

Application Pack

Chair, Board of Directors



A sincere thank you for your interest in becoming the next Chair of the Board at Cruse Scotland. We're delighted that you're considering joining us. We hope the information in this pack gives you a good sense of who we are and what the role involves – but if you have any additional questions or would like to chat further, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

CEO

fiona.arnott-barron@crusescotland.org.uk

Outgoing Chair

christine.mclintock@crusescotland.org.uk

Vice Chair

mike.mcglinchey@crusescotland.org.uk

We hope you will feel inspired to put forward an application and very much look forward to hearing from you.



About Us

Cruse Scotland is a unique organisation. Our services offer bereaved people the vital support they so badly need when someone close dies. We have a proven record of providing personalised, quality support to bereaved adults and children across Scotland over the last 60 plus years.

We are Scotland's only open-to-all bereavement charity. As such, we support people of all ages regardless of when the death occurred or the cause of death. More than half of our clients live in areas of multiple deprivation and will regularly contact us following a recommendation from their GP or other NHS specialist.

Our expertise is recognised and valued by the Scottish Government, and we are called upon to provide support following significant traumatic incidents such as the Bin Lorry tragedy in Glasgow, the Baby Ashes issue in Aberdeen and are currently supporting families affected through the challenging situation happening at Ayr and Troon Cemeteries as well as the high profile Covid-19 Inquiry in Scotland.

We are commissioned by Scottish Government to deliver responsive support to any workplace in Scotland in the aftermath of suicide. These facilitated support sessions are delivered on site by a highly qualified team all across Scotland to public, private and voluntary sector organisations.

We deliver specialist counselling and helpline training to around 100 new Cruse Scotland volunteers each year for a variety of roles including counselling support, helpline, children and young people's support and our assessment team. We contribute to the development of Scotland's counselling and psychotherapy workforce through providing placements for counselling students from many Scottish further education institutions. We also provide training to a wide range of external parties including Health and Social Care staff; banking, law and insurance companies and many third sector organisations who are dealing with bereaved people; through the course of their work.

Our Impact

Research shows that there are approximately 60,000 deaths in Scotland each year with around 280,000 people in Scotland being affected by bereavement. In the year 2023-24 Cruse Scotland received over 12,000 calls to its national helpline and webchat support service and delivered almost 6,000 counselling or group support sessions. Whilst this is a very significant achievement, we continue to work tirelessly to develop our services to enable us to reach even more people who need our help. Since the pandemic, demand for our service rose and with an increased intensity of client need.

The positive impact of Cruse Scotland on those we support (in terms of improved mental and physical wellbeing, reduced need for GP and other medical assistance and earlier return to work) is clearly demonstrated by our evidence-based evaluation. A conservative estimate of the direct value of the support provided by Cruse Scotland free of charge to clients is in the region of £2.5m per annum.

Our service evaluation indicates that 69% of clients confirmed they had visited their GP less often following counselling from Cruse Scotland, clearly showing that our work plays a preventative role and results in cost savings for the NHS.



Strategy 2022-2027

About us

Cruse Scotland is the country's dedicated bereavement charity, helping people understand, process and navigate their grief. Our listening and counselling services are available and free to everyone, no matter their age, beliefs, background or relationship to the deceased.

We help bereaved children, young people and adults by offering: Information and advice, a national helpline and webchat service, one-to-one counselling and listening, specialist support for children, young people and families and group support

Our Vision

A compassionate Scotland in which the impact of bereavement and grief is properly understood and supported.

Our Values

Compassionate: We are respectful, warm, kind and here when people need us most. We offer people the time and space to talk when they are ready.

Professional: We are experienced, committed and operate to the highest standard throughout the organisation. Our services are based on best practice, research, and feedback.

Inclusive: We value and develop our diverse team and strive to understand and respond to the needs of all communities across Scotland to make sure no one goes through grief alone.

Collaborative: By working as a team and collaborating with others, we can help build a more empathetic, bereavement-friendly society in Scotland.

Dedicated: Our passion, knowledge and dedication help people live with their grief, one day at a time.



Our Strategic Goals

Sustainability:
To enable sustainability by diversifying our income stream & resource model; to assess and reduce the environmental impact of the organisation.

Bereavement support: to deliver more effective services to more bereaved people.

Positive bereavement health: to promote bereavement support in communities through education & training.

Diversity & Equalities: to better understand and address inequalities & diversity issues affecting Cruse Scotland and our clients.

Influencing: to ensure the experiences of bereaved people influence policy & practice in Scotland.



Our Strategy

Our 5 year strategy was launched in April 2022 and will complete in March 2027.

We have made excellent progress to date across each of our key areas. In 2026 we will focus on our next strategy and your role will be key in developing this.

Our Key Enablers

People Strategy – This strategy will set out how Cruse Scotland will attract, retain, and develop staff and volunteers to accomplish our strategic goals.

External Training Development Plan – This will set Cruse Scotland's plans to grow its training services, which equip individuals and organisations to understand, and cope, with the impact of bereavement and grief.

Communications and marketing plan – This will help raise awareness of our charity, its services and the impact of bereavement and grief.

Environment Audit & Plan – The audit will help Cruse Scotland understand the impact that its services have on the environment and will inform how we reduce the charity's carbon footprint.

Diversity & Equalities Audit & Plan – The audit will provide a holistic view of diversity, equality, and inclusion, allowing the creation of a strategy that will ensure Cruse Scotland's service are truly open to all.

