

Trustee - Governance



August 2026





Role Overview

Help build the governance foundations for early childhood development at scale

Over 250 million children under five across the Global South miss out on the care, play and stimulation they need during the most important years of their lives. Governments increasingly recognise the importance of early childhood development, but many struggle to find approaches that are affordable, scalable and sustainable.

Lively Minds believes the solution is hiding in plain sight: parents.

For almost twenty years we have worked alongside governments and communities to develop and test a parent-powered approach that enables families- regardless of their income or level of education -to give children the best possible start in life. We have shown that this approach can be successfully integrated into government systems and delivered at scale. In Ghana alone, our model has been adopted nationally, reaching more than 700,000 children and supporting over 130,000 parents. Independent research found participating children made developmental gains equivalent to an additional year of schooling.

Having demonstrated what is possible, we are now entering an exciting new phase.

Rather than operating as a traditional programme delivery organisation, Lively Minds has evolved into a specialist technical assistance partner. We work alongside governments to design, test and scale parent-powered early childhood development within national education systems - building the capability, evidence and implementation approaches that enable governments to lead sustainable, long-term change.

Today we support governments in Ghana, Uganda, Ethiopia and The Gambia, with partnerships in development in Togo and Senegal. Our ambition is to help many more governments transform early childhood development over the coming decade.

We realise that our strategy requires an organisation that is not only ambitious and effective, but well-governed. We are looking for a Governance Trustee who can help ensure we have the structures, standards and accountability needed to operate with confidence at scale

The Opportunity

This is not a traditional governance trustee role.

Lively Minds is at an important strategic inflection point. As we expand our technical assistance model across multiple countries, we are asking new questions about scale, innovative partnerships, operating with complexity and uncertainty. We are looking for someone who enjoys helping ambitious organisations navigate those questions.

Lively Minds has recently undertaken a significant governance reset, developing a new governance framework, decision-making and delegation policy, committee structures and trustee role expectations. We are now looking for a Governance Trustee to help embed and champion that work, ensuring it translates into practice and evolves as the organisation grows.

As Governance Trustee, you will bring expertise, independent judgement and constructive challenge to the Board on governance matters. You will act as a trusted sounding board for the Chair and CEO, help the Board meet its legal and regulatory obligations, and ensure that the processes and structures that underpin good governance are understood, followed and kept current.

You will join a Board that believes its role is to help the organisation realise its potential. That means asking difficult questions, opening doors, sharing expertise, encouraging innovation and supporting the executive team to succeed - while respecting the principle that the Board governs and management manages.





Key Responsibilities

As Governance Trustee you will help the Board to:

Champion good governance

- Champion good governance practice across the Board, ensuring it is meeting its legal and regulatory obligations
- Ensure the Board Governance Framework, Code of Conduct and committee Terms of Reference are understood, followed and kept current
- Act as a sounding board for the CEO and Chair on governance questions and emerging governance and legal risks

Strengthen board effectiveness

- Lead or support the annual board performance review process
- Support trustee recruitment, induction and tenure processes, including the skills audit and succession planning
- Help ensure the Board has the right composition, culture and working practices to govern effectively

Oversee complaints and dispute resolution

- Oversee the Complaints, Disputes and Escalation Policy, ensuring it is fit for purpose and followed when triggered
- Provide independent governance oversight when complaints or disputes are activated

Contribute as a Trustee

Like all trustees, you will contribute to the overall leadership and governance of Lively Minds, participating fully in Board discussions on strategy, organisational performance, risk, people and governance. We also expect trustees to champion the organisation actively - using their networks, credibility and relationships to open doors, support fundraising, strengthen partnerships and increase Lively Minds' visibility in the spaces where it matters most. The Board governs rigorously and champions energetically; we are looking for trustees who are ready to do both.

Candidate Profile

Who we are looking for:

We're looking for someone who combines deep governance expertise with practical judgement and a commitment to our mission.

You will probably have:

- strong knowledge of charity governance and UK Charity Commission requirements
- experience as a senior governance professional or senior lawyer
- familiarity with board effectiveness, trustee duties and regulatory compliance
- the confidence to provide constructive challenge while building positive relationships
- an understanding of the respective roles of trustees and management
- the ability to translate governance principles into practical, proportionate action

Desirable Experience

Experience in one or more of the following would be particularly valuable:

- supporting governance reform or board development in a scaling organisation
- international development or cross-jurisdictional governance environments
- complaints handling, dispute resolution or employment law
- trustee recruitment and board succession planning

Most importantly, we're looking for someone who is excited by our mission and motivated by the opportunity to help build an organisation capable of transforming early childhood development at scale.

Time commitment

The expected commitment is approximately one to two days per month.

This includes:

- four Board meetings each year
- preparation for meetings, including reviewing governance compliance ahead of each meeting
- the annual board performance review process
- annual review and update of governance documents
- occasional availability as a sounding board for the Chair and CEO on governance questions and emerging risks
- oversight of complaints or dispute resolution processes when triggered

Meetings are primarily held remotely, with occasional in-person meetings. The role is voluntary and unpaid, although reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

We believe stronger boards are built through diversity of experience, perspectives and backgrounds.

We particularly welcome applications from people with lived or professional experience in the countries and regions where we work, and from groups currently underrepresented on charity boards.

We are committed to making our recruitment process accessible and will make reasonable adjustments wherever needed.



Application Instructions



If you are motivated by using your governance expertise to help governments transform the lives of millions of children, we would love to hear from you.

Please send:

- your CV (or short professional biography)
- a covering letter explaining why you are interested in joining the Board of Lively Minds and what you would bring to the role

Applications should be sent to jobs@livelyminds.org

Timeline

Closing Date: 5 September 2026.

