

Call For an Independent Trustee-Chair of Risk & Compliance Committee

JANUARY 2026

The Start Network Board is seeking a new Independent Trustee-chair of Risk & Compliance committee to join the Board who will play a leading role in shaping our strategy and achieving our ambitious mission at a critical point in our journey. The candidate is also expected to chair the Risk and Compliance committee.

This brief contains more information on this appointment and instructions on how to apply. The closing date for applications is 22nd February 2026.

START
NETWORK



WHAT IS START NETWORK?

Our purpose is to be a catalyst for system-level change that improves the efficiency, effectiveness and ethics of humanitarian action. We do this by working as a network to develop, test & spread new ways of collaborating and resourcing locally-led crisis response and anticipation.

Our current membership is made up of nearly 100 local, national and international NGOs based all around the world. We also support 10 national and regional hubs made up of civil society organisations and NGOs as our vehicle for devolving power, resources and accountability.



OUR SOLUTIONS

DECENTRALISING & LOCALLY-LED ACTION:

Shifting power and resources and decentralising decision-making to locally led networks and organisations.

EARLY & RAPID FINANCING:

Building a global financing system that reduces risk, anticipates, and acts ahead of predictable crises.

COMMUNITY-LED INNOVATION:

Incentivising innovative, locally led, and contextual solutions and learning from them together with people affected by crises.

For more information about Start Network and to read about our 2024-2026 strategy, please visit our [website](#).

OUR VALUES

WE PUT PEOPLE FIRST:

Communities come first in our decision-making and programming.

WE ARE BRAVE:

We have great ambition and are willing to explore new things and take risks to achieve it.

WE OPERATE COLLECTIVELY:

We leverage the value of working as a network, sharing risk and resources, and learning together.

WE ARE INCLUSIVE:

We see the value in diverse perspectives and work to remove the barriers that prevent voices from being heard.

WE ARE OPEN:

We work transparently and with integrity, building mutual trust in all levels of our work, from governance to programming.

WE ARE ETHICAL:

We behave and operate based on key principles of anti-racism, non-discrimination, and anti-colonialism. This is a work in progress.

NEW TRUSTEE NEEDED

We are seeking to appoint an Independent Trustee-chair of Risk & Compliance Committee to join the Board of Start Network. As an Independent Trustee, you will contribute external expertise, objectivity, constructive challenge and strategic insight to support effective governance and decision-making. This role plays a key part in ensuring our Board remains balanced, accountable, and aligned with our vision of a locally led humanitarian system.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At Start Network, we are committed to building strong leadership that reflects gender diversity. We strongly encourage applications from women, who remain underrepresented at the governance level across many sectors, including humanitarian and nonprofit organisations.

We believe that inclusive leadership leads to better decision-making, stronger governance, and greater impact. Women bring essential perspectives that challenge conventional thinking and help shape strategies that are more equitable and relevant. This is not a box-ticking exercise; it is a core part of our commitment to transformational leadership and meaningful change in the humanitarian sector.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

The Trustees will serve a three-year term, extendable to a maximum of two terms. On completion of the first term, a performance evaluation will take place, and with mutual agreement between the trustee and Board-Chair, the second term will be renewed. This is an unpaid voluntary role for which reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed, in accordance with Start Network policies.

You will be required to attend a minimum of three out of four Board meetings per year, one of which will be face-to-face in London, with the rest being virtual. You will also be expected to attend the annual Start Network Assembly meeting and will also be expected to chair the Risk and Compliance committee. The committees meet quarterly and virtually. The Board and committees may also convene additional meetings if necessary. There may also be ad hoc answering of queries or suggestions to the CFOO, Directorate and Head of Assurance.

