

New Strategic Board Member Specification

Interface are seeking up to four new members to volunteer to join Interface's Strategic Board from May 2018 who have a passion for innovation and collaboration between businesses and higher and further education to enable economic and social impact. Applications are invited from a wide range of people who have an interest in higher or further education and have a commitment to knowledge exchange in Scotland.

The Interface Strategic Board is formed from representatives of industry, partner University and Research Institutes, funders of knowledge exchange, and other relevant organisations that support business – academic engagement. A variety of skills and experience is necessary to support the wide-ranging mission and priorities of Interface which is outlined in Appendix 1.

It is envisaged that successful candidates will possess:

- A background in industry or academia having held senior positions in higher or further education, business or equivalent organisations e.g. social enterprises
- a passion for innovation
- an appreciation of how higher and further education can support company led R&D and open innovation
- a knowledge of governance systems in the public sector

Time Commitment

The total voluntary time commitment required of Board members is around five days per year. The Board meets on a quarterly basis normally in central Edinburgh. Meetings usually last for a maximum of two hours with further preparation time required in advance of each meeting. Regular attendance is expected and to facilitate this a phone-in facility is available. Strategic Board members may on occasion be called upon to join the short life working groups to progress specific activities or to represent Interface at stakeholder events.

Strategic Board Member benefits

There are considerable benefits to being an Interface Strategic Board Member, both reputational and practical, in terms of building networks and the ability to influence the future of this important area in line with the Scotland CAN DO: An Innovation Action Plan For Scotland¹. Whilst the position is not paid you will receive reimbursement for all reasonable travel and subsistence costs.

How to Apply:

Please forward your CV together with a brief covering letter detailing why you wish to join Interface's Strategic Board and what you will bring to the Board in terms of expertise and experience to siobhan@interface-online.org.uk by **Tuesday 10th April 2018**. Late applications will not be considered.

Selection Process

The indicative time table is as follows:

Activity	Proposed date
Call for new Board members opens	Week of 12 th March 2018
Closing date of applications	Tuesday 10 th April 2018
Interviews if required	16 th – 25 th April 2018
Completion of selection decisions	By Monday 30 th April 2018
Interface Strategic Board meeting	8 th May 2018

A selection panel will consider all applications, this panel will be made up of at least three members of the current Board: <http://www.interface-online.org.uk/about-us/meet-board> . It is expected that any interviews would be

¹ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/01/5181/downloads>

held in April 2018 and may be conducted face-to-face, by telephone or Skype at a time and location convenient to the candidate and the Interview Panel.

Selection Criteria

We value equality and diversity and welcome applications from all sections of the community. All selection criteria will be tested via a combination of CV, covering letter and if necessary interview.

Essential experience/skills include

Experience/skill	What does this mean?
Academic or Business Leader	You have experience of working in senior role within higher or further education, business, industry or social enterprise
Innovation / Research and Development within industry and academia	You have an appreciation of how organisations can benefit from innovation through co-development of R&D [not limited to businesses, higher and further education]
Governance systems in the public sector	You will demonstrate an understanding of public sector organisations including good governance regarding accountability, return on investment and funding cycles.

Desirable experience/skills include Digital Skills, Marketing to SMEs, adoption of academic research within businesses, skills for innovation

General skills & personal qualities include

Skill/quality	What does this mean?
Working collaboratively and constructively with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appreciating the knowledge/skills of colleagues • supporting colleagues whenever possible • sharing knowledge at every opportunity • showing respect for colleagues and stakeholders • striving to achieve consensus • accepting consensus decisions even when it goes against a personal view
Challenging the views of others in a constructive and supportive way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being confident in questioning proposals and debating issues. • putting forward your views in an objective way • not being too entrenched about your own perspective. • helping others to consider their own position in a non-confrontational way
Seeing the ‘bigger picture’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • able to look ahead and consider issues/topics within different timeframes • identifying relevant implications from discussions such as challenges, risks etc. • seeing beyond your own personal experience or specialism and considering other information and perspectives • considers longer term strategic view
Analysing information and making decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using available information to reach conclusions • clearly explain how conclusions have been reached • identifying some of the implications associated with what you are considering – priorities, risks, opportunities etc. • recognising when information is limited and where more information might be needed • being able to balance a number of different considerations

Managing Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of what is required of Interface and the Strategic Board • appreciate the different responsibilities of executive staff and board members • an appreciation of the Strategic board's responsibility for ensuring effective governance • personal experience of change with an understanding of how it should be implemented and the critical factors for success
Communicating Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being focused and succinct in your communication with good listening skills • confident in expressing views and opinions in a group setting • persuasive, able to influence others to your own perspective • able to adapt your style appropriately for different situations

Other information

If you have any queries about this appointment process or would like to find out more about the role, please contact Laura Hegarty on 0131 6036897 or email laura.hegarty@interface-online.org.uk

Appendix 1 - Summary Interface current services

Interface-The knowledge connection for business www.interface-online.org.uk provides Scottish SMEs a central point of access to the expertise available in Scotland's Universities, Research Institutes and Colleges. Our core mission is "to enable business-academic collaborations for economic and societal benefit". The Interface programme is delivered through a partnership of all 23 Scottish Universities and Research Institutions led by the University of Edinburgh (hosted by Edinburgh Innovations Ltd). Funding is provided from Scottish Funding Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise.

A copy of the latest Interface Annual report can be found via this link: <http://www.interface-online.org.uk/news/annual-review-2016-2017>

For many businesses and organisations who wish to collaborate with a University/Research Institutes /College, the challenge can often be to understand what is available and identify the relevant expertise. Through Interface, businesses and organisations suddenly gain access to a significant resource of world leading research, specialist facilities and knowledge, which can bring about major business benefits.

The Interface direct support to businesses includes:

- Stimulation of demand of industry-led innovation projects suitable for academic expertise through proactive marketing
- Bespoke translation and brokerage to match business requirements and academic expertise both for individual and groups of businesses
- Facilitation of collaborative projects between businesses and universities through knowledge sharing and co-creation of solutions to support the development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services
- Supporting multi-party collaborative projects where groups of businesses require academic expertise to solve industry wide challenges that will lead to scale and transformational impact
- Access to specialist facilities within Scotland's Universities, Research Institutions and Colleges with assistance, training and knowledge from in-house trained experts to help companies create, develop, test & analyse
- Demand stimulation for cutting edge and cost-effective technologies through the showcase website University-Technology.com
- Advice and support on innovation related funding streams – through the administration of the Scottish Funding Council/Scottish Enterprise/Highlands & Islands Enterprise Innovation Voucher Programme which provides business with grants of £5,000 - £20,000 to offset the costs of academic partnerships
- Providing impartial evidence to support policy, practice and continuous improvement to a wide range of funders and stakeholders on academic – business collaboration in Scotland and internationally