mission, objectives, and ambition. In addition to the institutional governance, trustees should offer a strategic assessment of the overall grants portfolio, at the same time as engagement with – and views on – the quality of the research the Foundation supports. This should involve identifying news areas of interest, ensuring the overall coherence and methodological rigour of the research portfolio, as well as its relevance to society and policy. Trustees approve decisions on major grants and awards. The Trustee will use their specific skills, knowledge, and experience to support aspects of the overall leadership and strategic development of the organisation. This will involve sitting on sub-committees, leading discussions on strategic issues, providing advice and guidance on key aspects of the grant portfolio, sponsoring significant grant applications, or other initiatives where the Trustee has expertise. They will also have a role in the oversight of the Foundation's three semi-autonomous centres. They may be required to join a board committee, most likely the investment committee, though this is to be discussed, and previous investment committee experience is not required.

The new trustee should bring the intellectual breadth to appraise the Foundation's output holistically, identify areas that are missing, and help the Foundation to anticipate future need. For example, no other institution has brought together the scientific and policy communities to examine how AI and data science might intersect with the effective and fair implementation of the government and public policy challenges in Nuffield's core areas of education, justice and welfare. There is currently felt to be an evidential gap in the research grant portfolio of projects that consider the impact of AI on the core Nuffield areas of interest and the future of digital inequality in a digitally determined society.

Key accountabilities include:

- Support and maintain the mission and values of the Foundation.
- Provide strategic direction and oversight.
- Approve or monitor high level policy, define goals and targets and review performance against these.
- Oversee the grants and programmes strategy, awards, and governance.
- Review and advise on key grants and grant applications.
- Protect and manage the assets of the Foundation and ensure their effective investment.
- Maintain appropriate fiscal oversight, monitor spend and ensure the Foundation has appropriate resources to meet its charitable objects.
- Ensure the organisation fulfils its legal and compliance obligations.
- Serve as an ambassador for the organisation and use expertise and networks to enhance the Foundation's work, reputation, and reach.
- Select, support, and guide the Chief Executive and monitor their performance.
- Maintain effective Board communication and performance.
- Maintain oversight of specific incubation and joint funded projects as agreed from time to time.

Candidate Profile

The Foundation seeks a new Trustee to succeed James Banks, who is nearing his maximum term limit. The successful candidate should be an accomplished academic, with a pedigree in applied economics, or another quantitative social science. They should demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, social welfare, justice, and education.

Suitable candidates should be able to demonstrate the following:

Mission and objectives

- Commitment to, and understanding of, the mission and objectives of the Foundation.
- A broad understanding of social policy and social welfare, and the development of evidence to address disadvantage and inequality.
- An understanding of the responsibilities of a trustee, including conflict of interest, knowledge of the principles of good governance, ethical regulation, and the legislative framework for the operation of charities.

Specific skills and experience

- Academic pedigree in applied economics, or in broader quantitative social science.
- Knowledge of the relationship between research and policy, including an understanding of how the research the Foundation funds can influence policy-making and practice, and improve the lives and life chances of those the Foundation serves.
- An intellectual interest in education, justice, and welfare, and the links between them.
- An understanding of how robust evidence can contribute to policy change and in turn maximise the Foundation's impact.
- High level financial acumen/familiarity with fiduciary accountability and regulations.

Personal characteristics

- Collegiate and collaborative style: a willingness to engage in constructive discussion and observe 'cabinet responsibility' for collectively agreed positions. Discussions can and should involve constructive challenge, in order to avoid 'group-think'.
- Strategic capacity: a grasp of the big picture and an enquiring mind, along with the ability to comment on and assess the full range of issues faced by the Board, including some operational oversight.
- Creative flair: the ability to help the Board consider problems from fresh perspectives.
- Hands-on engagement: a willingness and ability to actively 'lean into' discussions on programmes of work with the executive, investing time and energy to guide and support the endeavour, whilst recognising executive/non-executive boundaries.
- Clear-thinking and open-minded: combined with strong communication and good listening skills. An avoidance of dogmatic positions and capacity to alter opinion in the light of new facts and through discussion.
- Impact: driven by a desire to influence public policy to effect societal change.

Particulars

Role: Board Trustee

Committees: One of - Investment, Finance, Audit & Risk; Staff & Remuneration; Nomination & Governance

Location: Central London/remote working

Remuneration: Pro-bono

Time commitment: Approx. 18 days per annum*

Term of appointment: Two five-year terms

Honorarium: £11,000 per annum

**The full Trustee Board meets around five times each year. Meetings normally start around 9.30 and finish around 14:00 (with lunch included). They are usually held on Fridays. In addition, when possible, there may be some working dinners (up to three times per year, usually immediately before full Trustee meetings), and Trustees will normally also attend at least one other sub-committee which may meet twice annually and provide advice to the executive grants and programmes team on grant applications and assessments.*

The overall time commitment is estimated at up to c18 days per year.

The Nuffield Foundation is an employer that values the diversity of its workforce and welcome applications from all sections of the community.

The Recruitment & Selection Process

Russell Reynolds Associates (RRA) has been appointed to support this recruitment. Shortlisting of candidates will involve the assessment of information provided in the application documentation.

How to Apply

The closing date for applications is Friday 7th July 2023.

To apply, please send a full CV together with a supporting statement, briefly highlighting your experience and skills against the requirements of the role, and a [completed diversity monitoring form](#) to responses@russellreynolds.com. Please quote the role title and assignment code **2306-015L** in the subject heading of the email. All applications will be acknowledged.