Overall, the expected time required by Trustees during the course of the year is between 8-9 days - including time spent preparing for and attending Board and Committee meetings.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Strategic vision, and a passion for change in the humanitarian sector
- Commitment to Start's objectives around locally-led action, fast and early funding, and innovation.
- Ability to work cooperatively with other Board and Committee members and the Start Network team.
- Commitment to the values and objectives of the Start Network
- Ability to act in the best interest of the Start Network, not as a representative of any group, and to ensure conflicts of interest are managed appropriately.
- Willingness to commit additional time as required.
- Able to understand and communicate in English. Doesn't have to be a native speaker.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Risk management expertise
- Understanding of safeguarding
- Policy Oversight and Assurance
- Strategic Risk Thinking
- Incident Management and Escalation
- Having the ability to analyse complex issues
- Leadership skills
- Experience in internal audit, compliance, legal, or risk advisory roles.
- Tact and diplomacy, combined with a willingness to challenge
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness, and the ability to respect confidentiality.
- Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion within the workplace
- An appetite to lean into risk and away from being risk averse

DESIRABLE

- Charity, public sector, or nonprofit board experience.
- Understanding of specific safeguarding issues relevant to the charity's beneficiaries
- Openness to thinking beyond traditional aid system risk and compliance approaches



THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Start Network Board is made up of 7 member Trustees elected by the Network membership. 5 nominated Trustees are chosen based on their skills and expertise – 4 of whom must be independent, and 1 can be either independent or a member.

Independent: The independent Board members ensure that the Board is working in the wider interests of the Network and the sector, guarding against individual members' vested interests, and bringing in additional expertise.

Members: Board members who are elected from the Start Network's member agencies are chosen as individuals and are expected to act in the best interest of the entire membership.



START NETWORK GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

ASSEMBLY

Highest governing body, representing all members

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Oversees the implementation of the strategy, and responsible for the governance of the organisation-ensuring it is effectively run, and is meeting its mission

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Oversees membership issues in the network and advises on the evolution of the hubs.

HR COMMITTEE

Advises the Board on the organisation's HR and remuneration frameworks.

START FUND COMMITTEE

Responsible for the operational and strategic oversight of the Start Fund.

START READY COMMITTEE

Responsible for the operational and strategic oversight of Start Ready.

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Oversees the management of finances, treasury and reserves policies, and external audit.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Oversees Board composition and election of new trustees.

RISK & COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Oversees our risk strategy and management, reporting and compliance with UK regulations.

**EACH COMMITTEE IS EITHER CHAIRED BY A TRUSTEE,
OR HAS A SEAT FOR A TRUSTEE REPRESENTATIVE**

HOW TO APPLY

Start Network is partnering with Red Sea Executive Search for the appointment of this position. Any informal expression of interest or questions about the position not answered by this document can be directed to them in the first instance by writing to Tim Wingrove at applications@redseasearch.com

To apply please submit the following via Red Sea's website at this link:- <https://www.redseasearch.com/job/trustee-risk-and-compliance/>

- CV of no more than 3 pages.
- Statement of interest addressing the following:-
 - Your suitability for the role
 - Your motivation for and ability to serve as a Board member
 - Your vision for the Start Network going forward.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

● **22 FEBRUARY 2026**

Deadline for applying.

● **MARCH 2026**

Interview Process (Governance & Nominations committee)

● **25 MARCH 2026**

Board Approval

● **APRIL 2026**

Member's Approval either through the written resolution or tabled resolution at the Extra-ordinary General Meeting.

The results of the vote will be declared to the members and the nominees.

The Start Network team will undertake standard vetting checks on the new Trustees to ensure they are fit to serve on the Board

● **APRIL/MAY 2026**

The Trustees will go through an induction process, led by the Start Team. This will include conversations with the Chair of the Board, the CEO/CFOO and senior members of the team, as well as undergoing safeguarding training and UK Trustee Essentials training. Any costs will be covered by the Start Network.





WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!

KEY RESOURCES

[The 2024 – 2026 Start Network Strategy](#)

[Start Network's 2024 Annual Report](#)

[Start Network's Trustee Handbook](#)

[The full Terms of Reference of the Risk and Compliance Committee](#)

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