



Independent Member of Audit & Risk Committee

Brief for applicants
July 2026



Welcome

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining the Health Foundation as Independent Member of our Audit & Risk Committee.

As an independent charitable organisation committed to building a healthier UK, we shine a light on what needs to be done to improve health and care for the UK population.



Through our role as a philanthropic endowed foundation, we improve health and care in the UK through research and analysis, grant making, capacity building, social impact investing and partnerships. Our endowment enables us to take a long-term approach, supporting change over time and building the evidence, ideas and capability needed for lasting impact.

We believe we can have the greatest impact by combining action to inform policy and decision making with practical support to make change happen on the ground in health systems, regional and local government, and communities. Our recently launched Strategy 2030 reflects this approach, with clear goals and routes to impact.

The Foundation benefits from an endowment of more than £1.2bn which enables us to spend around £50m a year on our work. We have grown from an organisation of around 150 people in 2017, to over 200 employees today.

We are seeking to bolster the specialist knowledge in our Audit and Risk committee by appointing a new independent member. You will add to the Committee's collective expertise and perspective through your own specialism in finance and accounting.

We recognise the value that diversity of experience and thought bring to leadership and governance, particularly with respect to our mission to build a healthier UK. The more diverse the professional and lived expertise of our governors, the better able to understand and navigate the nuance and complexities within health and social care for different communities.

We have identified three groups where we would like to encourage applications – in alignment with our recently published EDI Strategy. We want to maintain the balance between men and women amongst our governor community. We also want to increase representation of people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds and recruit more people with disabilities across our broad leadership community. As part of this commitment, we particularly welcome applications from these groups.

We would also encourage applications from those who have the skills and experience to support the Foundation governor level and are at a developing stage of their career to apply.

All of our governors demonstrate an open and engaging communication style with an attention to detail and willingness to work alongside other members of the board and committees in pursuing our shared objectives.

This is a particularly rewarding time to join us, as we embark on our new strategy. With the NHS and social care system under pressure to meet people's needs, improvements in life expectancy stalling and deep inequalities in health holding back potential, the need for our work has never been greater. Your personal contribution will help shape the future of health and care across the nation. I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Sir David Behan
Chair of the Board of Governors

About the Health Foundation

We are an independent charitable organisation committed to building a healthier UK. We currently employ over 200 people, with offices in Blackfriars, Central London.

Health is our most precious asset. A healthier UK means improved health and reduced health inequalities. To make this happen, we need the building blocks of good health – like decent housing and good jobs – in place for more people across society. And we need high-quality and equitable health and care services now and in the future.

Health and care systems across the world are facing huge challenges with ageing populations, increasing demand for services and chronic labour shortages. In the UK, the population's health is fraying with more people living longer with major illness and deep inequalities in health between different parts of the country, the NHS is under unprecedented pressure with many people struggling to get the care they need, and the adult social care system is in crisis.

The Foundation can play an important role in helping to build a healthier population.

Our independence, expertise and ability to work for the long term puts us in a unique position to respond to the major health challenges facing the UK.

Our mission is to build a healthier UK.

We do this by influencing policy and enabling systemic change through our three goals:

- Put health and inequalities at the heart of decision making.
- Shape the future of the health and care system to ensure the best care for all
- Build new approaches to testing innovation that could transform health care

We have a strong reputation for producing high quality research and analysis, enjoy a high national profile and work closely with a wide range of stakeholders at a national level and in the health and care system.

Across our goals we will use a variety of approaches to drive change – building on our existing skills while shifting how we work in key areas. We will use four main approaches to deliver impact.

- Generating research and analysis
- Testing practical solutions
- Engagement, convening and partnerships
- Networks and long-term capability

As well as evolving what we focus on externally we will also continually improve how we work as an organisation, this is guided by our organisational values: **Impact, Evidence, Integrity and Collaboration**.

In line with these values, we will prioritise action to become a more diverse, inclusive and equitable organisation. Improving health equity in the UK is at the heart of our mission. And achieving our mission is only possible by being a flourishing and fair organisation – one that values equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and builds these principles into how we work. Our EDI strategy sets the direction for this work over the coming years and our priorities for action.

We will also continue our work to embed sustainability into what we do – including by working to become a net-zero organisation and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the Foundation.

Read more

Our current strategy is published at <https://www.health.org.uk/about-the-Health-Foundation/corporate-publications/building-a-healthier-uk>

More information about our Governor team can be found at <https://www.health.org.uk/about-the-health-foundation/our-people/board-of-governors>

Our 2024 annual report and financial statements are published at <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/2024-annual-report-and-financial-statements>

Our values and how we work can be found here: <https://www.health.org.uk/about-the-health-foundation>

Our EDI strategy can be found here: <https://www.health.org.uk/our-commitment-to-equity-diversity-and-inclusion>



Role description

Role title	Independent Member with relevant senior experience of finance and accounting
Reporting to	The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee

Role purpose:

The Health Foundation's board of governors (trustees) has four committees, one of which is the Audit and Risk Committee, which assist it in fulfilling its governance of the charity.

