



# ATTENBOROUGH LEARNING TRUST

## MEMBER/TRUSTEE (NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR) RECRUITMENT SPECIFICATION

The Attenborough Learning Trust (ALT) is a newly forming multi-academy trust based in central Leicester and aims to open in spring 2019 as a multi-academy trust of primary phase schools. They are seeking Non-Executive Directors (trustees) and Members to join the new trust board at this early formative stage and help guide the start-up and growth plans of the trust. Board meetings will be held in the Highfields and Spinney Hill areas of Leicester.

### About the Trust

The Attenborough Learning Trust (ALT) will open with five infant and primary schools, who are aiming to convert to academies and join the new trust in spring 2019. All the proposed schools are rated Ofsted 'Good' or 'Outstanding', they all have a nursery provision and all serve ethnically diverse communities in the LE2 and LE5 areas of Leicester.

Formed of the following schools, Highfields Primary, Medway Primary, Shenton Primary, Sparkenhoe Primary and Uplands Infants, the trust will be responsible for the education of c.2500 children, employing c.300 staff, with a revenue budget of over £10.5m, operating across 7 sites. Other schools in the area have already shown an interest in joining in the future.

### Plans for the Future

Three key challenges for the trust over the next 12-24 months are:

1. To complete its start-up plans, secure the necessary approvals to establish the MAT company, convert its schools to academies, complete the transfer of all assets to the new trust and to open securely with established partnership policies and processes that will be essential to its success.
2. To develop and manage a steady plan of growth through further primary phase schools in the city which are expected to join the trust within the first 2 years after opening and through the inclusion of specialist education provision (SEND) and/or alternative provision.
3. To build upon the strengths of the founding schools, and in line with its commitment to be outward facing in support of other schools, the trust will also explore the opportunities to develop a teaching school alliance and to sponsor schools that need improvement.

### Trust Ethos & Values

The primary objective of the ALT is to deliver increased learning opportunities for children, broadening the perspective of all young people so that they and their families place no limits on their opportunities and ambitions, in order to achieve improved outcomes and life chances for all.

The schools are committed to the principles of high expectations, raising aspirations and educational standards within a partnership that serves the local communities of the schools. Collaboration, sharing the great practice, expertise and resources that are within the schools to enable all schools to deliver excellent education for all of the children in their communities.

Each school's individual character is valued and the trust's relationships throughout the partnership are characterised by mutual respect, openness and a commitment to the core purpose of the academy trust.

ALT's core ambitions are to ensure that:-

- The **children** in ALT will benefit from increased learning opportunities alongside access to a wider experienced pool of specialist teaching and support staff and access to a wider range of resources resulting in improved outcomes and life chances for all.
- ALT will be orientated around **families** and the **community** with enhanced family support including sharing facilities and expertise, improved access to enrichment and support services and a broader range of community services.
- The **staff** within ALT will benefit from increased opportunities to develop and maintain their high-quality teaching practice by utilising access to greater resources and wider peer networks for sharing best practice.
- ALT **schools** will be able to improve their operational effectiveness and efficiency by sharing support and expertise.
- **Together** ALT schools will be better placed to contribute to the wider system of education across Leicester. Outward facing and forward thinking they will continuously look for opportunities to share experience, support others and develop themselves and others.

## Role Summary

During the start-up phase, the Non-Executive Directors/Trustees and Members will have an opportunity to play a key role in contributing to developing and forming the trust's strategy and governance structure, as well as establishing the relevant committee and delegation structures needed to ensure successful management of the trust. Ultimately, they will sign-off the trust's policies and delegated procedures under which all their schools will operate and enter into the legal agreements with the Secretary of State. All liabilities will be limited, as with all trustees of charities, and people will be expected to demonstrate the [Nolan Principles](#) of people in public office.

### Number of Positions Advertised:

- Up to eight Trustee/Non-Executive Directors
- Up to four Members.

### Roles 1 to 8 – Trustee/Non-Executive Director

The board of ALT and therefore the Non- Executive Directors/Trustees are the statutory governing body of all academies within the trust and are responsible for three core functions: setting the direction of the trust, holding the executive to account and ensuring financial probity.

The trust board manages the company by delegating authority: through the staffing structure of the organisation; by appointing board committees and local governing boards (committees) (LGBs) with specific delegation of governance functions; and by adopting policies and procedures which set out how staff, LGBs and board committees function. The role of the Non- Executive Directors/Trustees as a trust board, is therefore one of scrutiny, challenge and support, guiding the executive in the running of the trust.

As both a start-up company/charity and to support its ambitions, ALT needs to ensure the board is made up of the right balance of individuals from business disciplines and the community with skills and expertise of an appropriate scale and calibre in a range of different fields.

