



BRIEF FOR NOMINEES

FSB Board of Directors

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Federation of
Small Businesses

You're attracted to the opportunity to become involved at a national level with one of the UK's most respected business organisations and gain first-hand experience of volunteering at this level?

That's great as we think we have just the exciting opportunity for you!

By joining the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Board of Directors, you'll play an important role in the strategic development of the business which supports and gives a voice to its tens of thousands of members who are all part of the UK's 5.5 million small businesses and the self-employed community.

Not only that, but you'll have the chance to develop new skills in strategic-thinking, diligence, industry insight and communication. We're aware that you have your own business/es to run, and this has been taken into account versus the amount of time you'll be expected to volunteer to the Board of Directors.

Because you may have had a great business idea, founded, developed, operated and grown a small business, you are exactly the type of person we need to help FSB continue to progress, innovate and expand over the next half century, remaining the most relevant and value for money business membership organisation in the UK.

We're particularly keen to attract people from an ethnic minority background and young people so that the Board of Directors fully reflects and represents FSB membership and the UK's small business and self-employed community. We'll also provide support and guidance to those who may not necessarily have the relevant experience but can demonstrate the relevant skills and interest.

We are seeking nominations from FSB members for the offices of:

- National Chair
- National Vice Chair (Policy and Advocacy)
- Non-Executive Directors

You'll be part of a group of up to 13 directors on the Board with the responsibility for providing appropriate oversight, governance and strategic leadership to FSB in the pursuit of its purpose to protect, support, promote and further the interests of small businesses and the self-employed.

You'll be supported by FSB's governance staff team in this office, and you'll need to attend around seven Board meetings per year – a combination of virtual and in-person.

Keep reading to find out more about FSB and how you can become involved as a board director!



ABOUT THE FEDERATION OF SMALL BUSINESSES (FSB)

Our vision is to be recognised as the most influential and trusted organisation representing the voice of all small businesses, in every region and nation of the UK.

FSB is the UK's grassroots business organisation, established in 1974, offering its members a powerful voice which is heard in Government as well as vital business services and products. The UK's 5.5 million small businesses and self-employed make up more than 99 per cent of all private sector businesses. They contribute a staggering amount to the UK's economy as well as being a major source of employment; more than 16.7 million people are employed by smaller firms.

Our local, national and international activism helps shape policy decisions that have a direct impact on the day-to-day running of smaller businesses. We work for their interests through research and engagement with our members and by effective campaigning – influencing those in power through policy analysis, public affairs, media and public relations activity.

Every day of the year, you'll see FSB editorially featured in national, regional and trade media – on television, radio, online and in print. Over just the last six months we've featured on prime-time *Sky News*, *BBC Breakfast*, *ITV News*, *LBC*, *GB News*, *BBC Radio 4*, *BBC Radio 5 Live*, lots of independent news and local BBC news; in the *Times* and *Sunday Times*, *The Mail*, *the FT*, *the Independent*, *the Guardian*, *the Express*, *The Telegraph*, *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, *The Scotsman*, *SME Today*, *SME News*, *The Caterer*, *FE Week*, *Retail Gazette* and many others.

We consistently engage with the Government and opposition parties, through our public affairs strategy, and often give evidence on behalf of our members at Parliamentary Select Committees. We sometimes work in collaboration with other trade associations and organisations.

As well as a voice to those in power, we also provide our members with a range of relevant and competitive business products and services to help them with the day-to-day running of their businesses, from legal advice to access to finance, and from debt recovery to training courses. Our commercial strategy drives member recruitment and retention as well as collaborations with commercial partners.

We've achieved the Institute of Customer Service's Service Mark accreditation in recognition of high-quality customer service to our members. FSB currently employs 201 full-time and part-time staff who are based in various locations in the UK, including in Westminster, Blackpool, Cardiff, Glasgow, Belfast and the regions of England.

OUR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

As a board director, you would play a vital role in ensuring the delivery, on behalf of members, of our corporate objectives:

1. to represent the diversity of the UK's small business community;
2. to provide support, advice and practical solutions to our community of members;
3. to advocate on behalf of small businesses and the self-employed, providing a powerful voice heard by Government and key decision-makers; and
4. to maintain a critical mass of customers to deliver scale and to operate efficiently, ensuring financial stability and safeguarding FSB for the future.

Find out how we have delivered on these, our key achievements and our group strategic reports in our [Annual Reports and Financial Statements](#).

PURPOSE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are governed by our Board of up to 13 directors, responsible for providing appropriate oversight, governance and strategic leadership to FSB in the pursuit of its purpose to protect, support, promote and further the interests of small businesses and the self-employed.

The Board scrutinises the performance of senior management in meeting agreed goals and objectives and monitors the reporting of performance. The Board should satisfy itself as to the integrity of financial and other information, and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible.

