

Role:	Chair of Trustees
Contract:	Trustees serve for 3 year terms
Pay rate:	Voluntary, with reasonable expenses reimbursed
Location:	Remote, but with one in-person meeting per year. Must be based in the UK.
Interviews:	Joining the HMF board will be a process that include telephone interviews, observation of board meetings, in person visits to the Hearts Milk Bank, and discussions with the other trustees, with a mutually suitable start date as soon as possible thereafter.

Role summary

The Human Milk Foundation charity provides donor human milk to sick, premature babies in hospital neonatal intensive care units and families at home such as mothers with cancer. Much like donated blood, donor human milk can help save lives. Our aim is to scale up and build a national milk bank service so that every baby who could benefit can access donor milk. There's a short video which demonstrates the impact of our work here - Amelia's story: <https://humanmilkfoundation.org/get-involved/heroes/>

We are recruiting for a new Chair of Trustees to join our board, who shares our team's ambitious goal to create a national human milk bank service to be integrated into perinatal care across England & Wales. The chair will hold the board and senior leadership team to account for the charity's mission and vision, providing inclusive leadership to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity.

Key responsibilities

- Chair meetings of the board of trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision making process.
- Ensure that trustees are engaged and that collective decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the charity.
- Maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the trustees.
- Work closely with the senior leadership team to give direction to board policy-making and to ensure that meetings are well planned and reflect the responsibilities of trustees.
- Monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

Time commitment

We meet formally once every two months with a remote meeting of up to 2 hours, with a one-hour update call on alternative months when required. While most meetings can be conducted virtually, one meeting each year will be held face-to-face.

What skills would I need?

The chair will possess attention to detail and enjoy working in a team that is driving excellence and innovation in infant and maternal health. You will have strategic leadership

skills and sound judgement, with strong personal values and high ethical standards. We would love to hear about your successful experience of significant organisational growth and transformation in a comparable role or organisation.

- Significant previous experience of chairing meetings and events.
- Experience of charity governance and working with or as part of a Board of Trustees.
- Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders.
- Good understanding of charity governance issues.
- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation.
- Personal integrity, ability to challenge, and good judgement.

Support will be offered by the charity in the form of training, time with the senior leadership team and other trustees, visits to the Hearts Milk Bank, and regular opportunities to gain new skills.

Conflict of interests

Applicants should declare any personal or professional links which may be perceived as a conflict of interest with the aims of the charity. This includes, but is not limited to, an association with a company which does not adhere to the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes.

Charity overview

The Human Milk Foundation (HMF) charity is based at Gossoms End Health Centre in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. Our goal is to support more families to feed their babies with human milk, through education, research and the supply of donor human milk.

We operate the UK's first independent, non-profit human milk bank - the Hearts Milk Bank (HMB, www.heartsmilkbank.org) providing donor human milk to over 50 NHS hospital neonatal units across England and Wales. Much like donated human blood, donor human milk can help save lives. Premature babies are very vulnerable and at risk of life-threatening conditions such as necrotising enterocolitis (NEC), a condition which causes some or all of the bowel to die. Parents who have given birth early are sometimes unable to produce their own milk straight away and can be very unwell themselves. In these situations, safe, screened donor human milk can act as a medicine to protect the baby during the first days and weeks after birth; it also allows mothers the time and support to establish their own milk supply, supporting breastfeeding and parental mental health.

Milk banks operate in a similar way to the blood transfusion service. The HMB team recruit milk donors who undergo blood tests and a detailed lifestyle and health questionnaire before donating milk. Donor milk is collected from donors by volunteer SERV ("blood-biker") volunteers and delivered to the milk bank where it is heat-treated (pasteurised) to destroy potentially harmful bacteria and viruses, checked by microbiologists to make sure that there



is no bacterial contamination and stored frozen. The milk is collected and delivered to hospitals and to parents in the community who cannot breastfeed such as those with cancer, HIV or lack of breast tissue.

A key pillar of the charity's work is to build an evidence base demonstrating the impact of this unique intervention in improving infant health, parental wellbeing and breastfeeding rates. Our work includes research and evaluation, along with training and education for healthcare teams. The HMF also supports a range of research projects in association with universities.

The Human Milk Foundation is a small team of dedicated individuals with a broad set of skills and lived-experience. We all have a great passion to make change to improve the health of parents and their babies, and we look forward to welcoming new members to the board who share this passion.

Application process

Trustees are welcomed from every part of the UK.

Please send a CV and covering letter to trustees@humanmilkfoundation.org.

Applications will close early if sufficient applications are received.

The HMF is committed to promoting equal opportunities. You and any applicants to this role will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics).