



PETER SOWERBY
FOUNDATION

Funding Healthcare,
Innovation & Creativity

Trustee – Role Description

About the Foundation

Background

The Peter Sowerby Foundation (<https://petersowerbyfoundation.org.uk/>) is a significant, charitable grant-maker supporting work in the fields of health, education and community, the arts, and the environment.

Registered with the Charity Commission in 2011, the Foundation aims to fulfil the charitable aims of its late settlor, Dr Peter Sowerby, a retired GP from rural North Yorkshire and founding partner in Egton Medical Information Systems (EMIS), which now provides database and records management software for over 10,000 healthcare organisations in the UK and in excess of 16M of the UK population.

The Foundation is currently managed by a board of four [trustees](#). These are David Aspinall, Chair of Trustees; Dr David Stables, Peter Sowerby's former GP partner and an expert in management information systems; Sara Siegel Poullos, lead partner in Deloitte's Healthcare Strategy who has been seconded to senior positions in the Department of Health and NHS, and Dr Carole Longson, Chief Scientific Officer at the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI).

Since it was established, the Foundation has awarded hundreds of grants. Some of these have been small grants to local, grass-roots organisations, whilst others have been to large, well-established charities and educational institutions. In total, the Foundation has awarded some £15 million in grants since inception.

The Foundation is currently seeking additional trustees to join the Foundation and is particularly looking for individuals with one or more of the following:

- experience working within the health sector/NHS in a front line capacity – we note this could be current GP, consultant, clinician or another similar post
- experience in financial management/strategic oversight – especially at Board Level
- experience in grant making and the evaluation of the impact of grant making.

The Foundation will also consider applications from potential trustees, with experience outside of the above areas, but with an interest in the work of the Foundation and its charitable endeavours.

Grant Making

The Peter Sowerby Foundation currently supports charities, CICs and registered social and healthcare providers through two main strands of grant making:

- **Good Causes Fund** - grants of up to £100,000 in the areas of Community, Environment and Conservation, and Education. The Foundation also has a current focus on the seed funding of start-up initiatives and on supporting projects in the area of mental health
- **Health Breakthrough Fund** - grants designed to provide larger scale funding to those projects that are providing innovation and transformation in health and social care.

On occasion, the Foundation issues Open Calls for projects in a specific and identified area; however, mostly, the Foundation is a non-solicited funder and goes out to the charitable sector to seek out projects of interest in its key areas of strategy.

Principles

In keeping with the wishes and personal character of Dr Sowerby, the Foundation continues to be a funder that is distinctive in its approach to grant-making and which is prepared to push the boundaries of achievement within its chosen fields so as to make a tangible and lasting impact. The Foundation also places innovation and influence on wider policy and practice at the forefront of grant making.

In terms of geography, the Foundation largely supports UK-wide projects but has occasionally provided grants to international ventures. Trustees are particularly interested in supporting projects in Dr Sowerby's much-loved home of North Yorkshire.

Role Description

The trustees have overall control of the governance of the Foundation and are ultimately responsible for the charity. Grant solicitation and directorial support is provided under contract from *Cause4* (<https://cause4.co.uk/>), whilst an outsourced finance function is provided by FLB Accountants (<https://flb.co.uk/>). The Foundation also employs a governance expert as administrator to the board.

The Foundation has an expendable endowment of some £65M and Trustees are advised by their investment consultancy, HFMC Wealth (<https://www.hfmcwealth.com/>), with investment management services provided by four leading investment houses.

The Board meets virtually each quarter (for up to three hours) and, from time to time, Trustees are also asked to attend to governance and grant matters remotely between meetings. We estimate the total time commitment to be about four-six days per year.

Specific responsibilities of trustees include:

- reviewing and setting the strategic aims for the Foundation
- reviewing progress against the strategic aims
- setting annual budgets for grant-making and management
- considering operational and financial risks
- authorising grant programmes
- approving and assessing grants
- approving the investment policy and reviewing investment performance and risk
- approving annual accounts and annual report.

Person Specification

The Foundation is seeking to appoint at least two trustees with skills and experience that can help us achieve our objectives, who can bring energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the role and who will broaden the diversity of thinking on our Board.

Individuals should have the ability to exercise good, independent judgement and provide a willingness to participate actively in discussion and debate.

Knowledge of the process of charitable grant-making would be beneficial for the role but is not essential.

A comprehensive induction process will be available to the selected individual(s).

Legal Responsibilities

The overriding duty of all trustees is to advance the purposes of the Foundation and to follow the legal and regulatory duties as outlined by the Charity Commission [guidance](#) – which, in summary, are as follows:

- **ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit;**
- **comply with your charity's governing document and the law;**
- **act in your charity's best interests;**
- **manage your charity's resources responsibly;**
- **act with reasonable care and skill;**
- **ensure your charity is accountable.**

The expectation is that a minimum initial period of three years would be served, with the potential to extend as required/preferred.

Equal Opportunities

We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds. Our definition of diversity encompasses responding to issues around race, ethnicity, faith, disability, age, gender, sexuality, class and economic disadvantage and any social and institutional barriers.

How to Apply

Closing date: 31st December 2024

To arrange an informal conversation about the role, please contact Michelle Wright, CEO, *Cause4*, by email in the first instance (michelle.wright@cause4.co.uk).

To apply for the position, please email a letter of no more than two sides of A4 to Hannah Vincent hannah@petersowerbyfoundation.org.uk showing how you satisfy the required skills and experience, together with a copy of an up-to-date CV.

The Trustees seek to make an appointment at the earliest opportunity and will assess applications as they arrive. Interviews will be arranged at a mutually convenient time.