



Scottish Rural Action is seeking new Board Directors

Role: Non-executive Director and Trustee of Scottish Rural Action

At our AGM on February 27, 2020, we are looking to appoint up to 8 new Directors. To complement the existing Directors, and to move towards the future board structure outlined below, we are looking for one or more of the following attributes in our new Directors:

1. From a rural region of Scotland, with priority on the Highlands and Islands and Perthshire
2. Active in a rural development context, at local, regional or national levels
3. From one of our national partner organisations
4. Having skills in finance, rural policy or communications

Salary: Unpaid. Expenses incurred while travelling to meetings will be refunded

Time commitment: We expect Directors to offer an equivalent of 1-2 days per month support to the work of SRA. Much of our work is undertaken remotely through Skype, Zoom and other technological means. We usually meet 3-4 times a year. Some meetings may require overnight stays. Board meetings are held in a central location. Attendance at SRA events, including the AGM and Scottish Rural Parliament are additional to this. Directors are encouraged to undertake additional voluntary activities in support of the work of SRA.

Application process: If you are interested in standing as a Board Director of SRA please read the following job description, discuss with us if necessary, and apply by email, with a personal statement of not more than 500 words, outlining why you are interested in becoming a board member of SRA and how you would contribute to its work, according to the responsibilities and duties listed below. Please also give details of 2 suitable referees (to be contacted upon application). Applicants will be assessed by the SRA recruitment committee for their suitability. Approved candidates will be put forward for the election which concludes at the AGM on February 27, 2020. You will be informed of progress.

Please send your application to: barbara@sra.scot

Your application should be received no later than 5pm on Monday January 27, 2020

Further information is available on www.sra.scot and www.scottishruralparliament.org.uk

Scottish Rural Action is a Private Limited Company with Charitable Status
Company Number: 461352; Charity No: SC048086

Introduction

Scottish Rural Action

SRA is an established Scottish Charity that represents and reflects the voices of Rural Scotland, bringing rural issues into the mainstream of policy making. SRA serves the interests of rural communities while providing a vital reference point for decision makers.

Scottish Rural Action (SRA) was established in 2013 with the dual objectives of establishing the Scottish Rural Parliament and developing a rural community movement. Since 2013, SRA has undertaken significant work to deliver its objectives. The biennial Scottish Rural Parliament is recognised as a strong voice to advocate for rural Scotland; priority issues have been identified and addressed, working in consultation with local and national interests; a strong relationship with the Scottish Government enables advocacy. SRA is also an active partner in the European Rural Parliament, a partnership of similar organisations in 38 countries. We are increasingly seeking to engage with the voice of rural youth and lesser heard voices.

SRA is now focusing its efforts on the further development of the rural movement, in partnership with Scottish Government and other organisations and rural communities across Scotland. This is an exciting challenge, which holds the potential to build an inclusive platform for rural people, interests and places. In this context, SRA itself is also embracing significant changes in the way it is structured and operates.

A Process of Change

As Rural Scotland changes so does SRA and recently a report commissioned from the James Hutton Institute gave us a clear indication of our strengths and areas where with change we can be more effective. Where it is acknowledged that SRA has shown strength in advocacy, we are particularly interested in developing the “pipeline” for thought leadership between the grassroots and policy makers and connecting more fully with partners organisations who have similar ambitions. We are seeking to do this by developing our regional network and extending this out to effect a rural movement. It is our intent to embed this change at Board level.

SRA Board

We are a small organisation by design. This gives opportunity for Board members to take leadership roles that are reflected outside of SRA. They will be supported by staff, but Board members, because they reflect the Rural Community both through membership and employment, are the key voice of authenticity within SRA.

SRA’s constitution has provision for 15 Board Directors. Building upon the excellent Directors currently in service we wish to develop our Board so that it has 13 Directors drawn from 2 different but overlapping pools of expertise. They will have responsibilities and duties. The responsibilities may differ but the duties apply to all. Board Directors may serve for up to 6 years.

Responsibilities and Duties

Responsibilities of Board Members

- 8 Directors will be appointed for their strengths within the rural sector, their regional knowledge and their experience in organisational governance. Each Director in this category will have a regional remit and will Chair a regional committee. Their tasks will differ as each area does but each Director will have responsibility for disseminating SRA work strands such that they reach to the grassroots and will receive and report back to the Board and staff to help to build our policy responses. How they do this will reflect the infrastructure within each region and thus may differ. This diversity will build the strengths and richness of rural sectoral engagement. Directors in this category will be comfortable in networking; familiar with Rural and 3rd sector organisations and businesses; will have a background in rural development issues; will come from different regions of Scotland.
- 5 Directors will be specifically sought from partner organisations to ensure that we are aligned and can support one another while avoiding duplication of effort. As Directors their role in law must be to support SRA but with sympathetic connections realising synergies with their parent organisations.
- 2 posts will be held open for co-option through the year.

All Directors will have the opportunity to Chair and take responsibility for Thematic areas that affect Rural Scotland for eg: Land Use, Transport, Rural Poverty, Housing, Climate change, etc.

Duties of Board Members

A Director is both a Company Director and a Trustee of the Charity. As such their Duties have standard expectations. In outline, the duties of a Director are:

1. To ensure the organisation complies with its memorandum & articles, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
2. To ensure the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its memorandum & articles.
3. To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
4. To contribute actively to the Board's role in giving clear strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
5. To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
6. To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
7. To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
8. To ensure effective management of the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of its funds.
9. To appoint senior staff and monitor their performance.
10. To apply a duty of care to paid staff and volunteers.
11. To exercise collective responsibility for democratically taken decisions.
12. To protect the confidentiality of Board transactions, whether written or oral.
13. In addition to the above statutory duties, each director should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they may have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the director has specific expertise.