

**Candidate Information Pack**

**For a Role on the**

**Board of Trustees**

A collage of people outside

Description automatically generated**at CAN**

**Foreword from our C**A picture containing text, clipart

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for expressing your interest in joining the Board of Trustees for CAN, a bold, creative organisation, working to improve the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and neurodiversity’s, their families and carers. We are currently seeking passionate and skilled individuals to help guide our organisation as we continue to serve our community and make a meaningful impact.

Becoming a Trustee offers a unique opportunity to:

* **Make a Difference:** As a Board member, you will have a direct hand in shaping the future of our organisation. Your decisions will influence the development of initiatives that have real, positive effects on individuals and communities.
* **Develop Skills and Experience:** Serving on a Board allows you to gain valuable experience in governance, strategy, financial management, and leadership. You will enhance your understanding of the charity sector and build skills that can enrich your personal and professional life.
* **Collaborate with Like-Minded Individuals:** You will be part of a team of dedicated professionals, all working together towards a common goal. This collaborative environment is not only rewarding but also provides opportunities for personal growth and the expansion of your professional network.
* **Give Back to the Community:** Volunteering your time and expertise as a Board member is a meaningful way to give back. Your contributions will help ensure the sustainability and success of CAN for the long term.

As a Trustee, you will play a key role in ensuring that CAN remains focused on its mission while maintaining high standards of governance. Specific responsibilities include:

* **Governance and Strategic Oversight:** Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation, ensuring that all activities align with its charitable objectives, and adhering to its governing documents and legal obligations.
* **Financial Management:** While financial expertise is not required for all Trustees, you will help oversee the organisation’s financial health, approving budgets, and ensuring resources are used effectively in line with our mission. Trustees with financial expertise may take on a Treasurer role, offering more in-depth guidance on financial matters.
* **Risk Management:** Trustees are responsible for identifying and managing risks to ensure the organisation operates in a safe, legal, and efficient manner.
* **Advocacy and Representation:** Board members may act as ambassadors for the organisation, representing us at events and helping to raise awareness of our work and impact.
* **Time Commitment:** While we understand that Board members often have other commitments, Trustees are expected to attend regular Board meetings, participate in sub-committees, and occasionally attend events. This usually equates to a time commitment of 30 hours per year.

**Why We Need You…**

We are looking for individuals who share our passion for fulfilling our vision (see: [CAN vision 2023 at Lislagan Farm (youtube.com)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzjuuDWoo1g) and bring a diverse range of skills and experiences to help us grow. Whether you have expertise in finance, governance, legal matters, fundraising, or simply a deep commitment to the cause, we believe you can make a valuable contribution.

Joining our Board provides a chance to leave a lasting legacy while contributing to the ongoing success and impact of CAN.

If you are looking for a rewarding opportunity to give back to the community, grow your skills, and make a difference, we would love to hear from you.

Please let us know if you are interested, or feel free to reach out for an informal chat about the role. Thank you for considering this opportunity, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

**Joanne**

**Joanne McDowell**

**Chair**

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Charity No. **NIC100988** Registered Company No. NI32676

Head Office Address: 32 Lislagan Road, Ballymoney, BT53 7DD.  Tel  028 275 23053. [www.compasspeople.org](http://www.compasspeople.org/)

**Background to the Organisation**

CAN is an award-winning organisation in Northern Ireland that has been recognised for its sustainability efforts and leading transformation in health and social care. With a 26-year track record, CAN is known for providing creative and cost-effective solutions that prioritize the needs of individuals.

The organisation maintains its independence and ensures the inclusion of its core service users through its engaged board and Peoples Forum. CAN works with over 450 individuals, families, and carers, offering holistic support through various programs and initiatives. They have also established social enterprises that generate funds and provide training opportunities for people with disabilities and mental health issues. Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, political instability and a cost-of-living crisis, CAN has focused on maximizing income and streamlining operations to sustain its services. Their vision is to create a space where individuals with disabilities and mental health issues can realise their full potential.

CAN aims to generate at least 50% of its income through social enterprise activities by 2028, granting them more autonomy and sustainability. In 2021, the organisation purchased an 11-acre site called Lislagan Farm, which will serve as a groundbreaking facility and expand their income generation potential. This facility will provide a range of services, including social and leisure activities, therapeutic interventions, and training programs.

CAN plans to secure funding for the next stages of the project, which include bookable accommodation, a coffee stop, and overnight respite options. The farm will not only support CAN's social enterprise activities but also provide critical services to meet the future needs of children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and neurodiversity’s, their families and carers

The farm will be a space where people can engage in various activities and experiences throughout the seasons.  
Map

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**Role Description**

**Overview:**

As a Board Member of CAN, you will play a crucial role in the governance and strategic direction of the organisation. You will work collaboratively with fellow Board Members, CEO and the Senior Management Team to oversee the organisation's activities, ensure financial sustainability, and support its mission and values.

The role is a voluntary, non-executive position, requiring commitment, vision, and expertise to contribute towards the organisation's success.

**Key Responsibilities:**

**1. Strategic Leadership:**

* To contribute to the development and approval of the organisation’s long-term strategic goals and objectives.
* Participate in strategic planning and decision-making to guide the direction of the organisation.
* Ensure that the organisation’s mission, vision, and values are upheld in all decisions and actions.

**2. Governance:**

* Provide oversight to ensure that the organisation operates in compliance with its governing documents, legal obligations, and regulatory requirements.
* Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for effective governance and risk management.
* Monitor and evaluate the organisation's performance in achieving its strategic goals and objectives.

