Interface Strategic Board Principles

Status of the Interface Strategic Board

The Interface Strategic Board serves an advisory role, with a structure and purpose reviewed in 2023 as part of Interface's strategic refresh. The Strategic Board's main function is to provide independent advice, oversee development, and make recommendations on Interface's strategy and operations. The Board has no governance responsibility.

Interface Strategic Board guiding principles

The guiding principles for the Interface Strategic Board emphasise the board's role in overseeing, advising, and supporting the programme's mission. The remit of the board includes several key responsibilities:

1. **Programme oversight:** ensure the programme operates effectively on behalf of all stakeholders, maintaining a broad perspective on strategic priorities and goals
2. **Critical friend role:** act as a supportive but challenging advisor by scrutinising activities and strategic plans to ensure they meet the evolving needs of businesses, academics, stakeholders, and funders
3. **Strategic advancement:** generate new ideas and strategies to help drive the programme forward
4. **Awareness of emerging themes:** identify and respond to emerging trends in knowledge exchange, innovation, and key sectors within Scotland, as well as investment priorities on global, national, and local levels. Advise on aligning programme activities with these developments to maintain relevance and strategic impact
5. **Network engagement:** advise on ways to strengthen engagement with networks critical to industry and knowledge exchange, facilitating robust connections that enhance programme reach and impact
6. **Operational performance oversight:** ensure the programme has the financial and human resources necessary to meet its objectives, with responsibilities including:
    - competent management and sound strategic planning
      providing direction, suggesting initiatives, and proposing events and actions to advance the programme
    - maintaining adequate internal control systems and monitoring, including accounting and record-keeping, to support effective operational performance

These principles guide the board in fostering a proactive, informed, and supportive governance framework that maximises Interface's contribution to Scotland's innovation landscape.

Composition and Operation

The Interface Strategic Board is formed from representatives of industry and SMEs, partner university, colleges and research institutes, stakeholders and other relevant organisations that support business – academic engagement. Members are selected based on their expertise, insights into sectoral and industry agendas, and professional skills. The Board prioritises a systems approach, focusing on contributions rather than comprehensive representation of all sectors.

Interface Strategic Board Principles

Board Leadership and Structure

- The Chair, nominated by Universities Scotland, is a Vice-Chancellor/President with a three-year term, extendable by mutual agreement with the Strategic Board and Chair
- A representative from the host university serves on the Board
- The Board includes members actively engaged in Knowledge Exchange and Innovation (KE&I) from **both** the university and college sectors
- An SFC observer is also part of the Board, as outlined by funding arrangements

Membership Requirements and Meetings

- The Director of Interface serves as the primary contact for the Board
- The Board convenes up to four times per calendar year, focusing on key issues related to policy and practice. Members are expected to attend at least two meetings annually
- In the Chair's absence, meetings are led by the Deputy Chair from the host university
- To proceed, each meeting requires at least 50% attendance from Board members

Collaboration and Flexibility

- The Board collaborates with other sector or innovation groups when relevant and may invite external parties to meetings with the Chair's consent and in consultation with the Interface Director

Term of office

The term of office will span three years, at which point the Strategic Board member will have an opportunity to serve for one more term. However, it is essential that continuity is maintained with no more than one third of the members changing in any one year.

Members may terminate their post in writing (by email or letter) to Chair of board.