

Candidate Pack For Chair of Trustees



Anna Freud
building the mental
wellbeing of the
next generation



Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in joining Anna Freud as our next Chair of Trustees.

Children and young people's mental health has never been more important — or more complex. Across the UK, increasing numbers are struggling with challenges that affect their wellbeing, development, and sense of belonging. Anna Freud plays a vital and unique role in meeting this need: bringing together world-leading research, clinical expertise, and training to transform how children's mental health is understood and supported. By bridging the gap between science and practice, and by putting the voices of children and families at the heart of everything we do, we are helping to build a future where every young person can thrive.

This is an exciting moment of change for us. Founded more than 70 years ago, we have grown from a small centre of psychoanalytic excellence into a world-leading mental health charity, combining cutting-edge research, clinical practice, policy, and training to improve the lives of children, young people and families. Our work now spans the UK and beyond, with strategic partnerships with UCL and Yale that bring together academic excellence and applied innovation on a global scale. Our Patron, HRH The Princess of Wales, shares our deep commitment to transforming mental health for children and families.

With the appointment of Professor Eamon McCrory as our Chief Executive in 2024, and the forthcoming departure of our longstanding Chair, Michael Samuel MBE – who has announced he is stepping down after many years of dedicated and distinguished service in March next year – this is a moment of both change and opportunity for Anna Freud. Together, the Board and Executive are embarking

on a new strategic chapter – one that will shape the organisation's future impact by deepening our influence, extending our reach, and strengthening the sustainability of our model.

We are looking for an exceptional Chair to lead our Board into this next phase. You will bring strategic and financial acumen, sound judgement, and a genuine spirit of partnership, working closely with Eamon and his leadership team as a trusted, supportive, and thoughtful partner. Collaborative and insightful in your leadership, you will know when to challenge and when to encourage. You will also bring the personal authority, networks, and influence to represent Anna Freud externally, champion our mission and spot opportunities for us.

Crucially, you will share a deep commitment to our belief that every child and young person deserves the opportunity to thrive emotionally and mentally. If you bring the vision, empathy and leadership to guide us forward, we would be delighted to hear from you.

With best wishes,

The Board of Trustees

About us

Anna Freud is a world-leading mental health charity for children, young people and their families. Our purpose is to take everything that we have learned over the last 70 years, and to transform the mental health of current and future generations of children and young people, to close the gap between mental illness and mental wellness – and to create a more compassionate society for everyone. We listen to and learn from their diverse voices and integrate this with learnings from our science and practice to develop and deliver mental health care.

Our work spans a broad spectrum of activities, all designed to close the gaps in knowledge, access, and service provision:

- **Clinical and School Services:** Our specialist teams provide multidisciplinary, evidence-based treatment and support tailored to children and young people's diverse needs. We focus on accessibility and quality, ensuring that help reaches those who need it most. Our clinical services are informed by the latest research and continuously refined through feedback from those we serve.
- **Knowledge Dissemination and Workforce Development:** Each year we equip thousands of researchers, clinicians, teachers, and social care professionals with the latest evidence and practical skills to support children and young people's mental health. Our flagship initiatives include *Schools in Mind* and a portfolio of more than 13 UCL-accredited postgraduate programmes at Masters and Doctoral level. Through these, we strengthen the knowledge, capability, and confidence of those on the frontline to promote wellbeing, foster resilience, and enable recovery in everyday settings.

- **Research and Innovation:** In partnership with leading academic institutions such as UCL and Yale University, we conduct pioneering research to deepen understanding of mental health challenges and develop innovative interventions. Our commitment to integrating science and practice ensures that new knowledge translates into meaningful improvements in mental health care and support.
- **Networks and Advocacy:** We coordinate national initiatives including the UK Trauma Council and the Child Outcomes Research Consortium, facilitating collaboration across sectors to influence policy and practice. By bringing together diverse stakeholders—from clinicians to policymakers—we amplify our impact and contribute to shaping a mental health system that is fair, effective, and inclusive.

Central to our approach is a steadfast commitment to listening to and learning from children, young people, and their families. Their lived experiences guide our work, helping us to create services and resources that are truly responsive, culturally sensitive, and equitable.

Anna Freud is proud of its heritage and the trust it has earned over seven decades, but we are equally focused on the future. We are committed to pushing the boundaries of knowledge and practice, embracing new technologies, and expanding our reach to meet emerging mental health needs.

