

# Research Data Scotland

## Board Recruitment Pack



# About RDS

Data is often locked away in lots of individual systems, across many different organisations, and isn't in a format that makes access or integration easy.

We can help researchers by giving them information, advice and tools that speed up and simplify their work.



## About Research Data Scotland

We have some excellent data in Scotland, excellent research community, and the ability to bring together people from Government, academia, industry and public bodies quickly to make real change happen. Research Data Scotland is a charity funded by Scottish Government that is transforming the systems and processes that hold onto this data to speed up and simplify researcher access.

Government is doubling efforts to build public services around a person and that means we need data and evidence built that way too – to know what to do, how to target resource and know whether we're getting value from that spend. And in healthcare new datasets on medical imaging and genomics are pushing the boundaries of innovation that will improve the length and quality of life.

As we embark on this search for new Board Members, we are reaching out to individuals who are as passionate about this work as we are. They will hold our values of Transparency, Collaboration, Integrity, Humility and Courage. And they will bring additional knowledge, diverse perspectives and a commitment to helping RDS forge ahead in its work to improve the wellbeing of people of Scotland through better use of data.

## Our search for new Board Members

Bringing additional expertise onto our Charity Board will help us bridge the gap between some of our current Board Members who are stepping down and will complement and expand the skill sets already present. We are thinking expansively about the work we do, and you'll support and challenge our thinking as we embark on the next stage of this exciting journey.

You will help us achieve our strategy and the ambitions we've set out in our business plan.

1. Develop our Researcher Access Service to become the single point of entry for researchers wanting data about people, places and businesses in Scotland.
2. Broaden the range of users, data sets and delivery partners and demonstrate the public value of our work through new data insights and innovation.
3. Further automate, simplify and standardise the processes for data acquisition, ingest and linkage to meet user demand for a greater range of data sets.
4. Establish a mix of funding to support our longer-term service delivery and system outcomes.

The Board has more impact when it includes a mix of people with varying experiences and we are currently looking for new Board Members with skills and expertise in (a) commercial and business development, (b) media and communications or (c) public engagement and (d) privacy.

## Role Description

Our Board Members play a vital role in making sure Research Data Scotland achieves its core purpose. They oversee the overall governance, budgetary frameworks and administration of the Charity. They help us define our strategy and guide us to ensure our work and goals align to it. And importantly, they support and challenge the senior leadership team, to help us grow and thrive.

Our Board Members have collective responsibility, which means they act as a group unless they have specific delegated responsibilities. Responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Charity is delegated to Roger Halliday, our Chief Executive who reports to Board Members on a regular basis.

## Duties

- Support and provide advice on Research Data Scotland's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Oversee Research Data Scotland's financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure that key risks are being identified, monitored and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve Research Data Scotland's financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to Research Data Scotland's Leadership Team in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in Research Data Scotland's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of Research Data Scotland's own governance. Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect Research Data Scotland's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of Research Data Scotland's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

We believe we can only truly deliver public value if we are representative of the wide range of people in our diverse Scottish communities; and improving Board diversity is crucial in that. We will make better decisions and be more effective in our delivery with a broader range of perspectives on our Board; so, we warmly encourage applications from people who are Black or a minoritised ethnicity, identify as female, disabled, LGBTQ+ and/or have varying levels of educational achievement.

## What's involved in being a Board Member.

The RDS Board convenes quarterly, comprising three virtual 2-hour meetings conducted via Teams and 1 half-day in-person meeting in Edinburgh. Additionally, there are two subcommittees - Finance, Audit & Risk (FAR) which typically hold meetings quarterly, and Remuneration & Nominations (RemCo) which typically hold meetings annually and regularly make decisions by email correspondence.

Board papers are distributed at least two weeks prior to each meeting to allow time for reading in advance and if necessary to seek further information.

Board Members are appointed for a minimum term of 4 years and can continue for an additional 4-year term (max 8 years).

You may wish to embark on funded training if this is your first Board Membership, to help you fulfil your duties (further details will be provided on request). You'll also be invited to attend events that support your understanding of our work.

The role is voluntary and unpaid; however, we reimburse reasonable out of pocket expenses. This does not form any type of employment contract and should not be interpreted as such.

## Person specification

- Willingness and ability to understand and accept the responsibilities of acting as a Board Member.
- Act in the best interests of Research Data Scotland and enable our work.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically.
- Ability to exercise good judgement and work collaboratively with others.
- Effective written and verbal communication
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the role.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Board Membership.
- Commitment to Research Data Scotland values.

For further information about Charity Board duties, we'd encourage you to visit [OSCR](#), the website of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

## How to find out more and apply

Please direct any queries to [David Currie](#) or [Catriona Mackie](#) on 0141 212 7555. Please submit your application by [CLICKING HERE](#). Your application should consist of a supporting letter, of no more than 2 sides, saying why you feel you are suited for this position, paying particular attention to the current skills we are seeking and please include a CV. Please combine your letter and CV in one document.

If we can make adjustments to any part of our recruitment process, to be more inclusive or support your equal participation, please let us know.

Thank you for the interest you have shown in the work of Research Data Scotland and this Board position.

**Closing date for applications:** Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April

**Interviews:** Afternoon of Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> or Afternoon of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May

## Research Data Scotland

Learn more about our work at [Research Data Scotland](#) and more about the work of our Board at [about RDS - Governance](#).

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