

CONVERGE IS LOOKING FOR EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN THE STRATEGIC ADVISORY BOARD

BACKGROUND

Converge is Scotland's leading entrepreneurial development programme for staff, students and recent graduates of all Scottish Universities and Research Institutes.

We help the most innovative and creative thinkers from academia to realise their entrepreneurial ambitions by offering generous cash prizes, mentoring and a programme of business support that turns fledgling businesses into investor-ready companies.

Converge does not have a separate legal structure but is 'hosted' by Heriot Watt University who are the legal employer of its Management Team and provide administrative support.

GOVERNANCE AND DIRECTION

Converge has a two-tier governance structure comprising:-

*- A **Strategic Advisory Board** which is responsible for setting the strategic direction of Converge;*

and

*- A **Steering Group** which is responsible for oversight of operational issues, primarily overseeing the delivery of the annual programme, and for ensuring close liaison with all HEI Partners upon whom it relies for its pipeline of applicants.*

An independent Chair is appointed to chair meetings of the Strategic Advisory Board and the Steering Group and to provide general support and guidance to the Director.

THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

The role of the Strategic Advisory Board is to provide advice and guidance about the strategic direction of Converge, to ensure that it remains aligned with the interests of its various stakeholders and to assist in identifying emerging challenges and opportunities.

We are seeking to grow a Board reflective of the full range of external perspectives, bringing experience at the interface between business and universities, in business, in policy and funding, and who have experience of university commercialisation, investment, international business, private sector and start-up activities.

As an Advisory Board member you will be asked to contribute as follows:

- *Act as a 'Champion' of Converge both within their own Institutions and more generally in relevant policy making circles, such as Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee, Scottish*

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Funding Council and Principals' meetings, Skills & Enterprise Review Board, within the business community etc;

- *Assist in securing and influencing commitments from the various stakeholders and potential funders of Converge;*
- *Advise on future issues and opportunities and on possible risks to the future sustainability of the Converge programme;*
- *Provide guidance on the future strategic direction of Converge including, but not limited to, enhanced programme, investment opportunities for Alumni, corporate sponsorship, internationalisation and expansion;*
- *Participate in horizon scanning to assist in long-term planning and identify long-term opportunities and issues;*
- *Provide general specialist professional guidance and support for strategic initiatives based on the professional background and experience of the individual Member concerned such as Corporate engagement and internationalisation; and*
- *Provide such other guidance to the Director and the team as may be required;*
- *Liaise with the Steering Group to allow flow of information and efficient decision making.*

In addition to the above duties, the appointed Chair will also:

- *Chair all the Strategic Advisory Board and Steering Group meetings;*
- *Provide professional guidance and support to the Director and the team as may be required;*
- *Have the ability to influence the Scottish Government, Scottish Funding Council, Economic Development Agencies and Universities to guarantee continuous financial support to Converge;*
- *Support the preparation and approval of the Business Plan.*

All members will be asked to serve for an initial term of three years which may be extended for one/two additional periods of one year if mutually agreed.

The Strategic Advisory Board meets four times a year and meeting dates are normally fixed six months in advance. Meetings do not generally last longer than two hours. The role is honorary but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Appointment process:

If interested in joining the Converge Strategic Advisory Board or want to know more about our long-term strategy, please contact the Director for an informal initial conversation. Claudia.cavalluzzo@convergechallenge.com

The interested candidates will meet the Director in person and, if shortlisted, will be interviewed by the Converge appointment panel composed of Board members who are responsible for the final appointment.

Candidates will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest.

Converge welcomes applications from under-represented groups.