



CANDIDATE PACK FOR TRUSTEES

WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee at SeeAbility.

Founded in 1799 as The Royal School for the Blind, we are one of the UK's oldest disability charities. For over 225 years, we've specialised in supporting people with learning disabilities or autism, many of whom also have sight loss. Today, our passionate team supports more than 300 people to live extraordinary lives through social care, and we reach over 7,000 children each year through our pioneering eye care work.

At SeeAbility, ambition is at the heart of everything we do. With the right support, people achieve things they never thought possible — building friendships, discovering new experiences, gaining independence, and even finding employment. Our unique combination of self-advocacy, social care, influencing, eye care, and supported employment programmes enables people to challenge assumptions about disability and redefine what's possible.

As we develop our new five-year strategy, co-produced with the people we support, their families, and our colleagues, we are in a strong position to build on our heritage and extend our impact even further. Trustees play a vital role in this journey — ensuring good governance, shaping our direction, and bringing expertise to meet the challenges of today's environment, from funding pressures to workforce needs.

We are now looking to strengthen our Board with skills in areas such as people and organisational development, fundraising, and financial leadership. If you share our belief in a more inclusive world, and can bring your experience and ambition to help us achieve it, I would be delighted to welcome you to our team.

Lisa Hopkins
Chief Executive, SeeAbility



ABOUT US

At SeeAbility, we specialise in supporting people who have learning disabilities or autism, who may also have sight loss.

Through our support, people live ambitious lives and achieve things they never thought possible, whether that's forming more friendships and relationships, enjoying new experiences and activities or finding employment.

We encourage people with disabilities to challenge what they expect from life, from themselves and from wider society.

The people we support overcome huge barriers to achieve exciting new things every day - they challenge us all to think about what's possible and to rethink disability.

Our self-advocacy, social care, influencing and supported employment programmes mean more people with disabilities can achieve their ambitions, while challenging assumptions, attitudes and policies.

We also campaign for better eye care for people with learning disabilities, who are ten times more likely to have sight loss. In 2023, we successfully convinced the NHS to provide sight tests in all special schools so the next generation can get the eye care they need. We also work with adults to provide information, advice and to build local pathways so people can find accessible sight tests at their own opticians.

OUR VISION

Our vision is for inclusive communities where people with sight loss, autism, and learning disabilities participate as equal citizens.

OUR MISSION

We champion and deliver ambitious support and preventative services alongside people with learning disabilities, autism, and sight loss, enabling them to realise their goals each and every day.

To read our strategy please click [here](#)

THE KEY VALUES THAT DRIVE OUR WORK

Listening to everyone's voices has led us to our ambitions, focusing on four key areas – Excellence, Community, Transformation and Voice.

Our current strategy calls for three important values:

- A shift in power
- A shift in ambition
- A shift in decision making

VALUES

We have co-produced a new set of values with people we support, families, colleagues and trustees. These values represent people being at the heart of the charity and being the driving force for change.

- Respect is our starting point
- We spark imagination
- We learn together to be our best
- We believe in each other

WHO ARE SEEABILITY'S TRUSTEES?

Our current Trustee board is well established and many have been involved with the charity for many years.

Charity Trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity and ensuring it is solvent, well-run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.

For SeeAbility, the Trustees are Members who have been elected to serve on the Council of Trustees. SeeAbility's constitution allows for a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 Trustees, elected for a 4 year term but with the opportunity to be re-elected.

SeeAbility has incorporated status 'in perpetuity' dating back to a special Act of Parliament of 1826. A Charity Commission Scheme dated 1996 updated the charity's constitution.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Trustee

Reports to: Chair of the Board of Trustees

ROLE PURPOSE

The responsibilities of a Trustee are to

- Ensure compliance with the objects, purposes and values of SeeAbility and its governing document.
- Set or approve policies, plans and budgets in pursuit of these and monitor performance against them, having regard to the charity's financial solvency and the need to show public benefit.
- Ensure the charity complies with all relevant laws and regulations pertaining to its work.
- Monitor all key risk areas for the charity and agree policies in mitigation of these.
- Act at all times in the best interests of the charity and its current and future beneficiaries.
- Be an ambassador for SeeAbility in the promotion of its work and in pursuit of funding opportunities.
- Be open, accountable and responsive to those using the charity's services and their families, members, funders, volunteers and others with an interest in the charity's work.

In addition to the above responsibilities, each Trustee should attend Council and sub-committee meetings and use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Council 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; and then always upholding the decisions taken by Council. There are two main sub-committees currently, Services & Quality and Finance & Audit. Every Trustee sits on one of these committees.



WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

We are looking for up to three trustees who bring a proven record of significant achievement in the fields of **fundraising**; innovative **organisational design and people leadership**; and **financial leadership**.

WHAT YOU WILL BRING

- Experience of operating at board level and ability to take high-level decisions about the future of the organisation
- Strategic vision with the ability to think creatively
- An understanding of how to develop strategies and experience of contributing towards overall organisational strategy
- Outstanding influencing skills, and high-level connections in relevant circles of influence and the ability to network at the highest level for the benefit of SeeAbility
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship (training/information will be offered in this area for first time trustees)
- Strong empathy and understanding of SeeAbility and a connection to our mission and vision
- Good listening skills and strong diplomacy skills, an openness to other views and feedback on your contribution
- Integrity, authenticity and the ability to act impartially and fairly
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the trustee role
- An ability to contribute effectively to the workings of Council and the appropriate sub-committees

To ensure more diversity at board level we strongly encourage applications from people of all different backgrounds who share our values and our vision, regardless of ethnicity, disability, or protected characteristics.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

REMUNERATION

All Trustee roles are voluntary and reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Trustees are asked to disclose potential conflicts of interest to ensure impartiality in decision making.

TIME COMMITMENT

Being a Trustee involves attendance at four Council meetings per annum, as well as sub-committee meetings. Council meetings are usually held in central London and Committee meetings are held online. There is additionally an overnight strategy session once a year.

In addition, it is expected that Trustees commit the time to receive a proper induction, which involves attendance at a small number of training sessions, visits to some of the homes where people we support live, attend a sight testing session in a special school, and meet with the leadership team. Ideally, every Trustee will also engage with the charity at various events throughout the year.



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.oconnor@starfishsearch.com to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/seeability-trustees/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date:

Applications considered upon arrival

Final Panel interviews with SeeAbility:

Monday 26th January

