



TRUSTEE - ROLE DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

The Trustee's responsibilities and obligations are described in the statutes (*Estatutos*).

This document informs of the role of the Board of Trustee's (BoT) and on the expectations of trustees. Board meetings are held regularly according to an annual meeting plan. If necessary, BoT convenes for extra board meetings. BoT meetings focus on substantive matters requiring decision or action. All members share the responsibility for achieving a common understanding and support for the development of SiS's mission, purpose and operations. In addition, the BoT is working to expand SiS's visibility, enhance awareness and increase donor support.

This document discloses the roles and responsibilities of BoT for clarification of the existing board members as well as information for potential new members.

2. Basic principles

BoT endorses the spirit of the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' as set forth in the Nolan Committee's First Report 'Standard of Public Life' (Annex).

3. Overall purpose

The Trustees of SiS are jointly and severally responsible for:

- (i) The overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation
- (ii) Its financial health
- (iii) The probity of its activities
- (iv) The development of the organisation's aims, strategy and objectives in accordance with the *Estatutos*, and with legal and regulatory guidelines.

All Trustees should be aware of, and understand, their collective responsibilities, and should not be overly reliant on one or more individual members in any particular aspect of the governance of SiS. For example, all Trustees should be able to read the financial accounts to a level that they can ask questions and comprehend answers of a general nature.

Any Trustee should undergo a thorough induction upon appointment and remain alert to, and be aware of the Trustee's duties and responsibilities, and of the environment in which they operate.

4. Main responsibilities for Trustees

1. To ensure that SiS and its representatives function within all legal and regulatory requirements applicable, and in line with its *Estatutos*, continually striving for best practice in governance.
2. To maintain the fiduciary duty invested in the position, undertaking such duties in a way that adds to public confidence and trust in SiS.
3. To take appropriate professional advice in all matters where there may be a material risk to SiS, or

where Trustees may be in breach of their duties.

4. To determine the overall direction and development of SiS through good governance.
5. To develop strategies and objectives, monitor the implementation of these and evaluate the results.
6. To avoid any personal conflict of interest.
7. To be responsible for the overall management of SiS and in particular for the appointment of senior management.
8. To ensure that robust systems are in place for internal financial control and for the protection of the funds and assets of SiS.
9. To protect the reputation of SiS.
10. To evaluate own performance and take appropriate initiatives to improve.

5. Other specific personal duties

- a) To maintain absolute confidentiality with regard to all aspects of Trustee business, bearing in mind the over-riding legal obligations placed upon Trustees.
- b) To ensure a fully effective and appropriate system for the recruitment, appointment and monitoring of the work and activities of Volunteers and, where appropriate, other persons who are carrying out any functions in relation to SiS.
- c) To ensure the effective and efficient administration of SiS and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance.
- d) To use any specific skills, knowledge or experience [s]he may have to help the BoT to operate effectively and efficiently. This involves:
 - Scrutinising Trustee Board papers.
 - Focusing on key issues.
 - Providing guidance on new initiatives.
 - Serving on ad hoc and sub-Group Committees as agreed.
 - Taking a lead role in a particular area of the work of SiS as agreed with the Trustee Board.
 - Other issues in which the Trustee has specific expertise.

6. Accountability

As BoT is responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of SiS, the Trustees are accountable in varying degrees to a variety of persons including Volunteers, the beneficiaries of its services, funders, the Registrar of Associations and other regulators. Close attention must be given to the *Estatutos* to ascertain the type of organisational structure and the range of interested parties that SiS has.

There is a demand within the general public for an organisation such as SiS to be open and accountable for its actions and inactions. Evolving best practice would therefore lead Trustees to consider the wider implications of the decisions they make and to communicate the formal reasons behind such decisions or actions. Above all else Trustees must adhere to any legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the activities of SiS.

ANNEX:

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The Committee has set out ‘**Seven Principles of Public Life**’ which it believes should apply to all in the public service. These are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organizations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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