

## INSIGHTS FOR ORGANISATIONS LOOKING FOR NON-EXECUTIVES

1. **Two key talent pools for Chair appointments.** The market has, over the last three years, lost a cadre of its most experienced and proven chairs able to take on these roles for larger charities. In many cases, individuals had their appointments extended to cover the post-covid transition period and these postholders are now either actively winding down their portfolio commitments or have retired altogether. It is being replaced by a cohort of chairs who have been rising behind them, shaping their board leadership skills in the time of the pandemic. This cohort is increasingly diverse, modern in its outlook, challenging, agile and dextrous. Many individuals offer multi-sector experience. This cohort is also, however, extremely heavily committed. Behind them is rising equally quickly a group of chairs and prospective chairs, slightly less experienced but gaining ground, whose value lies more ostensibly in transferable skills and / or deep sector knowledge. These pools are more dynamic than previously without one static pool at the top.
2. **Altered profile of time expenditure for Chairs,** possibly as a result of the way risk now tends to manifest for boards and a shift in patterns of engagement, makes chairing more than one organisation challenging in the current climate. For this reason, more seasoned chairs are resisting a second similar appointment in their portfolio, leaving room for smaller paid appointments and avoiding the possibility of over-exposure.
3. **The purpose and role of boards continues to change subtly** in response to shifting pressures on organisations. Charities are continuing to take stock frequently, to ensure their boards are robust and broad enough to steer a changing course. Compared with just a few years ago, when boards typically still paid significant attention to their 'inward / downward' focus into the organisation, this is more often matched in 2024 by demand for trustees who can bring a strong 'upward / outward' focus, grounding the organisation in its stakeholder, public and political landscape.
4. **Charity Boards are making space for innovation and for the incubation of positive change at the most strategic level of the charity.** Committee structures are strengthened to accommodate routine governance procedures and disciplines, freeing up board time for necessary generative discussion, horizon scanning and the promulgation of collective networks, leverage and influence.
5. **Extending reach and range.** Whereas subject knowledge and governance skills were for a long time at the top of the list for board roles, these are now challenged by as much demand for people with personal credibility, links and connections with key communities and audiences, and who can contribute through their personal and lived experiences.