We believe mental wellbeing is the foundation from which children and young people achieve their potential. By continually expanding our understanding and translating it into practice – grounded in science and guided by children and young people – we can ensure they get the right support at the right time.

To view our most recent annual reports, please click [here](#).

Our Vision

Our vision is a world where all children and young people are able to achieve their full potential.

A world in which they and their families get support that is designed with their input, available at the right time, and meets their needs, so that they can develop their emotional and mental health.

Our Mission

Our mission is to close the gap in wellbeing and mental health by advancing, translating, delivering and sharing the best science and practice with everyone who impacts the lives of children and families.

Our Values

Compassion. We strive to empathise with the experiences and feelings of others, reflecting constantly and with humility to honour the trust we are given.

Inclusivity. Children, young people, and their families are at the heart of everything we do. We listen and learn from them, and from those who support them in education, social care and health, and across statutory, voluntary and community services.

Collaboration. We maximise our impact by working in partnership with others, learning from them and sharing our knowledge, expertise and experience.

Creativity. We maximise our impact by working in partnership with others, learning from them and sharing our knowledge, expertise and experience.

Creativity. We are imaginative in how we build new understanding, strengthen relationships and develop our skills as the foundation of excellent practice.

Equity. We strive for fairness and adjust our approach to help towards addressing the inequalities that exist in society today, recognising that not everyone starts in the same place.

Courage. We experiment and pioneer, accepting that we will sometimes get things wrong, and that is part of how we learn.

Integrity. We act with honesty and integrity, guided by evidence, while keeping in mind what science cannot tell us.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We are dedicated to building an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued. Our diversity networks are central to this goal. Each network focuses on amplifying underrepresented voices and fostering supportive spaces where colleagues can share their experiences. These networks drive positive change, both within Anna Freud and beyond.

We have committed to several equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives, including The Halo Code and Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyards. We are committed to the living wage and are a member of the Business Disability Forum.

To learn more about our EDI strategy, please click [here](#).

