

Board Chair – Dundee Science Centre
Job description

The Organisation

Dundee Science Centre first opened its doors in July 2000, as a visitor attraction for young families and based on the science of the five senses. Over the past 18 years, the exhibition and programme content has expanded significantly to now include a variety of topics and skills within science and technology. The centre's educational remit has grown and Dundee Science Centre has become well established as a science education resource for schools and Further/Higher Education. In parallel to this, our community outreach programme, festivals and community-led projects have significantly evolved over the years, and Dundee Science Centre is now well recognised in the sector as a leader in widening access to science for 'hard to reach' audiences.

Our role in society is to:

- **provide an exciting science-based visitor experience**
- **be a key resource to encourage and support lifelong learning**
- **bring scientific excellence and local research into the public knowledge**
- **promote science as part of the cultural mix of the local region**

We currently engage over 80,000 people per annum – over 65,000 people through in-centre visits, over 15,000 people through outreach activity and science festivals.

- **We provide exhibitions and public programmes** for the local community and visiting tourists wishing to engage in leisure, cultural and social pursuits.
- **We support Curriculum for Excellence** - providing learning opportunities for 10,000 children and young people each year and providing professional learning support for teaching practitioners.
- **We provide communication training for scientists and facilitate public engagement** with scientific research and careers, by working closely with academia, research institutes and industry.
- **We provide widening access initiatives for underserved audiences**, including tailored and subsidised programmes for those who are socially-economically deprived, unemployed or have additional support needs.
- **We support local businesses and partners** (within and beyond the science sector) by hosting their meetings, events and team building activities.

2018 was a landmark year in Dundee Science Centre's journey, as 2018 saw the opening of our new Medical Marvels exhibition and Science Learning Suite, which were several years in the making. The new exhibition, seminar room, classroom and offices were built through a £2.1 million capital investment programme which has doubled the first floor footprint of the science centre as part of a mezzanine extension.

Our 2019-2022 strategy focuses on driving forward our ambitious plans to be a five star visitor attraction, accessible community hub and lifelong learning resource for Tayside & Fife. While we will continue to expand our outreach work and learning programmes, there will be a focus on reimagining and upgrading the ground-floor facilities and integrating widening access into everything we do. Central to this will be delivery of our £2 million CONNECT project over the next two years.

Once CONNECT is complete in March 2021, we will have upgraded almost the entire science centre within the space of three years. The recent opening of V&A Dundee and increased tourists to the city also presents a hugely exciting opportunity for our future growth. We will capitalise on these opportunities by raising our profile within the many sectors in which we work and ensuring Dundee Science Centre is positioned as an integral part of Dundee's exciting Waterfront transformation and city regeneration.

Purpose

The Chair's primary role is to ensure the Board of Dundee Science Centre (DSC) is effective in setting and implementing the organisation's direction and strategy by:

- leading the Board in agreeing and monitoring implementation of the strategy and business plans whilst ensuring that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation
- providing strategic support to the Chief Executive in the development and pursuit of DSC's objectives and its wider aspiration of becoming a five star visitor attraction, widely accessible community hub and lifelong learning resource
- maintaining an independent position and balance between the interests on the Board
- seeking views and facilitating consensus from Board members in the development of DSC's policies.

Person specification

It is anticipated that the 'formal' duties of the Chair are likely to necessitate a commitment of approximately 1 - 2 days per month and applicants must be able to accommodate this with their other activities.

To fulfill this role you will need:

- a successful track record in a senior leadership capacity, within an organisation which operates in one or more of DSC's sectors, preferably with a strong background in a commercially orientated environment
- an empathy for, and interest in advancing public engagement with science and widening access, perhaps having gained your understanding from a former science or community education background
- a good track record of chairing multifaceted (multidisciplinary) panels or committees, with non-executive board membership and practical understanding of the fiduciary duties, responsibilities and liabilities a pre-requisite
- demonstrable depth and rigour in decision making with sound, independent judgment, already having made an outstanding contribution within your industry / professional would be advantageous
- ability to mentor at a senior level and be a 'sounding-board' for the Chief Executive
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to generate openness and trust
- well-developed communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate with relevant stakeholders at all levels, and to influence and raise profile
- an existing network of contacts that would be beneficial to delivery of DSC's function and future goals
- a well-developed understanding of the cultural perspectives of all stakeholders, specifically between private and public sectors.

An awareness of the science centre field would be advantageous, as would practical experience of capital investment projects and developing an organisation's public presence during a period of change.

Core Competencies

Stewardship

Sets and articulates the goals, objectives and strategic framework for DSC, providing independent and objective oversight to effectively guide and monitor the implementation of strategic initiatives, by:

- steering DSC toward its vision, by participating, along with the CEO and other Board members, in setting goals and objectives and by proposing strategies to address problems or seize opportunities
- ensuring DSC anticipates and responds to changes in its environment and monitors effective use of all resources
- identifying risks to ensure appropriate risk management strategies are developed and monitored
- initiating and developing networks and relationships with political, regulatory and sector related individuals and groups, principally at local and scottish levels, but also within the wider UK network
- promoting DSC's vision and strategy to key stakeholders (scientific, political and financial) and wider public as appropriate, and representing DSC at appropriate levels

- assisting the planning, monitoring and delivery of DSCs financial goals.

Ability to Influence

Builds support, consensus and commitment in leading the Board in discharging its responsibilities, by:

- effectively communicating ideas/concepts/plans to Board members outlining both risk and opportunities, ensuring information is available to serve as the basis for comprehensive analysis, discussion and decision-making
- reviewing recommendations and proposals with a critical and strategic perspective
- knowing when to request availability of further information or alternative advice, facilitating constructive, comprehensive debate and compromise to further effective resolution

Corporate Governance

Acts to govern the affairs of DSC to achieve corporate values such as transparency, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability; and to ensure DSC complies with governance requirements of all stakeholders, including statutory and charity requirements, by:

- understanding the accountability of DSCs stakeholder framework and committing to sound governance and financial control practices, including effective monitoring of DSCs progress against agreed plans
- fulfilling fiduciary duties of due diligence and duty of care
- ensuring DSC Board has the range of knowledge, skill and experience in order to fulfil responsibilities, including initiating, leading and overseeing succession planning, selection, appointment, review and development and exit of Board members and CEO
- ensuring the Board conducts its affairs in an open, responsive and accountable manner, acting to the highest ethical standards.

Professional Awareness

Demonstrates depth and breadth of knowledge, skill and experience as appropriate to the role, the organisation and sector in which DSC operates, by:

- being aware of relevant regulatory policies and practices that apply or impact on DSC and its various sectors
- ensuring, along with the CEO and management team, that relevant regulations/policies/ practices are applied and monitored
- having a comprehensive understanding of financial and operational procedures and practices and the factors which impact on DSC and its sectors
- maintaining a current knowledge of the associated stakeholder communities and their issues and interests.

Organisational Effectiveness

Ensures effective organisation of the activities of the Board, by

- developing a constructive relationship with the CEO ensuring a comprehensive overview of the organisation
- chairing meetings effectively, seeking consensus and encouraging participation of all board members
- ensuring alternative representation and reporting procedures are in place and adhered to
- seeking input to, and setting of, appropriate Board meeting agendas
- ensuring accurate records of meeting / decisions are reported, acted upon and reviewed as appropriate
- monitoring overall effectiveness of Board using effective review processes and developing the Board and sub committees
- developing and supporting professional and developmental opportunities for Board members
- assessing and monitoring the overall effectiveness of the CEO, advising on and making recommendations for continuous development opportunities as appropriate.