The competencies required for this role include:

**Essential** *(due to multiple roles, candidates may be accepted who possess one or more of the skills below)*

- CFO/ Finance
- HR / Organisation Development
- Legal/Compliance
- Education leadership/ School Improvement
- Real Estate
- Turnaround
- Change Management
- Risk
- Communications/Branding/Marketing
- IT/Technology
- Entrepreneur/Founder
- Audit
- Health / Social care

**Desirable**

- Trustee/Non-executive Director
- Corporate Governance
- Growth Management
- Chair
- Turnaround

## Person Specification

The trust is interested in candidates from commercial, third sector or public sector businesses as well as those who have connections with the local community. Candidates must be able to demonstrate their experience in one of more of the above skills/disciplines. The appropriate individuals will be expected to maintain focus on what's best for the trust and its pupils. Suitable candidates will have experience of developing strategy across an organisation and challenging management in a constructive manner. Candidates must be able and willing to hold others to account for their professional practice, to understand and analyse performance data and to take appropriate risks and consider dynamic and innovative options.

## Time Commitment

Once established, trust board meetings are expected to be once each half-term (i.e. 6 per year). If the trustee is also part of a central sub-committee, this is envisaged to require up to a further six meetings per year.. The new board members will be expected to advise on the effective and efficient running of the trust.

During the set-up phase, newly appointed trustees may require or be invited to attend the Project Steering and Interim Board (PSIB). These meetings may be 3-6 weekly until the trust is established.

Once, the trust is established. meetings will be timed to suit the majority of trustees and generally last up to 2 hours. Some time to read papers/prepare will normally be expected.

## Roles 1 to 4 – Member

The role of the Members of ALT is to ensure the appropriate running of the trust through the appointment of the Non-Executive Directors/Trustees for the trust; and by holding the trust board to account by considering its compliance with both charity law and company law, appointing the auditors for the trust, and receiving the trust's annual report and accounts.

Members are expected to carry out their business effectively, including induction of new Members, a commitment to the continued professional development of Members and, as the only body able to amend the articles, to consider the appropriate development of the trust board and its governance model. Members may also be asked to act as an advocate for the trust and to support the trust board's role of giving clear strategic direction to its academies.

The competencies required for this role include:

**Essential** *(due to multiple roles, candidates may be accepted who possess one or more of the skills below)*

- Non-executive/ Trustee
- Corporate Governance
- Strategic
- Legal/Compliance
- Corporate business / CEO

**Desirable**

- Chair
- Education Leadership

## Person Specification

Members must display a commitment to the trust and its articles. Appropriate individuals will come from within and outside of the local community and have held leadership positions within either commercial business, third sector or public sector organisations. They will have effective communication skills, good independent judgement and an ability and willingness to hold others to account for their professional practice. Candidates are expected to show an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Members within company and charitable law.

## Time Commitment

Once established, three meetings per year (one per term of around 2 hours).

During the set-up phase, newly appointed members may require or occasionally be invited to attend the Project Steering and Interim Board (PSIB). These meetings may be 3-6 weekly until the trust is established but it is unlikely members would be needed to attend all PSIBs.

## Location of Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held in the Highfields and Spinney Hill areas of Leicester.

## Governance Structure

The group currently operates through a PSIB (Project Steering and Interim Board), which has been established to enable ALT to develop its MAT plans and take forward its proposals. The PSIB is currently made up of school representatives (Headteachers and Governors) and is supported by specialist advisors.

Depending on the starting dates for newly recruited Members and Trustees/Non-executive Directors, candidates may be able to join the PSIB during the start-up development and conversion phase over the next 6-12 months (approx.)

### **Proposed governance structure once open -**

There will be a Members board of 5 of which one will be the chair of the trust board.

There will be a Trust Board of 11. Each school within ALT will have a local governing board (committee) which will have powers delegated to it from the board.

## Background on Academy Trusts

Academy schools, which are charities run independently of local authority control, now account for 73% of secondary schools and 28% of primaries – and their number is growing all the time.

Many of these schools are grouped together as multi-academy trusts (MATs). There are currently 726 multi academy trusts of 3+ schools. If the schools are to fulfil their potential, the trusts need non-executives (known in charity law as trustees) to bring a wide range of skills and experience to help guide strategy, ensure their ambitions can be soundly financed and keep their schools up to the mark delivering for their pupils.

“Academy boards must be ambitious for all children and young people and infused with a passion for education and a commitment to continuous school improvement that enables the best possible outcomes. Governance must be grounded in reality as defined by both high-quality objective data and a full understanding of the views and needs of pupils/students, staff, parents, carers and local communities. It should be driven by inquisitive, independent minds and through conversations focused on the key strategic issues which are conducted with humility, good judgement, resilience and determination.”

*Source: Governance Handbook, Department for Education (2017)*

Trusteeship is a voluntary, unpaid role for people who have the energy and skills to make a real contribution to shaping the future of our schools. You do not need to have any specialist knowledge of education.

## Applications

If you are interested in applying for a role with the trust, please send your CV and a short expression of interest to the schools Partnership Project Manager Shelley Whitehead at [shelley@lockhouseconsulting.co.uk](mailto:shelley@lockhouseconsulting.co.uk).

Please note: candidates should live within reasonable travelling distance of the trust and/or have a link with the region.

## Key Dates

We strongly recommend applying as early as you can to have the best possible chance of being considered as we may change the closing date if we have received sufficient applications. Applicants should be aware of the following key dates in the recruitment process –

**Deadline for applications: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018**