Background

LINK was formed in 1987 as the forum for Scotland’s voluntary environmental bodies. Twenty-eight years on, there are over thirty-five member bodies representing a wide spectrum of environmental concerns and sharing the common goal of a sustainable Scotland. Collective membership of LINK stands at almost half a million people - more than the combined membership of Scotland’s political parties.

LINK’s strategy is set by the members every three years. The network is managed on a day to day basis by Chief Officer, supported by an active Chair and Board of Trustees and a small core staff. Policy work is taken forward largely by task forces of interested member bodies each led by a Convenor. LINK is recognized by decision-makers in Scottish Government, the Scottish Parliament and across Scotland’s wider policy community as the collective voice of Scotland’s environment community.

Whilst the focus of most of LINK’s work is Scotland and very much around decisions made in Holyrood, LINK networks with sister bodies in the UK and takes an active interest in promoting the environment at Westminster and in Europe and in lobbying for change at these levels. LINK is a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the European Environmental Bureau, Civilscape and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

More information about LINK and its member bodies, their collective work and policy outputs is available at [http://www.scotlink.org](http://www.scotlink.org) and [http://www.savescottishseas.org](http://www.savescottishseas.org).

The President’s remit

LINK seeks an individual with relevant experience and an interest in supporting the organization in developing wider relationships to take over in autumn 2015 as President.

The emphasis of the presidential role is ambassadorial, helping the network to develop its profile and its upward and outward representation with the economic, social and other sectors beyond the environment. As this external role is complemented by a strong internal management role in the Chair, the requirement for the President to invest time in internal meetings can be constrained. LINK Board and Chief Officer will liaise with the President to ensure s/he is au fait with LINK positions, internal issues and aware of aspirations for developing relationships. (The Chair convenes Board and most LINK plenaries, supports staff and leads regular contact with Ministers, and strategic liaison with agencies with a remit for the environment.)

The President’s remit is largely focussed around:

- Helping to identify openings with new audiences to enable LINK to engage in debate beyond the network’s traditional focusses
- Helping to build relationships with new audiences and advising LINK on how to establish representation in arenas beyond the traditional; LINK members are aware of the importance of building common cause, and voice, with others across the policy community
- Attending certain functions for LINK where it’s important that the movement is represented generically at a high level and where LINK’s Trustees or task force Convenors would not normally carry out that role
- Occasionally leading certain high-level LINK delegations
- Attending AGM and Congress, perhaps occasionally hosting other LINK events
Person specification

Amongst the qualities and experience sought are:

- Understanding of and evidence of engagement with sustainable development
- A strong public profile and experience of public life
- Empathy with environmental issues
- Good working understanding of the voluntary sector in Scotland
- Political credibility, authority, leadership abilities
- Very good communication and negotiation skills
- Comfort in the role identified above and sensitivity to the relationship LINK has with member bodies and their CEOs
- Confidence and humour
- Operating from a Scottish base

How the role works

Handover with the current incumbent in the role is proposed from summer 2015.

At an early opportunity LINK will ensure introductions to heads of LINK’s member bodies, LINK Trustees, staff and task force Convenors; and as opportunity and need arises, to other figures with whom the movement works. LINK will support the President in developing relationships internally, with Trustees, task force Convenors, and where appropriate with leaders of the member bodies.

The President will have access to all the regular information going to members and Board, to public statements, publications, development plans. S/He is welcome at internal LINK meetings and can be provided with additional briefings as needed.

In keeping with the intention that the President would seek to represent the generic objectives of LINK (rather than technical/policy issues), approaches made to the President directly should be discussed with Chair or Chief Officer as these arise, to determine how they should be responded to.

The office of LINK President is an honorary one but expenses are paid.

This is subject to re-election by members annually at the AGM and is probably most usefully seen as a minimum three-year commitment.

Details of LINK - members, strategy, current concerns, briefings and publications

All at www.scotlink.org and www.savescottishseas.org

Further information from:

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