



# CANDIDATE PACK FOR ELECTED TRUSTEES



# WELCOME

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Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining our Board of Trustees.

Over 150,000 people in the UK have multiple sclerosis (MS). It's unpredictable, and different for everyone. It's often painful and exhausting, and can cause problems with how we walk, move, see, think, and feel. But it doesn't have to be this way.

The MS Society is the UK's largest organisation dedicated to supporting people with MS and those who care about them. We fund world-leading scientists as they seek to understand mechanisms that underpin MS and search for new treatments. We make sure everyone can access expert information and services to help them live well with MS. We speak up together, to make sure everyone's voice is heard, and rights are protected. We support one another when times are tough and celebrate together when they are good. We make sure no one has to feel alone.

But we know we can deliver more impact for MS communities. We've embarked on a comprehensive transformation programme to reach more people, deepen engagement, diversify income streams, build a stronger team and working culture, and maximise our impact. Last December, the Board of Trustees approved our ambitious organisational strategy for 2025-2029.

We're now looking for Elected Trustees to join the MS Society Board. We're keen to broaden the experience and thinking on our Board, and we welcome applications from anyone who can bring fresh perspectives. And if you have lived experience of MS, particularly of more advanced MS, your insight would be invaluable.

We're especially interested in hearing from strategic leaders within their fields who bring significant skills and experience in digital, data and technology. Investment in this area is helping us transform how we work and grow our impact. And as we move closer to the next research breakthrough, it's vital that we maintain our Board's expertise in any area of world-leading research.

You don't need to have been on a Board before, but you will be someone with the highest level of personal integrity and maturity of judgement, with strong analytical skills and the ability to work collaboratively within a diverse Board.

At all times, we want to keep pace with the MS community's expectations, building enduring relationships with as many people as possible and keeping the needs and priorities of people affected by MS at the heart of everything we do. As a member of our Board, you'll offer the challenge and support we need to help us achieve this.

Our Trustees are a critical part of an organisation that is people-centred and forward-thinking. More than ever, it is important that we have the strong strategic leadership and governance required to achieve our vision. If you bring the experience and fresh perspective we are looking for and are motivated by our vision of a world free from MS, I hope you will read on to find out more.

**Professor Sir Paul Curran**  
**Chair of the Board of Trustees**

# ABOUT US

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As the UK's leading MS charity, we provide hope, voice, and support for everyone affected by MS.

We're here for people with MS, and for their friends, families, and carers. And we're here for the supporters, volunteers, researchers, and healthcare professionals united against MS.

Our vision is a world free from MS. That means fewer people developing MS. And everyone with MS having the effective treatments and support they need to live well.

## THE MS SOCIETY IN 2025

In December, the Board of Trustees approved our organisational strategy for 2025-2029. This strategy is built on three pillars – **stop MS, be heard**, and **live well**. They're how we'll achieve our vision.

We're changing the research world to **stop MS**. We've launched Octopus, our revolutionary, multi-arm, multi-stage drugs trial that transforms the way we test treatments for progressive MS. And we're conducting research to improve our understanding of health inequalities so we can better support marginalised groups.

We're making sure our community's voice is **heard**. We know that welfare reform risks pushing people with MS into poverty and worsening health outcomes. We're speaking up to make sure MS stays on the agenda in Westminster, Holyrood, the Senedd and Stormont.

We're bringing together the services, information, and expertise our community needs to understand and manage their MS. We're empowering everyone with MS to maintain their physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing. And we're enabling community connections. So everyone in our MS community can **live well**.

We're a complex organisation with ambitious goals. And we know we need to transform how we work to meet them. We're improving how we use data. We're making more relevant services available to more of the MS community. We're developing stronger long-term relationships within and beyond our community, so more people want to support us as donors, volunteers, and campaigners. And we're building an even stronger team and creating smarter ways of working within a respectful, supportive, and inclusive culture.

We know we'll have to take bold, calculated risks to achieve our vision. And this will need to be balanced by robust Board governance. To make sure it provides effective scrutiny and challenge, the Board of Trustees has reviewed and updated the structure and remit of its committees.

All this and more stands before us. It's a huge task. But together, our MS community is a unique and powerful force for positive change. Join us. And together we will create a future free from MS.

To find out more about us, please visit [About us | MS Society](#)



## OUR BOARD

Our Board of Trustees sets our strategy, values, and culture, and oversees their implementation. The Board agrees our annual plan, budget, and performance targets on an annual basis. It monitors the charity's performance and is responsible for managing risk and our compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements.

Everything we do is shaped by the experience and needs of people with MS. So being led by a Board that understands MS is fundamental to how we work. Most of our Trustees have MS, or someone important to them does.

Please [follow this link to meet our Trustees](#).

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Throughout your time with us, we'll support you to keep learning about what matters to people with MS, and their friends, families, and carers. As well as the supporters, volunteers, researchers, and healthcare professionals united against MS. You'll have lots of opportunities to connect with the MS community. And we'll support you to get involved in the areas of our work that interest you the most.

You'll take part in our comprehensive induction programme. This includes online sessions with the teams who lead on delivering our ambitious strategy. We'll also ensure you understand the responsibilities of being a Trustee.

You'll be paired up with Trustee and Executive buddies. They'll help you learn how things work in the boardroom. And you'll have regular check-ins with our Chair and Governance team.

You'll take part in regular in-meeting Board development sessions. And you'll need to complete mandatory online training covering key areas of risk. You'll also have access to our Board Reading Room. Here you'll find a range of internal and external resources to support you in your role.

Please [follow this link to find out more about what it means to be a MS Society trustee](#).



