

Curious Minds - Board Blueprint

Guiding Principles

- We want our governance to reflect the diverse communities we serve
- We value the contribution of 'lived experience' alongside professional skills
- We want to draw out and utilize areas of expertise to best effect
- We strive for a creative and curious format to meetings wherever possible
- We aim to be non-hierarchical in tone
- We have high aspirations – always striving to do things better and willing to do things differently.

We believe that lived experience and professional knowledge and background are of equal value and importance, and this is fundamental to the recruitment process for new Trustees.

We want the leadership of Curious Minds to reflect the **lived experience** of the children and young people whose lives we aim to improve through our work. Across the Executive Management Team and the 12 seats available on our Board of Trustees we aim for representation from people who:

- have experienced racism
- have experience of living with a disability, or caring for a disabled child
- identify as LGBTQ+
- are parents of school aged children
- come from working class backgrounds
- have experience of living in rural or isolated communities
- are care experienced.

We also want to include a strong mix of the following **professional skills & knowledge** (where there are gaps the board may choose to buy-in the expertise as required):

- accountancy and financial planning – *essential*
- education policy and leadership
- cultural policy and leadership
- children or young people's services, policy and leadership
- fundraising and bid writing
- business and enterprise
- marketing and communications

- data and digital technologies
- media relations and public affairs
- human resources
- legal services

Role of the Board of Trustees

Details of individual Trustees will be listed on Companies House and the Charities Commission. Collectively the Board is responsible for:

- **Being clear** about the people who carry out work on behalf of the charity – trustees, staff, volunteers – establishing and respecting boundaries between the governance role of the board and operational or day to day matters.
- **Ensuring the board operates effectively** – for example, ensuring it receives the right reports and advice, by planning the recruitment and induction of trustees, providing trustees with support and training or carrying out reviews or appraisals of the board's effectiveness.
- **Ensuring the work of the charity is effective, responsible and legal** – for example, by the use of policies and procedures and systems for monitoring and evaluating the charity's work.
- **Safeguarding finances, resources and property** and ensuring they are used to further the charity's purposes – for example, by insuring and documenting assets, maintaining financial systems, monitoring income and expenditure and ensuring the charity is financially sustainable or viable.
- **Being 'accountable'** to those with an interest or stake in, or who regulate the charity – for example, by overseeing the preparation of the annual reports and accounts and consulting with stakeholders.

Approach to Governance

Members of the Board reflect the [Nolan Principles](#) in their work and are committed, supportive and generous with their time and goodwill. They bring integrity, compassion, independent judgement, a willingness to speak their minds and an ability to listen and collaborate with others.

The 7Cs help us live our values.

They guide our planning, recruitment and delivery and provide a framework for self-evaluation and performance management.

- We are **CURIOUS**

We are hopeful for a fairer future. We explore new possibilities and seek out best and next practice, listening and responding to the opinions and ideas of others, especially children and young people.

- **We CARE**

We care deeply about children and young people, the adults who support them, and the places where they live and learn. We embrace, celebrate and champion diversity in all its forms.

- **We are COURAGEOUS**

We are relentless in our pursuit of fair access to creativity and culture for ALL and work to disrupt the status quo. We accept and deliver challenge, especially concerning diversity, inclusion, quality and relevance.

- **We are CONSCIENTIOUS**

We take our leadership role seriously and never take for granted the privilege of being trusted by our funders and partners to do the right thing with the resources we are given.

- **We COLLABORATE**

Partnerships and collaboration are fundamental to how we work. In these times of change and uncertainty, we understand the importance of listening to build meaning and grow collective impact.

- **We are CREDIBLE**

We are evidence driven and always learning. We draw expertise from across education and culture, and skillfully navigate and connect both worlds. We seek out and build alliances with experts who know the stuff we don't.

- **We CELEBRATE**

We celebrate and champion creative and cultural education; the diverse professionals delivering it; and the incredible children and young people it's all for.

Youth Voice, Influence & Leadership

Curious Minds' Board and staff strive to follow the principle of "nothing about us, without us". We use the Lundy Model of participation as a framework to ensure the opinions and influence of children and young people is meaningfully embedded in decision making and planning in relation to matters affecting them.

The Lundy Model of Participation
[Professor Laura Lundy, Centre for Children's rights]