The Foundation seeks a new Independent Member for its Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee meets three times per year. The Committee comprises three governors and up to two Independent (non-voting) members. The previous Independent member of the committee has stepped down, having served six years, and a new Independent member is sought.

This is a unique opportunity to contribute to the Foundation, an independent charitable organisation working to build a healthier UK. It is an exciting time to join the Foundation as the acute and complex pressures and challenges on the NHS and social care mean that demand for the Foundation's services has never been higher. This is a time for them to be bolder, more adventurous and more opportunistic. The Foundation are looking for an independent member who can help them achieve this, a challenge in a naturally risk-averse sector.

Role of independent member of board committee

1. To act in the best interests of the Foundation.
2. To act within the remit of the authority delegated by the governors.
3. To act in accordance with the terms of reference of the committee on which they sit.
4. To provide specialist knowledge relevant to the work of the committee with its duties to report accurately and regularly to the governors.
5. To ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements where appropriate to the committee's activities.
6. To comply with the Nolan principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, including keeping appropriately confidential matters confidential and declaring conflicts of interest.
7. To be accountable to the chair of the committee.

Role specification

Key tasks and responsibilities include:

- **External Audit** – consider the nature and scope of the external audit and assess audit findings; review the annual report and financial statements prior to their consideration by the board.
- **Internal Audit** – approve the annual internal audit plan; review and assess internal audit reports; review and monitor management responses to key recommendations.
- **Risk Management** - review the risk management process and assure the board of its effectiveness; ensure the board and its committees receive appropriate information to enable key risks to be monitored and managed
- **Internal Controls and Financial Management** - review the internal control systems and procedures, and the effectiveness of the procedures, drawing to the attention of the board and its committees any weaknesses and areas for development

Independent members are expected to:

- declare their interests
- have due regard for confidentiality
- understand cabinet responsibility
- prepare properly for meetings
- attend (either on Teams or in person) at least two meetings a year.

Person specification

Candidates must have no conflicts of interest that would create a reputational risk for the Foundation.

Part One

Knowledge and Experience

The following criteria are essential to be considered for this appointment:

- A deep understanding of finance and audit. This may be as a partner or director in an accountancy practice or at an equivalent level elsewhere in the private or public sector.
 - The successful candidate must have a current understanding of the accounting issues affecting charitable organisations; for example, they may have experience of completing audits for charities.
- A deep understanding of risk management in a context that is supportive in ensuring success, not just avoiding failure.
 - The Foundation wishes to be bolder, more adventurous and more opportunistic, and they are looking for an independent member who can help them achieve this.

The following criteria would be desirable:

- The ideal candidate will have previous experience working on an audit and risk committee, but this is by no means a prerequisite.
- The ideal candidate will have knowledge of the financial services industry to assist the audit committee with oversight of the Foundation's investment subsidiary, the Victoria Fund, which shelters their alternative investments.

Part Two

Skills and Personal Attributes

- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- An open and engaging communication style with an attention to detail and a willingness to work alongside other members of the committee in pursuing shared objectives would be desirable.
- Strategic thinking and maturity of judgement in decision making.
- Empathy with the mission to build a healthier UK and reduce inequalities in health.
- Alignment to the Foundation's values of impact, integrity, evidence and collaboration.



Terms of appointment

Remuneration

The position is unremunerated. Uniquely, the Foundation offers independent members £10,000 per year to donate to a charity or charities of their choice on behalf of the Health Foundation.

Time Commitment & Location

The time requirement for this role is three meetings (usually 2.5 hours each) per annum plus around two hours ad hoc work approximately 5 times per year.

Meetings are hybrid, with the options of using Microsoft teams or attending in-person at the Foundation's office at 8 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AP

The independent member is expected to take part in Audit and Risk committee meetings (three per year) plus carry out around 2 hours ad hoc work approximately 5 times per annum.

Term of Office

The term of office will be for an initial period of three years, which may be extended for a further three years.

Induction and onboarding

A full induction programme will be provided. During the induction period and at regular intervals Independent Members will be asked to let the Governance team know, confidentially, of any individual support or reasonable adjustments.



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 Szymon at Szymon.Podgorski@starfishsearch.com and we will be happy to arrange a call.

To make a formal application please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/thf-independent-member/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

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

If you have a disability and identify any barriers in the role description or person specification, please tell us. It would also be helpful if you could let us know any special arrangements we should make in the event of an interview.

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:	Friday 28th August 2026
Preliminary interviews:	w/c 7th September 2026
Stakeholder conversations:	following confirmation of the shortlist w/c 14th September 2026
Final Panel interviews:	Monday 21st September 2026

Forward Audit and Risk Committee meetings will be held on:

The Committee Meetings below are scheduled to take place during the daytime hybrid on Teams or in the London office. We would like a new independent member to start from our November 2026 committee meeting.

2026

- 22 June
- 2 November

2027

- 3 February
- 22 June
- 1 November