

Chair of the Board

Candidate briefing pack



STRATEGY



SUCCESS



TEAMWORK



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Thank you for your interest in this role.

We are seeking to recruit a new Chair of our Board of Directors for the What Works Centre for Wellbeing (the Centre), the UK's premier organisation committed to creating a robust evidence base for improving wellbeing in society. You will take the reins when our current Chair steps down in April 2021 after six years in the role and guide the organisation in the next phase of its journey.

The profile of wellbeing has never been higher and the Centre has played a key role in advancing understanding of why it's important, what drives improvement and how that can be achieved. The Coronavirus pandemic has shone a light on wellbeing inequalities and the resulting human and economic costs. As we emerge from that crisis and seek to find our place in a post-Brexit world there will be an ever-greater need for sound, practical guidance to help ensure that wellbeing can support a cohesive society and a productive economy.

You will lead a well-motivated and balanced Board that sets the strategic direction for the Centre and ensures effective governance. You will engage with academics from a wide range of disciplines and you will have the opportunity to influence policy makers in government, business and the voluntary sector. You will exercise your existing intellectual and persuasive skills but you will also learn a great deal in an environment where happiness is a fundamental goal.

If you care about the future direction of our society and want to make a difference to the lives of our fellow citizens then we want to hear from you. Inclusion is a core value for the Centre and we welcome applications that represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives.



Helen Baker
Vice-Chair of the Board



About the Centre

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing was established by the UK Prime Minister in 2014 in response to the Commission on Wellbeing and Policy. It is part of the national What Works Centre network. These bodies were all set up as independent centres, sharing the aim of bridging research knowledge (evidence) and practice for key decision-makers in the UK in order to improve the way Government, business and civil society generate and adopt evidence to inform more effective decision-making.

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing's vision is of a future where the wellbeing of people and communities improves year on year and wellbeing inequalities are reduced.

We believe that improving wellbeing should be the ultimate objective of policy and community action.

Our mission is to develop and share robust, accessible and useful evidence that governments, businesses, communities and people use to improve wellbeing across the UK.

The Centre has established itself as a world leading organisation in this developing field. We produce highly regarded evidence synthesis, pioneer methodology development and co-create tools for measuring an organisation's impact on wellbeing.

Whilst we have a global audience and partnerships our main focus is working with organisations across the UK. We work with wellbeing researchers, policy makers and practitioners across sectors to bring together the best available evidence on wellbeing and communicate it in a way that is accessible, timely and useful.

Our approach is underpinned by our values. We are:

- independent
- evidence based
- collaborative
- practical
- open
- transparent.
- Iterative.



Our governance structure

The What Works Centre for Wellbeing is a registered Community Interest Company.

The Board of Directors is the ultimate decision maker, as outlined in the Centre's Articles of Association. The Board is responsible for working closely with the Executive Director and the relevant teams to develop and agree a strategy for the organisation and ensure that:

- a) any activities and executive decisions are carried out in the best interests of the organisation, its stakeholders and the wider public
- b) any activities and executive decisions contribute to achieving the organisational purpose and aims
- c) that these are delivered effectively and sustainably.

The Board has set up a Finance Committee which meets regularly across the year and reports into the Board

The Centre also has an Advisory Panel that quality assures its products and research outputs although the Panel does not itself carry any formal governance responsibilities



The role

The role of the Chair is to ensure that the Centre fulfils its vision, mission and values, and delivers its purpose and strategy effectively and sustainably in line with agreed targets.

Their main responsibilities include:

Board leadership

Managing the business of the Board

- Leading in appointing, appraising and supporting the development of Board members .
- Ensuring that the Board maintains and develops an effective interface with the Executive Director and his/her senior team.
- Planning the annual cycle of Board meetings.
- Ensuring that the Board agenda focuses on the right issues, is informed by good quality papers and records and that decisions taken at board meetings are implemented.
- Ensuring effective debate and collective decision making.

Governance development

- Upholding good governance practices and performance management, ensuring that the Centre has proper controls, systems and processes in place.
- Ensuring that the needs and interests of all stakeholders, including the wider public, are at the heart of the Centre's work.

Management of the CEO

- Working closely with the Executive Director providing direction and support.
- Appraising and holding the Executive Director to account.
- Making recommendations to the Board concerning his/her reward.



Ambassadorial

- Working in partnership with the Executive Director to represent the charity externally, ensuring that excellent relationships are built and maintained with current and potential stakeholders and partners.

Person specification

The Chair of the Board will be able to demonstrate evidence of the following:

- A successful track record of significant achievement through their career
- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level in high profile, public, not for profit or commercial sector organisations
- A strong commercial skills set including confidence in working with budgets under pressure
- An in-depth understanding of and commitment to good governance
- An open, collaborative and inclusive style of leadership
- Excellent people leadership skills including coaching and mentoring
- Excellent influencing and communication skills
- The ability to act as an effective ambassador for the Centre
- A broad understanding of issues relating to wellbeing, including an understanding of the diversity of the UK population and factors affecting different people's wellbeing
- Integrity and commitment to the Centre, its purpose, vision, mission and strategy

We are constantly seeking to increase the diversity of experience and thinking represented by the Board and would particularly welcome applications from individuals representing a range of backgrounds across age, race, religion, social class and sexual orientation, including those with personal experience of factors that impair wellbeing.



Terms of appointment

This appointment will be for a term of three years with a possible extension for a further three year term.

The role is unremunerated. However, reasonable expenses will be paid.

The role will require a time commitment of around four days a month on average inclusive of board meetings. Board meetings currently take place five times a year in London or virtually with an additional away day once a year.

How to apply

Applicants should prepare a short statement setting out their reasons for wishing to be considered for the role and the skills/qualities they would bring to the organisation. Statements should not exceed two pages in length and must be accompanied by a curriculum vitae.

Applications should be sent by email to info@whatworkswellbeing.org.

Please also contact info@whatworkswellbeing.org if you would like to arrange a conversation with our outgoing chair Dr Paul Litchfield.