

## Recruiting new trustees

### Context

In 2019 MRF will be 30 years old. In that time we have helped transform the landscape of meningitis in the UK and Ireland, through awareness raising, vaccine advocacy, education, and support for people and families affected.

We have always taken an evidence-led approach, and consequently we have also committed significant funds to research throughout that time in universities and public health institutions in the UK, Ireland, and around the world. Thankfully, cases and deaths from meningitis in most developed economies have fallen significantly in that time, but many, many challenges remain.

In 2016, globally, meningitis and sepsis together were still the second biggest infectious killers of children under 5s and now kill more children in that age group than malaria. Progress against meningitis has been far slower in the last decade than for other leading killers such as measles, AIDS, tetanus and diarrhea. And if you do get meningitis and survive, your chances of having life-long severe disabilities as a result are very high.

In order to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of 'leaving no one behind' and 'health and wellbeing', the worldwide challenge of meningitis must be addressed.

Recognising this, two years ago MRF started campaigning for a new World Health Organization global roadmap aiming to defeat meningitis by 2030. The call was heard, and MRF is now a key member of a global task force that will deliver this new plan to the World Health Assembly in May 2020. The task force includes WHO, PATH, Centers for Disease Control, UNICEF, Medecins sans Frontieres, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. We are also implementing a new programme in Uganda building on our experience strengthening health systems in Malawi.

In this context, the MRF Board recognises the desirability of diversifying our Board to ensure that the much enlarged scope of our work has the necessary level of oversight and governance. We are also committed to ensuring that the diverse constituencies we serve are represented in our primary decision making body.

There has never been a more exciting time to become involved in the work of MRF. We are looking to appoint 4-6 new Trustees, please get in touch if you are interested in this role and I look forward to hearing from you.



**Dr Brian Scott**

**Chair**

## Trustee Role Profile

The duties of a trustee are to:

- Ensure that MRF pursues its stated charitable objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by contributing to developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensure that MRF complies with its governing document (ie its trust deed, constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that MRF applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects for the benefit of the public. This means the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- Ensure that MRF defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of MRF
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of MRF, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensure the financial stability of MRF
- Protect and manage the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Follow proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the Chief Executive

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

## Person specification

- A commitment to MRF
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership

## What we are looking for, why, and how to apply

In September 2018 the MRF Board conducted a skills and board review and identified the need to increase its diversity and experience. We are, therefore, seeking several new Trustees to join the existing Board of 10 members. Ideally the Board wishes to appoint 4-6 new Trustees at this time.

In particular, the Board identified the need for the following qualifications, skills, background, and experience.

The list below is not exclusive and ideally an individual candidate may bring one or more features to the Board:

- Tax residents in the Republic of Ireland, to ensure that the charity governs its affairs there effectively and is compliant with the Irish Triple Lock regulations (2 required as a minimum).
- Female and ethnic minority representatives.
- Representatives from outside the UK, ideally from high burden country/ies in the meningitis belt of sub-Saharan Africa.
- A background in disability rights and/or personal experience of disability impairment and disability.
- High value fundraising from individuals, companies, statutory bodies, trusts and foundations.
- International health advocacy.
- International legal and private sector experience.

All Trustees are required to meet the criteria set out in the Trustee role profile, be committed to the vision and mission of the organisation, and adhere to the Trustee code of conduct.

MRF is committed to safeguarding and this role will require references and confirmation of your identity will be undertaken. In addition to this you will be required to undergo criminal record checks relevant to the region. Screening will be via the Disclosure and Barring Service (England & Wales) Access NI (Northern Ireland), Garda Vetting (Ireland) or Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scotland. You will also be checked against the following: Individual Insolvency Register, Companies House Disqualified Directors Register and the Register of Removed Trustees.

Ideal candidates will be able to demonstrate how they are personally motivated by the work of MRF and how their characteristics, experience and skills can contribute to the development of the Board and the organisation.

### Commitment

The MRF Board meets four times each year (usually January, May, September and November) at a four hour meeting that takes place during working hours, typically 11am-3pm. Three meetings each year are held in central London and one meeting at the Bristol head office (usually in January each year). Papers for meetings are distributed one week in advance and take approximately two hours to

read and prepare for each meeting. Trustees are requested to attend all Board meetings. Where this is not possible, Trustees are asked not to miss more than two meetings consecutively.

For Trustees outside the UK, or for those who may have difficulty travelling, remote attendance at meetings is possible (via Skype, Zoom or similar) and this can be arranged in advance.

The MRF Board is supported by two sub-committees: Finance and General Purpose; and Risk and Compliance. Sub-committees are made up of a smaller group of Trustees. Sub-committee meetings take place two weeks before each full Board meeting and last 1 hour each. Papers are circulated in advance where possible no later than 48 hours before meeting. Sub-committee meetings usually take place remotely either by conference call or by Zoom to reduce time and cost on travel. However, the January sub-committee meetings usually take place in person in London to provide sufficient time to review the annual budgets and plans that are authorised at the full January Board meeting.

Travel expenses to meetings are covered by the Charity.

## Current Board

Full details of the current MRF Board can be found [here](#).

## Application process

If you are interested in this role, please see [here](#) for full details. Please complete the application form and email your CV and a covering letter setting out why becoming a Trustee of MRF appeals and what skills and experience you would bring to the role to Laura Hardidge [laurah@meningitis.org](mailto:laurah@meningitis.org).

If you would like an informal discussion before applying, please email MRF Chair Dr Brian Scott [bscottbrian@gmail.com](mailto:bscottbrian@gmail.com)

If your application is successful you will be invited to an interview involving the Chair, a member of the senior management team, and another member of the Board.