

Role: Trustee of the Human Milk Foundation

Contract: Trustees serve for 3 year terms.

Pay rate: Voluntary, but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Location: Meetings are predominantly virtual with at least one in-person meeting per year. Trustees must be based in the UK.

Process: Prospective Trustees are welcome to meet with the senior leadership team, observe Board meetings, visit the Hearts Milk Bank, and discuss the role and work of the charity with the other Trustees prior to being voted onto the Board.

Charity summary:

The Human Milk Foundation is working to help more families feed their babies with human milk, meeting multiple critical unmet needs in the perinatal care of families. The HMF operates the Hearts Milk Bank, a non-profit human milk bank that provides screened donor human milk to neonatal units in over 50 NHS hospitals and to hundreds of families each year who face challenges feeding their babies. Since its launch in 2018, the HMF now operates across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and beyond. Our research has shown positive impacts on infant health, as well as on parental wellbeing and breastfeeding rates.

The HMF was conceived in 2017 by a group of parents, scientists, milk bank experts and doctors, frustrated by the lack of assured access to donor milk for vulnerable infants, alongside countless parents who wanted to access donor milk for their babies, who did not meet NHS funding criteria. Human milk banks have been under-resourced in the UK for decades, leading to fragmented service provision, rationing and deficits in healthcare professional education, research, professionalisation, and public awareness.

Role summary:

Trustees will possess attention to detail and enjoy working in a team that is driving excellence and innovation in the support of infant and maternal health. We need your energy and enthusiasm and offer opportunities to participate in a range of projects both within the HMF and with external

collaborators. The Trustees are a strong team, navigating rapid growth in this young charity by challenging and supporting the operational team.

Support for new Trustees will be offered by the charity in the form of training, time with the cofounders and other Trustees, visits to the Hearts Milk Bank, and regular opportunities to gain new skills. Trustees are encouraged to take on responsibility for specific areas of governance within the charity. These include but are not limited to the Risk Register, Prioritisation Panel, Risk Register, Research Committee, and assisting the senior leadership team with specific projects.

Time commitment

Formal Board meetings are held bi-monthly and last for no longer than 2 hours. Recognising the fast pace of change and to enhance communication, monthly catch-up calls are held which last no longer than 1 hour. Most meetings are held virtually. At least one meeting each year will be held face-to-face which may include a charity strategy day and in-person training.

What skills would I need?

Personal integrity, ability to challenge and good judgement are essential. We are particularly keen to encourage a Board made up of people who can bring diversity of thought, helping the charity to create truly inclusive services that reach those in most need. We encourage applications from applicants from minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community as well as those who have not been a Trustee in the past. Trustees are welcomed from every part of the UK.

Support

The HMF offers Trustee development including governance training. Yearly appraisals help the Chair and Senior Leadership Team to work effectively and identify areas of personal development that can assist the role.

Application

For more details or an informal chat please send your CV to gillian@humanmilkfoundation.org.