# ROLE DESCRIPTION

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**Role title:** Elected Trustee

## ROLE DETAILS

As a Trustee, you'll play a critical role in setting our strategic direction and the delivery of our charitable objects. You'll support and challenge the Executive Group. And you'll set and uphold our values and culture.

## MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensuring the MS Society complies with its constitution (Articles), charity law, company law and other relevant legislation and regulations.
- Ensuring clear strategic direction, and setting and monitoring our policies, goals, and objectives.
- Safeguarding our reputation and promoting our vision and mission.
- Acting as an ambassador for the MS Society and upholding our values.
- Approving our annual business plan and budget.
- Approving our annual report & accounts and receiving the auditor's report.
- Protecting our assets, ensuring our funds are invested properly, and administered effectively and efficiently.
- Preparing thoroughly and participating fully in Board meetings.
- Using your specific skills, knowledge, or experience to help the Board to reach sound decisions.
- Upholding all decisions properly made by the Board.
- Undertaking Board committee and working group responsibilities, as appropriate.
- Keeping up to date with charity law, company law and other relevant legislation and regulations.
- Building strong, effective, and trusting relationships with fellow Trustees, members of the Executive Group, senior leaders, and stakeholders.
- Maintaining appropriate confidentiality, disclosing any conflicts of interest, and abiding by our Code of Conduct, policies, and procedures.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

The MS Society is registered as a charity in England and Wales, Scotland, and the Isle of Man; and as a company limited by guarantee. Our Board of Trustees are also our Company Directors, and as such, they are responsible for the governance and effective functioning of the MS Society under charity and company law, and other relevant legislation and regulations.

# WHAT YOU'LL BRING

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## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Strategic vision and the ability to think creatively.
- The ability to operate effectively as part of a team, and a willingness to offer constructive challenge and support collective decisions.
- The ability to listen to, read and assimilate information quickly and effectively.
- The ability to act corporately and not in the interests of one particular group, and to reach objective and independent decisions.
- An understanding of MS and the effects of living with it together with an appreciation of the work of the MS Society.
- An understanding and appreciation of the roles of Trustee and Company Director and the desire and ability to take part in committees of the Board, attending all meetings and undertaking associated tasks.
- The ability to communicate with a wide variety of people and organisations, including the ability or potential to speak at public engagements.
- Willingness to promote or engage in fundraising activity according to interests.
- The ability to act as an ambassador for the MS Society.
- Behaviours that demonstrate, model, and reinforce the MS Society's values – Bold, Expert, Ambitious, and Together.
- Commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equality.
- The ability and commitment to devote sufficient time, preparation, and effort to discharge the responsibilities of the role.

Please [follow this link to read our Board EDI Statement](#)



# TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

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Trustees are appointed to a three-year term and can be reappointed for up to two further terms, based on their performance in the role. This role is voluntary and unpaid.

Voting to confirm nominated candidates: 28 November to 15 December 2025

Confirmation of appointments by MS Society Chair: 19 December 2025

Trustee term starts: Thursday 1 January 2026 with online induction sessions on 29 January 2026 and 3 February 2026

We welcome applications from throughout the UK, and we don't want finances to be a barrier to anyone thinking of applying to join our Board. We'll book your travel and accommodation to attend meetings and reimburse other out-of-pocket expenses.

## TIME COMMITMENT AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS

Being a Trustee is a serious and rewarding leadership role. You need to be sure you have the time, energy, and dedication it will take to be an active and effective member of our Board.

Being a Trustee involves:

- Attending four in-person Board meetings during the year (these are daytime meetings during the week)
- Attending committee meetings - each Trustee sits on one of the Board's committees that also meets four times during the year (shorter, usually online, daytime meetings during the week)
- Attending our annual in-person Board and Executive Strategy Development Day (a daytime meeting during the week)
- Depending on your skills, experience, and availability, we may also invite you to take part in optional working groups (usually online)
- Preparing to attend Board, committee and working group meetings by reading the papers provided
- Attending other events to represent us and connect with the MS community.

This adds up to 1-2 days per month.

Board meetings and Strategy Days are held in London. The majority of our committee and working group meetings take place online. Our London office has been designed with accessibility, inclusivity, and flexible working in mind.

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## REQUIREMENTS OF JOINING OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Before appointing a person to our Board of Trustees, we need to ensure you meet the legal and constitutional eligibility criteria. To do this, we ask for two personal references, and run checks with organisations such as the Charity Commission, Companies House, the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Individual Insolvency Register.

All Trustees are required to take part in a comprehensive induction programme, financial and compliance training, and ongoing development, and to complete a formal appraisal prior to reappointment.

Some people are automatically disqualified by law from being a Trustee. For example, anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt, or who has been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty, unless that conviction is spent. If appointed, we will ask you to complete a Trustee Disqualification Undertaking Form annually to provide assurance that you are legally permitted to be a Trustee.



# HOW TO APPLY

We hope you will consider making an application. If you have questions about the appointment and would find it helpful to have an informal conversation, please contact [Rebecca.O'Connor@starfishsearch.com](mailto:Rebecca.O'Connor@starfishsearch.com) and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/ms-society-ele-tru/> and click on the 'apply now' button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV or biographical information (no more than three sides please)
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides please) that sets out your motivation for applying for the role and how you can meet the levels of knowledge and experience we are looking for.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are important to us. Please complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form provided as part of the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

## TIMELINE

<b>The closing date for applications:</b>	Monday 13th October 2025
<b>First stage interviews for selected candidates (with Starfish online):</b>	w/c 27th October 2025
<b>Interviews with MS Society online:</b>	12th and 13th November 2025