**3. Financial Oversight:**

* Review and approve the organisation’s budget, financial statements, and reports to ensure financial sustainability.
* Work with the Treasurer and Finance Committee to monitor the financial health of the organisation.
* Ensure that resources are managed responsibly and that financial risks are effectively mitigated.

**4. Advocacy and Representation:**

* Act as an ambassador for the organisation, representing it at key events, meetings, and functions.
* Promote the organisation’s mission and activities within your networks, helping to build relationships with key stakeholders.
* Support fundraising efforts and identify potential funding opportunities, including donor engagement and sponsorships.

**5. Collaboration and Support:**

* Work collaboratively with the Chair, Board Members, CEO and Senior Management Team to achieve the organisation’s objectives.
* Provide support and guidance to the SMT, offering expertise and constructive feedback where necessary.
* Participate actively in Board meetings, sub-committees, and working groups, where required, contributing to a positive and inclusive Board culture.

**6. Risk Management:**

* Help identify, assess, and manage risks that may impact the organisation’s operations and success.
* Ensure that proper risk management strategies are in place, including safeguarding the organisation’s assets and reputation.

**7. Performance Monitoring:**

* Evaluate the performance of the organisation against agreed objectives, ensuring continuous improvement and impact.
* Provide input into the performance management of the CEO, ensuring strong and effective leadership.

**Person Specification**

* **Commitment to the CAN’s Mission:** Passionate about the work of the organisation and committed to advancing its mission and values.
* **Strategic Thinking:** Able to contribute to the development and implementation of long-term strategies for the organisation’s growth and impact.
* **Governance Experience:** Understanding of good governance practices, preferably (but not essential) with experience serving on a Board or in senior leadership roles.
* **Financial Acumen:** Comfortable reviewing financial reports, budgets, and understanding financial responsibilities (support from Treasurer provided).
* **Communication and Advocacy:** Strong communication skills, able to advocate on behalf of the organisation and engage with stakeholders effectively.
* **Collaboration and Teamwork:** Willingness to work as part of a team, contributing constructively to discussions and decision-making.

**Term & Commitment:**

**Term Length:** Typically, Board Members serve terms of three years, with the option for re-election for up to 3 terms.

**Time Commitment:** Approximately 6–10 meetings per year, including Board meetings, committee work, and occasional events. Additional time may be required for specific projects.

**Voluntary Position:** This is a voluntary, unpaid role, although reasonable expenses incurred in the course of Board duties will be reimbursed.

**As a Board Member, you will be part of a committed and dynamic team, ensuring the ongoing success and sustainability of the organisation while championing its mission and the communities it serves.**

**Office Bearers**

In addition to the description listed above, Office Bearers carry the following responsibilities:

**Chair:**

* **Leadership & Governance**: Provides overall leadership to the Board, ensuring effective governance and strategic alignment with the charity’s mission.
* **Meeting Facilitation**: Chairs Board meetings, ensuring structured discussions, decision-making, and inclusive participation from all Trustees.
* **Chief Executive Support**: Acts as the primary point of contact for the Chief Executive, conducting regular performance reviews and providing strategic guidance.
* **External Representation**: Represents the charity at events, acting as its key ambassador to stakeholders and the public.
* **Trustee Development**: Leads recruitment and development of Trustees, ensuring the Board’s effectiveness and succession planning.

**Vice Chair:**

* **Chair Support**: Acts as a key support to the Chair, stepping in during the Chair’s absence and providing advice on governance and strategy.
* **Trustee Engagement**: Assists in fostering a collaborative Board culture and supports Trustee recruitment and development.
* **Chair Appraisal**: Leads the annual appraisal of the Chair, ensuring balanced feedback and assessment.
* **External Representation**: Represents the charity at external events when the Chair is unavailable, supporting stakeholder engagement.
* **Performance Monitoring**: Contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of the Board’s and Chief Executive’s performance.

**Treasurer:**

* **Financial Oversight**: Ensures the charity's financial viability, budgetary management, and compliance with statutory requirements.
* **Reporting & Information**: Provides the Board with regular, clear financial reports and oversees the preparation of Annual Accounts.
* **Audit & Controls**: Reviewing financial procedures, controls, and accounting policies.
* **Asset & Investment Management**: Monitors investments and reserves policies, ensures proper maintenance of assets.
* **Governance of Financial Duties**: Ensures the Board complies with financial regulations and understands its financial responsibilities.

These roles each provide distinct leadership and specialised oversight functions essential to the governance of the charity.

**Access NI (Criminal Convictions Check)**

Please note, all successful post-holders are required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure through Access NI. In addition, this individual may also be required to handle cash, cheque and other transactions, necessitating total trustworthiness and reliability.

**Disability**

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act a person is disabled if they have, or have had, “a physical or mental impairment which has, or has had, a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities”. If you consider yourself to have a disability relevant to the role please contact Danielle McKee so that we can make any specific arrangements for your discussions, and make any necessary reasonable adjustments or adaptations, or provide any aids to assist you in completing the duties of the role.

**References**

Successful applicants are required to provide details of two referees. You should not provide anyone who is related to you as a referee.

**Contact Details**

If you would like to discuss this position, please contact Danielle McKee on 028 275 23053 or by emailing danielle@compasspeople.org.

**Application**

**To apply, please send your CV along with a Covering Letter to joanne@compasspeople.org.**