

Trustee –Role Description

Our trustees play a vital role in making sure that The Laura Centre achieves its core purpose, to offer specialist bereavement support and counselling to parents whose child has died and to children or young people who have been bereaved of a parent or significant person. The service also supports those who are experiencing and preparing for an anticipated loss. This also includes offering bespoke training opportunities to organisations, health professionals, schools, businesses and individuals.

They oversee the overall management and administration of the charity and ensure that The Laura Centre has a clear strategy and that our work and goals are in line with our purpose. Just as importantly, they support and challenge the executive team to enable The Laura Centre to grow and thrive.

Board members have a collective responsibility. This means that trustees always act as a group and not as individuals.

Responsibilities of trustees

- Support and provide advice on The Laura Centre's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Approve operational strategies and policies and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee The Laura Centre'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 The Laura Centre's financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to The Laura Centre's CEO in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in The Laura Centre's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of The Laura Centre'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 The Laura Centre's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of The Laura Centre's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

As a small charity, there will be times when the trustees will need to be actively involved beyond Board meetings. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, presenting externally, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Attributes and qualities of a Trustee

We are looking for people willing to bring energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the role, and who will broaden the diversity of thinking on our board.

Personal skills and qualities

- Willingness and ability to understand and accept their responsibilities and liabilities as trustees and to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically, exercise good, independent judgement and work effectively as a board member.
- Effective communication skills and willingness to participate actively in discussion.
- A strong personal commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- Enthusiasm for our vision and mission.
- Willingness to lead according to our values [Appx 1].
- Commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Terms of office

- Trustees are initially appointed for a 1 year term of office and then reviewed as and when required thereafter.
- This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Time commitment

- Attending 4 Board meetings annually. Currently most meetings are held remotely, with an occasional meeting in person at the Centre in Leicester.
- Attending strategy / planning / training days as required.

Other duties

Ad hoc and occasional support through working groups and / or support to the executive team.

Optional occasional attendance at events and fundraising opportunities.

Appendix 1

The Laura Centre Values

The Laura Centre is a friendly and easily accessible service, providing professional holistic bereavement support, including bereavement counselling, to families. A death in the family of a child or parent, is a devastating and traumatic loss. The support we offer recognises the lifelong impact of such a loss and that there are no easy answers.

Working together we hope to be able to help each individual find their own way to cope.

We are committed to:

- offering our services in a family orientated, approachable and welcoming environment
- providing free therapeutic support to our clients
- respecting the uniqueness of the experience of bereavement for each individual
- understanding the spiritual, cultural and emotional aspects of bereavement
- continually developing our services in order to respond to the needs of our clients.