



Earlham
Institute

Decoding Living Systems

Trustee Director Legal

RECRUITMENT PACK



Introduction from Professor Peter Holland FRS, Chair of the Board.

We have all heard how DNA sequencing and 'data science' has the potential to transform our world, giving benefits to human health, our economy and the environment. If we can understand the genes that shape the biology of humans and other species, surely we can harness this knowledge to provide sustainable food, tackle pathogens, safeguard our health, understand and protect our environment, and even design new industrial products. The Earlham Institute is making that journey happen. But it is not an easy journey, and it requires expert research, world class facilities, dedicated staff, a sound funding base and a supportive, diverse and positive-thinking Trustee Board.

I am excited by the breakthroughs being made by scientists at the Earlham Institute and collaborators, both on the internationally renowned Norwich Research Park and beyond, and how these discoveries are starting the journey to real-world application. I could mention the genomic sequencing work underpinning breeding of new strains of wheat suitable for a changing planet or tilapia fish for food in Africa, or perhaps the futuristic-sounding Air-seq project to monitor the atmosphere for arrival of new pathogens. I could mention astonishing advances in synthetic biology which merge genetics with design-led engineering, or the advances in sequencing genomes of single cells; both are new frontiers in biology. These research directions also build on the Earlham Institute's computational expertise, recognised as critical to the UK science base. Finally, it would be remiss not to reflect on how the Earlham Institute rapidly applied its expertise to tackling the Covid-19 pandemic, providing one of the most effective asymptomatic mass testing services in the UK to support the NHS and the local community.

It has been my privilege to Chair the Board of Trustees of the Earlham Institute: a group of talented individuals from different backgrounds, each bringing their own skills and knowledge. In December 2024 Professor Deborah Smith will take over the Board Chair role as I rotate off the Board.

We have a Board that shares the vision of the Earlham Institute and is keen to support, guide, and challenge the Director, Professor Neil Hall, and his superb team. We hope to attract a new Board Member who shares our belief in the genuine importance of this work, and who will bring best practice and strong legal skills and experience to help ensure good commercial understanding, be part of the Audit Committee, and complement the perspectives of the wider Board to ensure effective leadership and governance.



Professor Peter Holland FRS
Chair





Who we are.

The Earham Institute is a hub of life science research, training, and innovation focused on understanding the natural world through the lens of genomics.

Embracing the full breadth of life on Earth, our scientists specialise in developing and testing the latest tools and approaches needed to decode living systems and make predictions about biology.

The Earham Institute is based within the Norwich Research Park and is one of eight institutes that receive strategic funding from UKRI Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), as well as support from other research funders.

earham.ac.uk



The Earham Institute is a registered charity (No.1136213), strategically funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.



Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The Earlham Institute is strongly committed to being a force for change with reference to furthering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. We welcome applications from anyone regardless of ethnicity, heritage, disability, gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic background or other differences.

We are committed to inclusive working practices.

During the application process we commit to:

- paying for childcare and care costs whilst you are at interviews
- paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews
- making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them
- providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download
- offering a guaranteed first stage interview with Inclusive Boards for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.

You can find more about our commitment to [Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Accessibility](#) on our website.

If there is anything else you are concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.





Our vision and mission.

We are building a future where the biology of any organism can be understood by analysing its genome.

The Earlham Institute's mission is to decode the scale and complexity of living systems so we can understand, benefit from, and protect life on Earth.

Bringing together multi-disciplinary expertise in the life sciences with engineering, computational science, and biotechnology, we are:

- Answering fundamental and important biological questions
- Pioneering the development of new technology and enabling resources
- Using our unique skills, knowledge, and infrastructure to address global challenges
- Training the next generation of scientists and upskilling the community
- Collaborating with academia and industry to realise the impact of our science
- Engaging with policy makers, the public, and stakeholders about our science

To read more, see

earlham.ac.uk/our-vision-and-mission

The EI Board structure.

The EI's Board is currently chaired by Professor Peter Holland. There are currently nine non-executive Trustee Directors; their collective experiences include: scientific research, commerce, finance and law.

Full details of the current Board members can be found at <http://www.earlham.ac.uk/governance>.

This recruitment is to replace the current Trustee Director with legal experience on the Board, when Amanda Tagg rotates off the Board in December 2024.

Duties and responsibilities of a Trustee Director.

