

Trustee - Treasurer and Fund-Raising Roles – Role Description

About Sustainability First

We are a small but highly regarded think-tank and charity that promotes practical, sustainable solutions to improve environmental, economic and social wellbeing through thought-leadership - primarily in the areas of energy and water.

Our work focuses on promoting a ‘public interest’ agenda where consumer and environmental issues come together and yet there are often trade-offs between managing near-term pressures against the need for longer-term thinking and actions for sustainability.

We address issues such as policy and regulation, corporate governance, innovation, stakeholder engagement, prices and tariffs, fair treatment for consumers and citizens in vulnerable situations, and the broad agendas for affordability and efficiency. We concentrate on GB practice and policy, but we look more widely in drawing comparisons and best-practice examples.

We are an independent and trusted convenor on complex policy and regulatory issues and have a strong track record of bringing together senior decision makers with wider stakeholders in multi-party projects. We work with public interest groups (consumer, citizen and environmental), companies, government, regulators and academics. We have recently launched a Patron scheme with a view to extending our influence.

We publish discussion papers and reports, hold round tables and conferences and blog and tweet. However, we are not a direct campaigning organisation.

We have no core funding and are funded largely by energy and water companies, regulators and government backed bodies for specific projects. We put together a group of sponsors for each project so that no one sponsor is able to exert undue influence on our work. Our projects typically last for between 18 months and 3 years. We have a healthy level of reserves.

Over the next three years we plan to extend our work into the waste sector and to develop our wider education remit. We also recognise the need to develop our funding model to allow us to strengthen the organisation and build our communication and influencing strategy.

We run an Associate model where Associates work on specific projects. Our only directly employed staff are our Director (who is employed for 2 days a week in this role and also does variable Associate work for us) and our Research Officer who we have just employed on a full time one-year contract. We have use of office space in central London but mostly work from home. For more information, please see: <http://www.sustainabilityfirst.org.uk>

Our values

- We seek to make a difference and exert influence via evidence-based work - from which to promote discussion and debate and influence senior decision makers.
- We are a non-political and non-campaigning charity, independent of any particular lobby. We are non-partisan and non-dogmatic in reaching conclusions, and not seeking pre-determined outcomes.
- Once we reach considered conclusions from our analysis and research, we aim to make our voice heard with policy-makers, regulators, companies and other stakeholders.
- We are strongly motivated by our charitable objectives to educate and inform a wider public on sustainable energy and water policy and practice.

The role

Sustainability First is currently seeking to appoint **two Trustees: A Treasurer; and a Trustee with fundraising experience.**

Key responsibilities as a Trustee include **guiding the strategic direction** of the charity to:

- Ensure Sustainability First is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Comply with Sustainability First's Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Ensure Sustainability First is accountable and is complying with the law.
- Manage Sustainability First's resources responsibly.
- Act in Sustainability First's best interests.
- Act with reasonable care and skill.
- With fellow Trustees, play an active part in the board of the charity. Trustees are also the members of the charity, a company limited by guarantee.

Qualities for Trustees

- Empathy and commitment to the objectives and values of Sustainability First.
- Ability as part of a small team to guide the strategic direction of the organisation.
- Ability to communicate clearly.
- Ability to provide guidance which is proportionate to a very small organisation but one which has a strong national reputation.

We are particularly interested in receiving applications that would help make our Trustee board more diverse.

Trustee positions are not remunerated although reasonable travel expenses will be paid.

Treasurer

As Treasurer, you would take the lead at board level on:

- Making sure Sustainability First keeps proper accounts.
- Reviewing Sustainability First's financial performance.

- Reviewing policies for finance and investment and advising the board accordingly.
- Ensuring that Sustainability First has robust and effective financial controls in place.
- Liaising with the Company Secretary and book keeper and with the charity's independent examiner/auditor.

Specific tasks as Treasurer are likely to include:

- Liaise with the Company Secretary and book keeper to ensure the financial viability of the organisation.
- Make fellow Trustees aware of their financial obligations and take a lead in interpreting financial data to them.
- Regularly report the financial position at Trustee meetings.
- Oversee the production of an annual budget and propose its adoption at the last meeting of the previous financial year.
- Ensure proper records are kept and that effective financial procedures and controls are in place.
- Lead on appointing and liaising with auditors/the independent examiner.

Trustee with fundraising experience

We are also looking to appoint a Trustee with knowledge and experience of fundraising to help us widen our funding model so that, in addition to project funding, we are able to strengthen the core capacity of our organisation and develop our educational, communication and influencing work.

Our current project-based funding and associate model has been very successful at building our work and we have managed to build reserves which we now have available to plough back into strengthening the organisation to better meet our charitable remit.

We are seeking a Trustee able to work with the board and Director to raise additional funds, whether from corporate, philanthropic, foundation / trust sources or otherwise, having regard to the charitable objects and values of Sustainability First.

How to apply

Please send an Email to Claire Froomberg, our Company Secretary, at claire.froomberg@sustainabilityfirst.org.uk, explaining why you are applying to become a Sustainability First Trustee, and for which role, and what experience and skills you would bring to it. Applications should be sent to Claire **by 9am on Monday 11th February**.

We will get back in touch with all applicants to let them know if they have been short listed for interview. Interviews will take place on the 14th March. If you would like a confidential chat about this role in advance of applying, please E Mail our Director, Sharon Darcy, sharon.darcy@sustainabilityfirst.org.uk, and she will get back to you to arrange a call.

Many thanks for your interest in Sustainability First.