VOLUNTEER CONTEXT AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD

It is recognised that members who volunteer for director level offices have their own businesses to run. FSB staff are sensitive to this, and our structure is designed to support and reflect these competing demands on volunteers' time. Whilst board directors are expected to set the strategic objectives, FSB staff advise, support and facilitate the delivery of any objectives set. The Board is supported by the FSB Senior Management Team, which is collectively responsible for the executive leadership of FSB's business; proposing strategy to the Board; delivering the business plan, managing risk on a day-to-day basis; and ensuring the Board receives the necessary information to provide assurance and to enable effective decision-making.

On behalf of the Board, the directors ensure there is effective communication between the Board and FSB volunteers. They ensure that when matters are put before the Board for decision, the potential impact on members is considered and that the member perspective is taken into account in all Board discussions. As members of the Board, directors have collective responsibility leading to the achievement of FSB's vision, mission and corporate objectives.

The expectations of the Board include:

- **Corporate objectives**
 - To play a part in working towards the delivery, on behalf of members, of our corporate objectives.
- **Strategy**
 - Contributing to constructive debate regarding the strategic development of FSB and any other material and significant issues facing the organisation.
 - Establishing clear objectives to deliver the agreed plans and strategy and regularly review performance against those objectives.
 - Ensuring the effective implementation of Board decisions by the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team and holding the Chief Executive to account for the effective management and delivery of the organisation's strategic aims and objectives.
 - Ensuring the long-term sustainability of FSB.
 - Building and maintaining close relations with FSB's members and stakeholders to promote the effective operation of the organisation's activities.
 - Ensuring the Board of Directors sets challenging objectives for improving performance.
- **Compliance and performance**
 - Ensuring that FSB complies with its constitution and any other applicable legislation and regulations.
 - Maintaining financial viability, using resources effectively, controlling and reporting on financial affairs.

- Ensuring the best use of financial and other resources in order to maximise value for members' money.
- Ensuring that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and that the Board is kept fully informed through timely and relevant information.
- Participating in the appointment of senior staff.
- Promoting the highest standards of corporate governance and compliance with regulatory requirements and best practice.
- Ensuring that FSB meets its commitments to members and that services provided are of a high standard.
- **Board activities**
 - Participating fully in the activity of the Board, contributing to the corporate responsibility of the Board of Directors.
 - Membership of Board committees where appropriate and attending other ad hoc meetings of the main Board.
 - Collaborating with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.
 - If required, in collaboration with the Board's Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Committee and Procedures Committee, support regional governance to function effectively within FSB guidelines.
 - Support the alignment of local activity to FSB purpose, values and corporate objectives.
 - Support/chair other activity and the volunteer validation process as requested.
 - Participating in any Board induction, ongoing training and evaluation identified for the individual board member and/or as part of the Board or a committee.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Upholding the values of FSB by example.
 - Ensuring that the organisation promotes equality, diversity and inclusion for all its stakeholders and demonstrating this in individual behaviours.
 - Upholding the highest standards of integrity and probity, recognising and declaring interests as appropriate and ensuring that the Board and its members work only in the interests of FSB.
 - Safeguarding the good name and reputation of FSB.
 - Acting as a director of subsidiary companies, where appropriate.

We'll also provide support and guidance to those who may not necessarily have the relevant experience referred to in this nominee brief provided they have the relevant skills and an interest in these areas.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The skills, experience and knowledge sought for Non-Executive Directors include:

- An understanding of issues facing small businesses and the self-employed.
- An understanding and interest in the issues FSB seeks to address/represent.
- Ability to facilitate timely decision-making and being capable of communication via digital technology (video conferencing, virtual collaboration) along with a strong understanding of social media applications.
- Ability to empathise with, and advocate for, members.
- Ability to effectively mediate and resolve issues.
- Well-developed interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to demonstrate an understanding of FSB's mission and corporate objectives.
- Strong business and financial acumen.
- Effective leadership skills.
- Ability to understand complex strategic issues, analyse and resolve difficult problems.
- Additional experience of larger businesses (e.g. more than 250 employees) could add further value to your contribution and therefore your nomination.
- Ability to complete the requisite conflict of interest and fit and proper person checks.
- We are particularly keen to hear from members who have experience in the following areas: HR; Legal and Governance; Audit and Risk; Digitisation.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE:

For the National Vice Chair (Policy and Advocacy):

- An ability and willingness to commit to cross-party, non-partisan engagement.
- Willingness to take sometimes difficult decisions to prioritise and safeguard some activity and to deprioritise others.
- Proven track record in policy, public affairs and advocacy.
- Personal credibility, gravitas and diplomacy.
- Highly developed interpersonal and communication skills including the ability to represent FSB in different media including live broadcast.
- The ability to represent FSB externally in meetings with Government and other public bodies, supported by the External Affairs (Westminster) staff team, and adhering to the agreed protocols in place.
- Experience of committee work, in particular of chairing boards or similar groups.
- Expertise in policy/lobbying; public relations; media spokesperson.

