

Trustee Job Description

Secretary General

Introduction

EACTS is a UK registered charity and is also a [Company Limited by Guarantee](#). The Board of Trustees, also known as the 'Council', is comprised of 15 members who are also Directors of the 'Company'. Council members must comply with a number of charity and company relevant laws, regulations and guidelines. The first part of this 'Job Description' details the general terms of trusteeship and commitment expected of all Council members. The second part of this Job Description outlines the specific duties and expectations of specific, named trustee roles.

EACTS will support each trustee in their duty and will provide regular information and training opportunities to ensure that trustees remain up to date on their governance duties. However, it remains the lawful responsibility of each trustee to ensure that they are aware of and fully comply with relevant legal and best practice requirements*.

Information relevant to all Trustees

Board of Trustees

The role of the Board of Trustees is to receive assets on behalf of the charity (donations, income, membership subscriptions etc), safeguard them and apply them for the charitable purposes of the Association. The Board of Trustees must always act in the best interests of EACTS, exercising the same duty of care that a prudent person of business would in looking after the affairs of someone for whom he/she had responsibility. The Board of Trustees must act as a group and not as individuals.

The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees is made up of the following named trustees:

- The President
- The Secretary General
- The Treasurer
- The Editor in Chief
- The Vice President

The Executive Committee may from time to time and when expedient, meet in order to fulfil their delegated authority from the Board of Trustees for particular, usually operational, matters and decisions. The Secretary General chairs these meetings.

Trustee Eligibility

There are strict rules on who is eligible to be a trustee of a UK registered charity. For example, people with certain unspent convictions, have a bankruptcy order or have been disqualified as a company director, cannot become trustees. Each Council member must make a 'declaration of eligibility', confirming their understanding of these rules and their eligibility to serve.

General Trustee Duties

Strategy & Governance

To ensure that EACTS complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation, regulations, and best practice guidelines.

To ensure that EACTS pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.

To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in providing strategic direction to EACTS, setting overall policy, defining goals, and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.

Finance & Other Assets

To ensure that EACTS applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, ie it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.

To ensure the financial stability of EACTS.

To protect and manage the property, assets, and funds of EACTS and to ensure the proper investment of EACTS's funds.

Personnel and Support

To support the Secretary General in the execution of his/her duties.

To support the appointment and management of the Chief Executive and other key staff and support in the monitoring of their performance.

Risk & Reputation

To safeguard the good name and values of EACTS.

To manage risks with a considered, proportionate, and balanced approach.

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 leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation or addressing other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Confidentiality

All information provided to trustees and discussions both within Council meetings and 'out of committee', are strictly confidential. It is an essential requirement of the professional operation of the Council and the principle of 'collective' decision making and responsibility, that Council communications are kept confidential. The communication beyond Council, of any trustee decisions or discussion must be approved by the Board. It should also be assumed that all Executive Committee and trustee-trustee discussions are confidential

unless otherwise made explicit by all parties.

Trustee Appraisal

Each trustee, except the President, will be appraised annually to assess their performance in fulfilling their duties and their wider contribution to the pursuit of EACTS's charitable objects and organisational plans.

The Secretary General will be appraised by the Executive Committee, led by the President. All other trustees will be appraised by the Secretary General and a member of the Executive Committee.

Trustee Person Specification

Each trustee must:

- Be committed to the charitable objects of the Association.
- Have sufficient time and willingness to contribute effectively to board proceedings, attending at least five meetings per year and contributing between meetings as necessary.
- Have an understanding of strategy development and management.
- Be able to work effectively as a member of a team.
- Be willing to speak up when necessary, whilst remaining independent of any influence from another organisation or individual.
- Have a reasonable level of understanding of legal, financial, audit and other regulatory requirements of a charity (regular training and information provided).
- Be able to make quick and sound decisions based on an analysis of information presented to them.
- Help to manage risks with a balanced and informed approach.
- Be able to communicate proficiently in English (spoken and written).

INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL

The Secretary General is the lead trustee in the day to day running of the Council and provides essential strategic oversight for the Association's Committees, Domains and Task Forces. The Secretary General will have an overview of all the activities of EACTS. He/she is also the integrator between EACTS and other associations internationally as well as the National Societies, ensuring appropriate representation for EACTS and supporting good relations.

In addition to his/her general responsibilities as a trustee, the Secretary General has a number of tasks specific to their role and must possess certain essential qualities and experience.

Main Responsibilities of the Secretary General

International & representation

- Ensuring that the Association is appropriately represented at the highest levels, so that partnership working with other international organisations in the cardiothoracic, vascular and related areas can be developed and driven.
- Support the development and maintenance of strategic partnerships with existing and new high net worth industrial and philanthropic sponsors.

Governance & management

- With the support of the President and other key Trustee officers, ensure the smooth running and effective strategic contribution of the Council.
- To support the Chief Executive and other senior staff as required in the execution of their executive, operational duties.
- To participate in the appointment of Trustees, Officers and other leadership roles within EACTS.

Qualities of the Secretary General

- Commitment to the organisation and an active EACTS member most likely evident in fulfilling an existing leadership role with the Association.
- Leadership skills.
- Integrity, strategic vision and good/independent judgement.
- Have a good administrative background and scientific knowledge.
- Ability to take decisions for the good of the organisation.
- Tact and diplomacy.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- Be proficient in oral and written English.
- Be willing to perform most of the necessary communication by e-mail.
- Have excellent communication skills, able to present confidently on the work of the Association.

Desirable experience

- Have reached a high position within his/her own department, being professionally independent. He/she should be (preferably but not necessarily) the head of the department.
- Prior experience of committee/trustee work within EACTS
- A wider involvement with or understanding of the voluntary sector.

Time Commitment

- The Board meets four times a year, twice in Windsor and twice elsewhere but usually in Europe.
- The Secretary General must be willing and able to travel as part of his/her duties especially in representing the Association to industry and other surgical associations around the world.

Term of office

The Secretary General is appointed for a three-year term, renewable by two further terms of three years (plus one additional, initial year 'shadowing' the outgoing Secretary General).

*** THE UK CHARITY COMMISSION PROVIDES UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON THE DUTIES OF TRUSTEES - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>**