The responsibilities of Trustee Director individually, and therefore collectively as a Board of Trustee Directors, include:

- To uphold the fiduciary duty invested in the role of trustee.
- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document, and always acts in its best interests.
- To ensure that the organisation uses its resources exclusively in furtherance of its charitable purposes.
- To exercise their duty of care, using their professional skills where appropriate and / or taking appropriate professional advice in all matters where there may be material risk to the charity.
- To ensure sound financial management and the long-term stability of the organisation, the protection and management of the Charity's property, and the proper investment of the Charity's funds.
- To contribute actively to the Board's role in agreeing strategy, policy, the overall organisational budgets, target-setting and evaluation of performance and supporting the Director and EI staff in their implementation.
- To safeguard the organisation's reputation and values and to understand, be committed to, and actively promote its core objectives.
- To avoid any personal conflicts of interest and to observe the organisation's conflict of interest policy.
- To prepare for, and participate in Board meetings and actively contribute to decision-making at such meetings.
- To support colleagues on the Board in carrying out their duties and use any specific knowledge / experience to help the Board reach sound decisions.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To observe fully the Trustee Code of Conduct, participating actively in systems for performance review and continually strive for the highest standards of governance.

About the role and person specification.

The Legal Trustee will:

- Have extensive experience of a commercial area of practice and be practising in that field.
- Have a solid understanding of matters of governance, but does not need to be an expert in this field.
- Is interested and curious in the work the EI undertakes.
- Able to communicate well and influence at a senior level.

- Have a number of years' experience as a member of executive or non-executive boards or committees.
- Perform relevant duties in the best interests of the charitable purposes of EI.

The successful applicant will be:

- A qualified solicitor.
- Extensively experienced in their field.
- Able to advise on best practice and legal policies relevant to EI.

In addition to the specific requirements listed above, the following general Trustee Director specification applies –

The new appointee should be sensitive to the demands of trusteeship, including:

- Awareness of, and sensitivity to, the political environment in which the organisation is operating.
- Strategic and creative thinker.
- Commitment to maintaining strict confidentiality concerning all EI matters that are not in the public domain.
- Sound independent judgement.
- Ability to assimilate and interpret wide-ranging types of information, including financial information.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship and, specifically, of the distinction within charitable companies of the role of the Board and its responsibility to set and monitor the strategic direction of the organisation, compared with the executive functions of staff for implementing strategy and managing the day-to-day operation of the charity.
- Commitment to the trustees' responsibility for ensuring that the Health & Safety Policy enables the company to fulfil its legal duties and emphasises the determination to manage its activities so that standards of health and safety are continuously improved.
- Commitment to leading an institute that values, encourages and supports equality and diversity of its Board, staff, students and visiting workers.
- Commitment to the "Seven Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership (Nolan Principles).
- Commitment to follow the Good Governance Code of Practice for the Voluntary and Community Sector and EI's governance guidance.
- Ability to work as a member of a team.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to fulfilling the role.

Additional information.

- **Location:** Board meetings are held at our offices, at Norwich Research Park or virtually.
- **Time commitment:** The Board usually meets around four times each year (twice in person and twice virtually), plus an away day. Meetings are usually scheduled for a half day with Board Members invited to attend dinner the night before the meeting when held in person. Board members are also expected to sit on at least one other committee and should be available for consultation and support outside of meetings; however the overall commitment is not expected to exceed 10 full days each year.
- **Conflicts of interest:** All candidates will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest. This will be examined to see if an actual conflict exists.
- **Terms of appointment:** Three-year term, with the possibility of renewable once.
- **Successful candidate:** The candidate offered the role will need to provide the Institute with relevant information to ensure they are able to be appointed to the role of UK Charity Trustee and Company Director. More information will be provided to the successful candidate.
- **Remuneration:** This role currently receives a small remuneration (£3,750) with special permission of the Charity Commission. This rate can be varied or removed by an annual decision by the Trustee Board, and will be confirmed to the candidate on offer of appointment. Reasonable expenses will be paid, and the Charity will book and pay directly for most travel and subsistence related to the role.

How to apply.

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of The Earlham Institute. If you wish to apply for this position, please provide the following by **23.59 on 1 September 2024**:

- A detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- A covering letter (maximum 2 sides) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the specification. Please note that the covering letter is important and will be assessed as part of your full application.
- Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call to discuss the role, please email Earlham@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0207 267 8369.

Please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities to apply online or send your CV and cover letter to Earlham@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

Key Dates:

- Deadline: **1 September**
- First Board Meeting: **18 March 2025**



Norwich Research Park.

We are partner Institute of the
Norwich Research Park.

Situated on a campus that stretches across
1 kilometre, the Norwich Research Park is a
world leading location for research, innovation
and business.

The park is home to six research organisations:
the Earlham Institute, John Innes Centre, The
Sainsbury Laboratory, the Quadram Institute,
the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital,
and the University of East Anglia.

For more on Norwich Research Park see:

norwichresearchpark.com





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