



Chair

Appointment Brief

Summer 2021



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of SLBI. We hope that you will find this an interesting and rewarding role. NB This is a voluntary role

The SLBI has a vision of everybody having opportunities to learn about and deepen their engagement with plants, both for their own benefit and that of the planet.

Our mission is to be somewhere that people of all ages and backgrounds can develop and share a passion for plants together with understanding how plants help to sustain human life, expressed as: *Discovering plants, enriching lives, sustaining the future.*

We have recently finalised and begun to implement our new business plan. Its purpose is to embed the SLBI – a unique botanic garden and resource in an inner-city setting - more firmly into both local and scientific communities.

Our plan will assist the SLBI to attract and engage with more people from the local community, which is increasingly young and ethnically diverse, and to also have a greater geographical reach through digitalisation. It will give the SLBI increased opportunities to educate more people more widely, including about the healing effect of plants, their contribution to life on the planet, climate change and inequalities and colonial legacies in botany. It will improve our scientific credentials and our collaborations with botanists and other professionals.



The SLBI Business Plan 2021-2026 has four strategic aims.

- To retain our current audiences and broaden our audiences in line with local demographics
- To make SLBI's building and collections more physically and intellectually accessible
- To maintain existing, and build new partnerships and collaborations locally, regionally and nationally to fulfil our aims
- To make the SLBI more financially resilient and sustainable

The SLBI has a rich history. It was set up in 1910 to promote, encourage and facilitate the science of Botany and related sciences and their practical applications.

We are now recruiting a Chair of the Trustee Board to work with us to maximise the impact of the plan, as well as leading the Board and ensuring that we fulfil our mission.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Michael Clarke and Marlowe Russell
Acting Co-Chairs



Chair's Role

The Chair provides leadership and direction to the SLBI's trustees and staff, enabling them to fulfill their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the SLBI.

The SLBI is a registered charity and a limited company. It is a membership organisation, whose trustees, including the Chair are elected from the membership for 3-year terms at the AGM. At the end of the 3-year term, rotating trustees may stand for re-election.

The Chair must be a trustee elected in accordance with the SLBI Memorandum and Articles. They shall be appointed by the trustees to serve as Chair for the current term of their trusteeship.

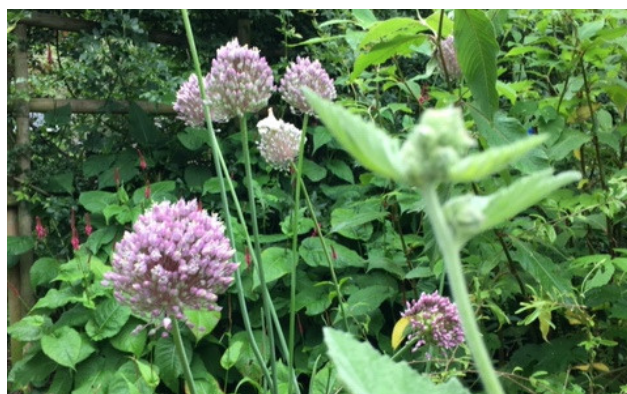
The Chair will work with the President, whose responsibilities lie with the plant scientific and educational integrity and public profile of the charity.

Accountability

The Chair is accountable to Trustee Board and the Members of the SLBI and, as a trustee, more generally to the Charity Commission and the public at large.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Chair shall be the period of their three-year trusteeship. They will be eligible for reappointment as Chair if elected to serve as a trustee for a further term.