For the National Chair:

- A good understanding of corporate governance and the distinction between strategic leadership and operational management.
- Champion of and commitment to FSB's objectives, strategy, mission and values.
- Accomplished strategic leader, with experience of board or committee work, in particular of chairing boards or similar groups.
- Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills.
- Excellent leadership and people management skills.
- Politically astute, with the ability to grasp relevant issues and understand relationships between interested parties.
- An ability and willingness to maintain a position of political neutrality when dealing with FSB business.
- Inclusive and consultative approach.
- Independence, integrity, personal credibility and gravitas.
- Demonstrable skills in navigating and resolving potential conflicts of priorities, perspectives and interests and any behaviours that are not consistent with the Code of Conduct or the best interests of FSB.
- Tact, diplomacy and forthrightness in taking any necessary leadership action when the need arises in the best interests of FSB.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

Remuneration

These offices are voluntary and do not entitle the office holder to any payment for any activity other than agreed expenses for which FSB chooses to pay from time to time. Currently, these offices are offered with an honorarium. The honorarium should not be considered to be a salary, and it does not imply an employment nor worker relationship. You have no contractual right to such payment nor is it a fixed payment. Any honorarium paid by FSB to an office holder is entirely discretionary.

Eligibility

Any FSB member may express an interest in these voluntary offices as long as they:

- Produce evidence of owning and running a current ongoing small business, as determined by the Board.
- Are a fully paid-up FSB member entitled to vote at the time of nomination. To become a member of FSB, if not already, to be considered for this office, please [join here](#).
- Do not hold a self-employed service contract with FSB or its subsidiaries.
- Are not a service provider to FSB or its subsidiaries.
- Can demonstrate a commitment to FSB.
- Provide at least one form of reference, preferably from an FSB member.

Appointment Term and structure of the Board's Meetings

The appointment is offered on a term of three years. Members of the Board are expected to devote such time as is necessary, typically attending seven meetings a year which are a combination of virtual and in-person meetings. The Board also holds strategically focussed sessions as and when required.

All directors are expected to devote such time as is necessary including attendances at:

- The above scheduled meetings.
- Other meetings as required.
- Unscheduled Board/ad hoc meetings that may be called at any time with notice.
- Annual Board strategy planning days.
- Annual General Meetings.
- Regional/policy meetings – when necessary and appropriate.
- Meetings with the Chief Executive and other directors.

SPECIFIC DIRECTOR DUTIES

Directors to the Board form the central authority of FSB and in carrying out their functions owe a series of legal duties to FSB, including the following under the Companies Act 2006 sections 171 to 177.

- Duty to act within powers.
- Duty to promote the success of the company.
- Duty to exercise independent judgement.
- Duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence.
- Duty to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Duty not to accept benefits from third parties.
- Duty to declare an interest in a proposed transaction or arrangement.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

If you feel this opportunity could be for you, you'll need to make a formal expression of interest by completing [this form](#).

Closing date: 20 December 2024

NEXT STEPS

Please note that, should you be invited to an interview, you will be asked by our governance department to also complete a conflict of interest form and 'fit and proper person' declaration.

FSB carries out verification checks, politically exposed persons (PEP) and sanctions checks where appropriate.

QUESTIONS?

If you have specific queries about the roles or appointments process, please get in touch with us by emailing fsbselection@fsb.org.uk and a confidential chat can be held.

Closing date: 20 December 2024

We'd also be grateful if you would complete an anonymous equality and diversity monitoring form. This is optional for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application. You'll find the form [here](#).

Selection stage	Anticipated timescale
Closing date for nominations	4pm, 20 Dec 2024
Selection Panel shortlisting	Early Jan 2025
Selection Panel interviews	Jan 2025
Board meeting to consider Selection Panel recommendations	5 Feb 2025
Nominees notified of outcome	Feb 2025
Formal approval of appointment at 2025 AGM	8 Apr 2025
3-year term commences	9 Apr 2025

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

FSB is committed to and values diversity and inclusion in everything we do. The strength of FSB rests on the diversity of our self-employed and small business owners who reflect the whole of the UK business population, both as members and volunteers. With this, we want to ensure all small business owners and the self-employed, from whichever communities they belong, feel welcome and a part of FSB.

We do not condone discrimination of any kind and we aspire to have a diverse and inclusive environment, where everyone is able to bring their whole self to any volunteering role they undertake. We would therefore welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

We are committed to ensure our selection processes are barrier free. Please let us know if you need any adjustments or changes to be made to the selection process because of a disability or long-term health condition by emailing fsbselection@fsb.org.uk or by calling 0141 343 7307.

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 FSB Westminster

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