Service user Engagement strategy – This strategy will ensure service users are at the heart of Cruse Scotland's activities, their experience will help shape our services and influence policy matters.

Our Trustees

We currently have 13 trustees who provide diverse professional expertise and guidance, across all aspects of the organisation. Their knowledge and skills span an impressive range including legal, health and social care, counselling, finance and fundraising, IT, and so much more. We currently have a full complement of trustees with no skills gaps. Our trustees are unpaid, however reasonable travel expenses are reimbursed.

Learn more about our Board of Trustees [here](#).

Our Team

It is a testament to the hard work and commitment of those involved in Cruse Scotland that such an enormous amount is achieved through a volunteer team of 200 people who are spread across Scotland.

The organisation would simply not exist without them. The commitment and passion from our volunteers is something very special and highly contagious! The volunteers are supported directly and indirectly by a very committed staff team of 22 (15 WTE) some of whom were volunteers previously... and some who volunteer in addition to working with the charity.... contagious!

There are many opportunities to connect with our volunteer and staff team across the year at training and Volunteers Week events, but most notably at our annual Volunteer Conference held on a Saturday each September.

Time Commitment

The estimated time commitment of this role is approx. one half day per week. As with any role, there are certain times of the year which are busier than others. The majority of time commitments are scheduled well in advance, but there will be occasions when support is required unexpectedly.

Board meetings are held each quarter with dates set at the end of each previous year, they last around 3 hours and alternate between in person and online. The Autumn Board Meeting also includes our AGM. Each trustee is also a member of one of our specialist board committees, related to their professional skillset. The committee remits are Practice Governance & Training; Finance and Audit; and Fundraising and Communications. Each committee meets for online meetings each quarter for 2 hours.

We hold an in-person strategy day once a year to bring together our trustees and staff management team.

Board members are encouraged to attend our Annual Volunteer Conference held on a Saturday in September, and where possible, are invited to engage with celebration events such as Volunteers Week. We deliver an ongoing programme of Continuing Professional Development on a wide range of bereavement and related topics which Board members are welcome to attend if they are of interest.

The dates for all meetings and events are in place for 2025, and dates for 2026 will be scheduled in the Autumn. In person meetings and events tend to be held in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth or Stirling.

Breakdown of Key Tasks and Time Commitment		
Task	Frequency	Mode
Support of CEO	Monthly	In person & Online
Board Meeting Preparation with CEO	Quarterly	Online
Chairing the Board Meeting	Quarterly	In person & Online
Committee Meeting Preparation with CEO	Quarterly	Online
Chairing Committee Meeting	Quarterly	In person & Online
Attendance at ACOSVO peer Chair network	Quarterly	In person & Online
Cruse Scotland Volunteer Events	Quarterly	In person & Online
Strategy Day with Trustees & Management Team	Annual	In person
CEO Appraisal	Annual	In person
Volunteer Conference	Annual	In person

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We would encourage our Chair to be a member of ACOSVO chairs network (or similar) to keep knowledge and skills up-to-date and enjoy the benefits of a peer support network. Click [here](#) for more information.

The Chair also provides a line management role to the Chief Executive through regular meetings, this is typically monthly, as well as conducting an annual appraisal. The Chair is also the first point of contact for the Chief Executive in the event of an emergency situation.



Duties as a Trustee and Chair

The responsibility of a Trustee is to direct the affairs of Cruse Scotland through efficient, effective and accountable governance ensuring that the organisation is solvent, professionally-run and that it acts in accordance with its aims and objectives.

Trustees are responsible and accountable for the overall strategic leadership and direction of Cruse Scotland, safeguarding the assets, reputation and ethos of the organisation and promoting its work. Trustees are expected to uphold our core values. The Chair of the Board of Trustees has the added responsibility of ensuring that others are adhering to their role and responsibilities and be willing to take action if not.

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) has produced guidance information for trustees. The document sets out in detail the duties and responsibilities of charity trustees in Scotland and can be found [here](#).

The role of Chair will include agreeing the agenda in conjunction with the Chief Executive for Board Meetings and Finance and Audit, incorporating specific items requested by other Directors, as necessary. The Chair is required to review all Minutes of Board and Annual General Meetings prior to circulation to the Directors. Following Board approval, the Chair is required to sign all Minutes of Board and Annual General Meetings on behalf of the Board.

What Next?

Interview and Induction

We will undertake the recruitment and selection of the Chair in an open, fair and inclusive manner. We will offer unsuccessful applicants feedback on their application. The successful applicant, once recommended and approved by the Board, will receive a full programme of induction to Cruse Scotland and its people.

Key documents will be shared with you at this stage including core governance documents:

- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Scheduled of Delegated Authorities
- Financial Regulations
- Agreement between Cruse Scotland & Cruse Bereavement Support (England, Wales and N Ireland)
- Meeting minutes from the last year comprising AGM, Board and Committees
- Mission, Vision and Values Statement
- COSCA Code of Ethics and Statement of Practice
- Contact details for all Board Members and staff management team
- Update on progress towards Strategy
- Management accounts

Closing date for applications:

noon on Monday 16 June 2025

Interviews will be held on:

Monday 23 June 2025 in Edinburgh

We very much look forward to hearing from you

Lead with commitment.

Govern with vision.

Champion compassion.



Cruse Scotland is a registered charity SC031600 and company limited by guarantee SC218026. Registered Office: Suite 4/2 Great Michael House, 14 Links Place, Edinburgh, EH6 7EZ.