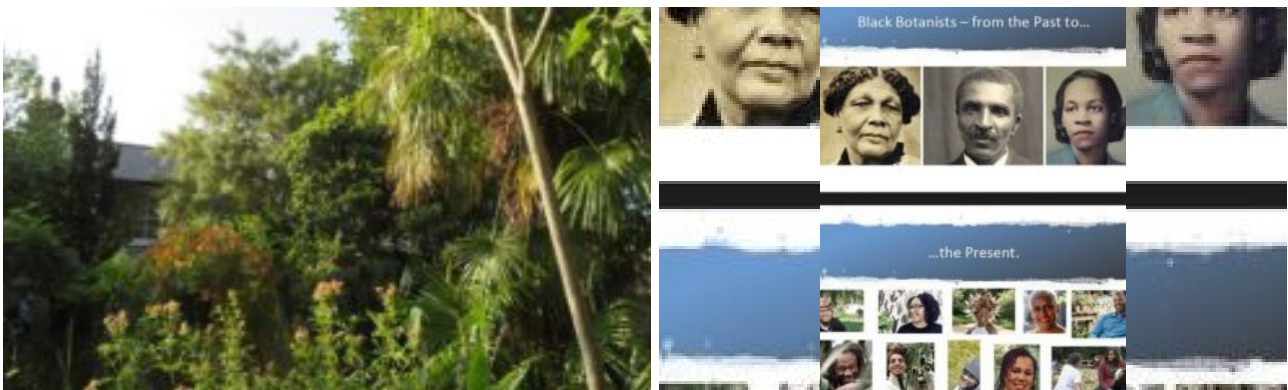
Chair's Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Provide leadership to the Board and ensure that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the proper governance of the charity. This will include establishing and chairing the annual cycle of Board meetings, ensuring that accurate, timely and clear information is provided to trustees, and that the Board as a whole works in partnership with senior staff;
- Ensure that the SLBI applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects;
- Ensure that the Board reviews and develops our strategy and policies, including the preparation & implementation of business plans;
- Work with the Treasurer, Finance Sub Committee, trustees and staff to ensure sound financial management, the setting and approval of budgets, ensuring expenditure is in line with objectives and that investment activities comply with the SLBI's own investment policies, legal requirements and accepted fiduciary standards;
- Ensure that trustees and staff undertake their duties in a way that promotes public confidence and trust in the charity;
- Ensure that the performance of the Board is reviewed annually, maintain the focus and commitment of the Board, including renewal and succession planning, and help oversee the appointment of new trustees;



- Prepare the agenda, chair trustee Meetings and ensure that they are properly run and recorded, with Administrator support;
- Exercise a casting vote if a vote on a trustees' decision is tied, as allowed under paragraphs 16 and 38 of the SLBI Memorandum and Articles;
- Act as a link between trustees, staff and wardens when required;
- Subject to discussion - Line-manage the most senior member of staff (annual appraisal, regular support sessions, ad hoc mentoring/support);
- To be the final arbiter in cases of complaint taken against the SLBI, in line with the SLBI Complaints Policy;
- Liaise with and collaborate with the SLBI President on a regular basis to ensure plant science and education are prioritized within the organisation;
- Act in the best interest of the SLBI at all times.



Person Specification

The SLBI seeks a Chair who can help it further its mission, hold it to account, and who will champion its cause. The charity generally has a consensual decision-making process, with the opinions and ideas of staff and other stakeholders sought when appropriate.

The charity is embarking on a new business plan that will aid recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and further grow and professionalise the organisation over the next five years. With strong local links, the SLBI also has an increasingly wide reach. Trustees are active and often have a 'hands-on' approach to operational as well as strategic matters and are supportive of each other through the sharing of skills and tasks.

The successful applicant will have a good understanding of charity governance and finance and of issues within the charitable sector, whether through employment, Board experience or combination. You will be able to guide the charity as it faces both day-to-day and long-term challenges.

Ideally you will have previous, comparable or transferrable experience of chairing a small charity and of helping to manage change. The Chair will need good interpersonal skills to guide decision-making that may involve various opinions. Ideally, you will understand how digital services contribute to learning and engagement.

You do not need to be a plant specialist, but will have an interest in plants, an enthusiasm for sharing that with people of all ages and backgrounds and a commitment to tackling the climate crisis.



The Chair should be comfortable representing the SLBI publicly and be prepared to speak on our behalf from time to time.

You will need to be, or become, a member of the SLBI and will be a director of the company.

You will need to share our values of inclusivity, sustainability, conservation, transparency and knowledge-sharing so that you can use your experience and skills to help the SLBI to enable more people to understand and enjoy plants and value their role in sustaining life on the planet.

You will need to be able to access us in person as well as virtually.

Application

To apply, please send a CV and a covering letter (max two pages) to info@slbi.org.uk by 15th September 2021. This should include reasons why you are interested in being our Chair and the names of two referees.

We intend to hold interviews week beginning 27th September.

Trustees would be willing to have an informal discussion prior to any application. Please contact info@slbi.org.uk and we will respond as soon as we can.





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