

## Trustee Recruitment – Further Particulars

The Urban Studies Foundation seeks to recruit up to two new Trustees to sit as Members of its Board, one to commence from Summer 2021 and one from January 2022.

This document outlines further details regarding the role profile, specification, application and assessment process. All applications should ensure that they have read this document in full prior to applying to the position.

Questions regarding the role and application process should be addressed to the USF Director of Operations, Joe Shaw, via email: [joe.shaw@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:joe.shaw@glasgow.ac.uk)

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## 1. About the Urban Studies Foundation

The Urban Studies Foundation (USF) is a charitable private limited company, established under UK company law for the following purposes:

- To advance academic research and education in the field of urban studies;
- To promote knowledge transfer, exchange and mobilisation in the field of urban studies.

The USF achieves its objectives by the provision of grants to individuals, groups, institutions or research projects. The objective of the charity's wholly owned subsidiary Urban Studies Journal (USJ) is to generate income by publishing an academic journal in the field of urban studies and to donate any profit to the charitable company to meet its objectives.

Specific activities which USF runs, manages and financially supports include the following:

- Postdoctoral Research Fellowships held in various institutes of higher education across the world.
- International Fellowships, in particular supporting early-to-mid career scholars from the Global South.
- Seminar Series awards.
- Other Events (for promoting Urban Studies theory and practice).

## 2. Governance

The USF is governed by a Board consisting of up to 11 Trustees (also referred to as 'Members'), in accordance with the organisation's Articles of Association and relevant policies determined by the USF Board. The USF also maintains a formal Members Agreement and a separate Independence Agreement between the USF and USJ. Members are drawn predominantly from academia, but also potentially from civic society.

Appointment of Trustees/Members is made on an open competition basis, through a selection process agreed by the USF Board. Appointments are for a fixed period of 4 years, which is renewable once only by mutual consent of Trustee and Board. The Chair of the Board is elected every 2 years from within the existing USF Membership. Newly appointed Trustees are ineligible for consideration as Chair within the first 2 years of appointment, but are expected to be prepared to serve as Chair thereafter if called upon.

The USF holds two meetings per year, usually in May and December, often (but not always) held at the base of the USF (the University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland, UK). Attendance is expected

of all Trustees, but this can occasionally be via videoconferencing (as has been the case during the coronavirus pandemic). At these meetings, the USF Board discharges a number of responsibilities which include:

- Receiving USF and USJ audited annual accounts.
- Ensuring that already committed USF resources are being used appropriately and to good effect, and determining the disposition of available uncommitted financial resources.
- Assessing USF performance against objectives.
- Evaluating new strategic initiatives.
- Monitoring the activities of the Journal (USF) (in terms of the Independence Agreement).
- Approving the USJ annual budget and business plan.
- Dealing with other ad hoc matters.

### **3. General duties of a USF Trustee**

The role of a USF Trustee / Board Member is to exercise skill and care in the general management and control of USF affairs and to facilitate the achievement of its charitable purposes. These requirements mean that Trustees' administrative/legal duties include:

- Attending twice-yearly Board meetings, preferably in person but can be via video conferencing.
- Ensuring that USF as a body complies with its Articles of Association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Complying with personal legal duties as a Board Member under UK company and charity law.
- Ensuring that USF applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
- Safeguarding the good name and values of USF.
- Complying with established codes of conduct and all other policy requirements of USF.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of USF.
- Ensuring the financial stability of USF.
- Protecting and managing the property of USF and ensuring the proper investment of its funds.
- Taking part in the appointment of the biannual Chair of USF and monitoring subsequent performance.

- Acting as Chair of USF if called upon by the Board to do so.
- Participating in appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels and USF sub-committees as required.
- Using personal skills, knowledge and experience to help the Board reach sound decisions. This involves various tasks including scrutinising Board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the Trustee has particular knowledge or experience.

Applicants should also consult the website of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR, see: <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/being-a-charity-in-scotland/charity-trustee-duties>) to better understand the role and duties of a charity Trustee in the United Kingdom.

Other general duties of a more academic nature involve helping identify and accepting responsibility for leading on areas of activity that serve to deliver Foundation objects (most notably including serving on recruitment panels and scrutinising reports). In particular, Trustees are expected actively to contribute to:

- Setting USF strategic direction.
- Achievement of USF's specified objects.

Trustees are accordingly expected to play a substantial and continuing role in USF academic activities over the full period of their appointment. This includes pro-actively seeking opportunities for promoting awareness of its activities and for enhancing its profile within the academic community.

#### **4. Personal qualities required of a Trustee**

Prospective Trustees should be able to demonstrate personal commitment to and active involvement in urban research or the application of such research in fields of urban practice, policy and politics.

Beyond this, given USF objects, governance structures and the above expectations of commitment, prospective Trustees are required to demonstrate:

- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Strategic vision.
- Good, independent judgement.
- Ability to think creatively.
- Willingness to speak their mind.

- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties and responsibilities involved.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Mindful of the existing composition of the Board of Trustees, the USF also particularly welcomes qualified applications from women, and people of racial or ethnic backgrounds not currently represented on the Board. Additionally, following a skills audit of the current Board, the USF also welcomes applications from individuals with (a) proven expertise in African cities, and/or (b) proven skills and experience in financial administration and planning for charities and other research organisations.

## 5. Remuneration

The position of a Trustee/Member is unremunerated, although travel and subsistence costs for meeting attendance are reimbursable.

## 6. Application process

Individuals wishing to apply for a position as USF Trustee should submit the following materials electronically via the USF website by 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021:

1. A covering letter (pdf format, no more than 2 pages, maximum size 5mb) explaining why you wish to be considered for a position as Member on the USF Board of Trustees, and detailing your relevant experience/achievements in the field of ‘the urban’ (academically and/or in terms of public policy/civic engagement).
2. A CV (pdf format, no more than 5 pages, maximum size 5mb), in which it must be easy to pick out the dimensions of your ‘urban’ experience and achievement, academically or otherwise).
3. Contact details for two referees, who should be prepared to provide letters of recommendation if requested. Referees should be either senior academics in the field of urban studies, or individuals working in other areas of urban policy, practice and industry (as relevant to the candidate).
4. Applicants to all USF funding, employment and governance positions are also invited to complete an anonymous Diversity and Equality survey, which will be automatically sent to all candidates after completing the application form.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome within two months of the closing deadline.

## 7. Assessment and selection

Assessment for the vacant positions will be carried out by the current Board of Trustees, mindful of fulfilling the role profile and specification above. However, the USF also reserves the right to make no appointment from the pool of eligible candidates should the Board decide that suitably qualified candidates are not forthcoming. The USF regrets that it cannot offer any feedback on individual applications.

In determining both candidate short-listing and the procedure for subsequent Board voting, the principal criteria overseeing recruitment and selection of Trustees is as follows:

- To ensure that the Board will be in the strongest possible position to meet USF objectives.
- To ensure that subsequent to the recruitment process, USF Trustees collectively represent the diversity of urban research and the global reach of the organisation's activities and objectives.
- To ensure that the Board Membership secured is respectful of different dimensions of human diversity, and mindful of the existing composition of the Board, a 'positive action' approach (as per specifications in the UK Equality Act 2010) will be shown towards candidates from under-represented gender, racial, regional and other relevant backgrounds who are regarded as of equal merit to others.