

Nuffield Council on Bioethics – Governing Board Member

Role Description

Introduction and Context

The Nuffield Council of Bioethics (NCoB) was established in 1991 and is an independent deliberative body, funded and housed within the Nuffield Foundation and co-funded by Wellcome and the Medical Research Council. The NCoB is made up of a Council of independent members supported by an executive who are employees of the Foundation. The NCoB is independent in terms of the delivery of its work on its chosen topics, its conclusions and recommendations.

The Council is accountable to the funders for delivering the strategy as set out in its quinquennial funding arrangements, and for keeping its topic selection within its agreed remit. Responsibility for governance oversight of the NCoB rests with a small Governing Board.

The Governing Board oversees the work of the Council to ensure that it remains within remit, works efficiently and effectively, and adheres to the terms of the grants it receives and the arrangements by which it is constituted. It has oversight of any additional third-party funding and takes a view on reputational risk. It is made up of three officers of the funders plus three independent members, one of whom is the independent Chair.

Board Member Role

The role will include:

- Ensuring that the Board receives adequate information to provide effective challenge and assurance to the funders that the five-year Strategic Plan is delivered appropriately
- Providing assurance that the topics selected for work within the Strategic Plan are within the remit of the Council.
- Endorsing the business plans (including budget and work plans) submitted by Council.
- Oversee the NCOB organisational and reputational risk management and financial operations and ensuring that good governance principles are adhered to at a high level.

Person Specification

The Board member is likely to meet the following criteria:

- Experience in policy and public engagement, ideally in a field related to the life sciences and public health.
- Experience of the UK regulatory policy and parliamentary environment.
- Some international experience would also be desirable but not essential
- An awareness of, and commitment to, the mission, functions, and role of the Nuffield Council on Bioethics;
- A well-developed understand of good strategic governance, and ideally some governing board experience
- A skilled communicator, networker and relationship builder

- Can demonstrate adherence to the Nolan principles of public life, selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;

Commitment and communication

Members serve on the Governing Body for up to three years, with the possibility of an additional three-year term.

The time commitment is expected to be between around 4-5 days per year, to include meetings and preparation time. The Governing Board normally meets twice a year.

In recognition of the time commitment, there is an honorarium of £2,000 per annum.