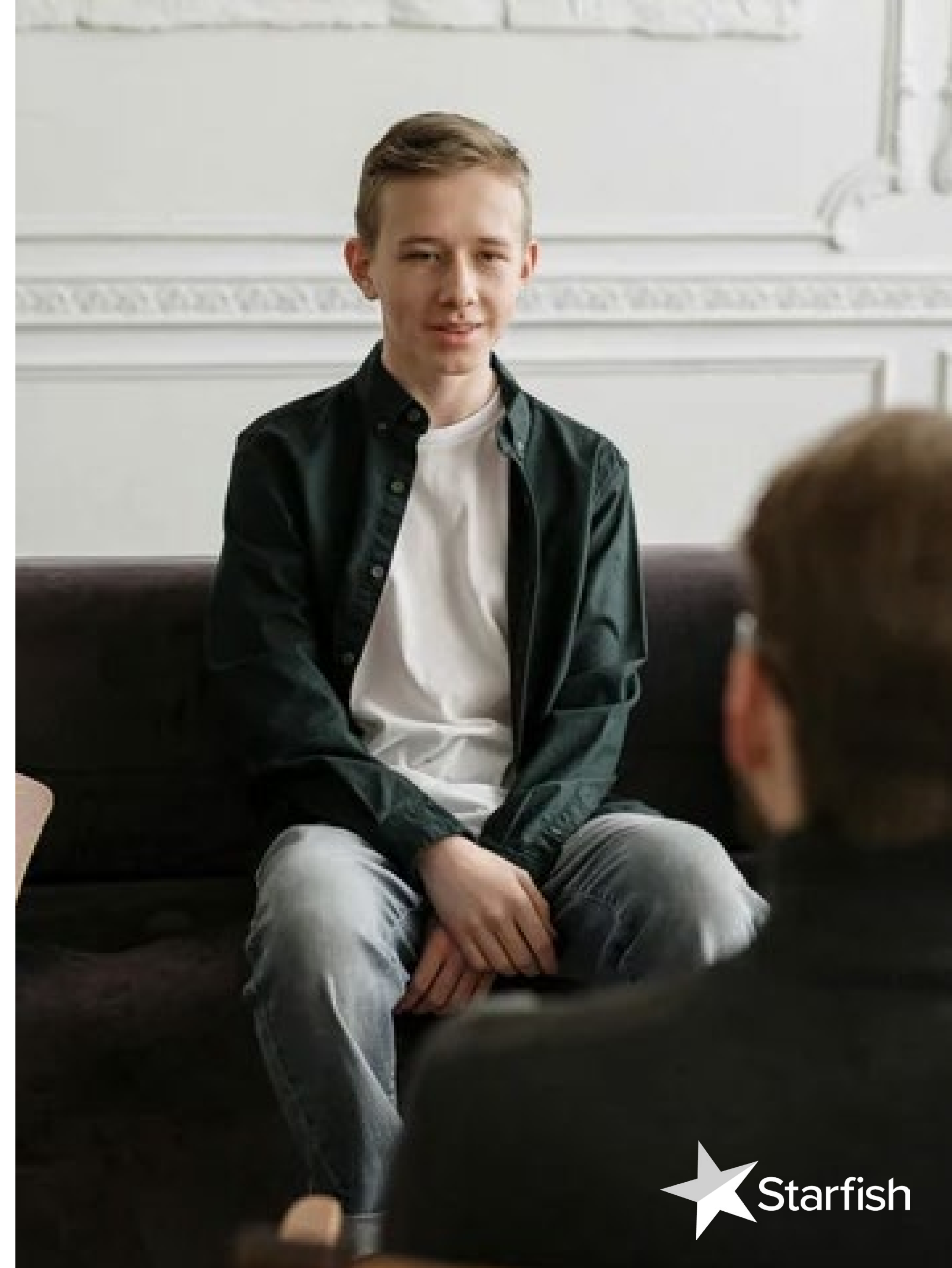


Job description

As Chair of Trustees, you will provide leadership and direction to the Board, ensuring that Anna Freud continues to fulfil its mission with strategic clarity, financial sustainability, and effective governance. You will be an ambassador for the charity's work and values, representing Anna Freud externally and supporting the Chief Executive in advancing influence and partnerships across sectors.

Key Responsibilities

- Provide strategic leadership to the Board, ensuring clarity of purpose, effective oversight, and alignment with the organisation's vision and long-term goals.
- Act as a trusted, supportive and challenging partner to the Chief Executive.
- Represent Anna Freud with authority and credibility, strengthening its public profile and fostering relationships with partners, funders, and policymakers.
- Champion robust governance, ensuring that the Board operates effectively and transparently.
- Support the sustainability of Anna Freud's finances, advocating for a diverse and resilient income base.
- Champion inclusion, equity and lived experience in the charity's governance and leadership.
- Foster collaboration across academia, government, philanthropy, and civil society to advance Anna Freud's mission.
- Deep commitment to Anna Freud's mission and an understanding of its integrated model of research, practice, and training.



Person specification

Essential

- Deep commitment to Anna Freud's mission and an understanding of its integrated model of research, practice, and training.
- Proven governance experience, ideally as a Chair, or substantial experience of board-level leadership.
- Significant senior leadership experience gained in complex, high-profile organisations (public, private or voluntary).
- The ability to provide strategic oversight with sound judgement, integrity, and emotional intelligence.
- Credibility to act as an ambassador for Anna Freud, with the networks and influence to support partnerships and fundraising.
- Commitment to inclusive leadership and to ensuring that the diversity of communities served by Anna Freud is reflected in governance.

Desirable

- Experience supporting income growth or diversification.
- Existing networks in relevant sectors (mental health, education, philanthropy, public policy, or related fields).

Style and behaviours

- A collaborative style that builds trust and enables the Chief Executive and Executive Team to thrive.
- Visionary and strategic in outlook.
- High capacity for self-reflection and is emotionally intelligent.
- Politically, analytically and commercially sharp; sound independent judgement
- Personally flexible and adaptable; willing and in a position to devote the necessary time and effort to the role.

Other requirements

- Enhanced DBS with Child
- Willing and able to take annual leave outside of academic/school term-time.
- Flexible to meet study participants outside usual working hours when required.

Terms of appointment

Remuneration

This is a voluntary role with reasonable expenses covered.

Time commitment

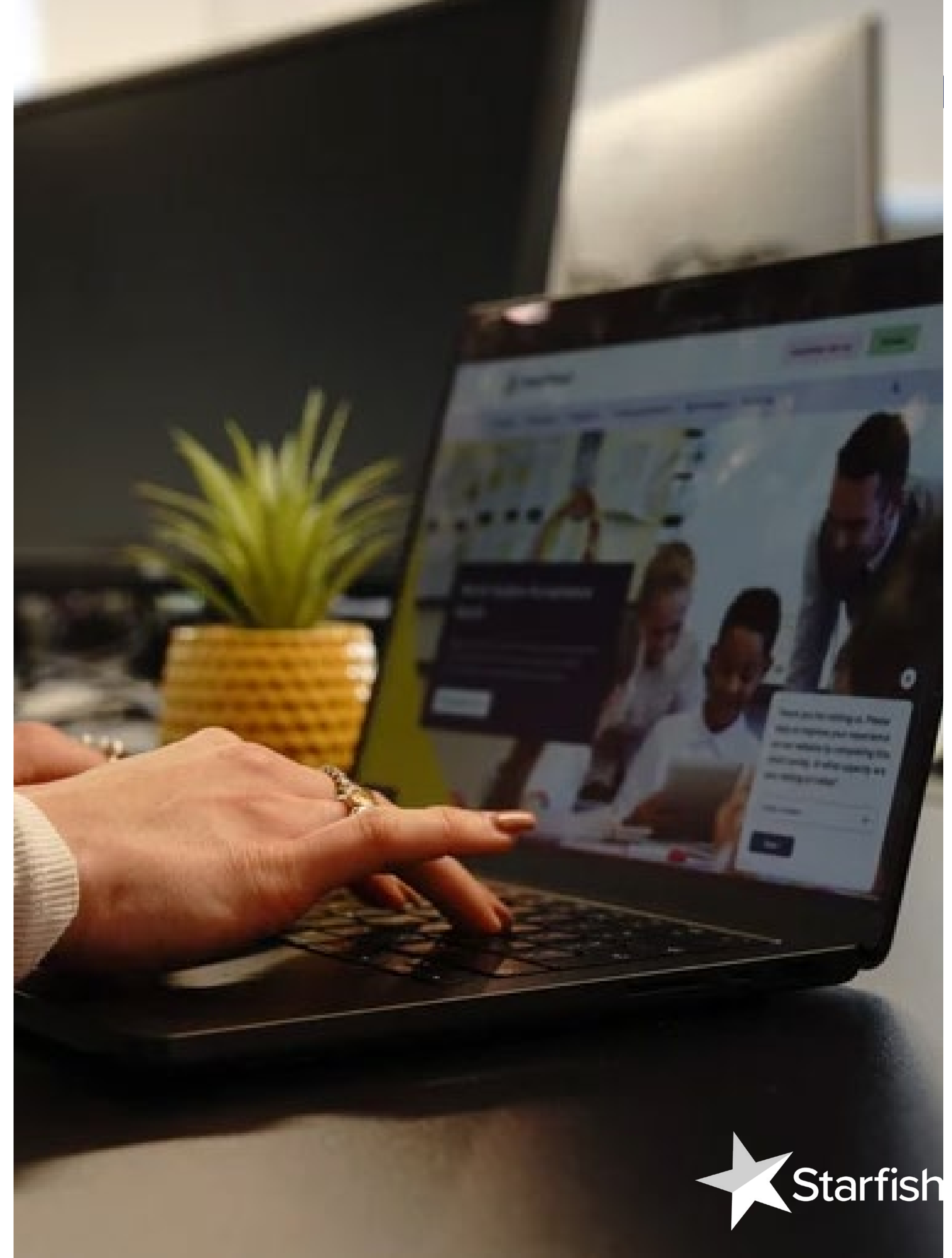
Approximately three days per month, including four Board meetings a year and regular contact with the Chief Executive.

Term

An initial term of three years, renewable by mutual agreement.

Location

London. We are keen to encourage Trustees to attend Board meetings in person, whenever possible to build relationships and foster effective communications. However, remote participation will be provided as and when necessary.



How to apply

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Katy Giddens at katy.giddens@starfishsearch.com or Rebecca O'Connor at rebecca.oconnor@starfishsearch.com who will be pleased to arrange a call. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/anna-freud-chair-of-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.

Timeline

Closing date for applications:	Friday 23rd January 2026
Preliminary meetings with Starfish:	w/c 26th January 2026
Final interviews with Anna Freud:	Monday 9th February 2026

