



Cabinet Office



CHAIR Social Mobility Commission

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

Closing date for this post is: 11 June 2021 at 17:00

**Applications should be sent to:
smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk**

**If you require this information in an alternative format or in
Welsh language please contact
smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk**

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A Message from the Minister for Women and Equalities



Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of the Social Mobility Commission.

The government is committed to levelling up and expanding opportunity across the United Kingdom. At this crucial time for the country, broadening access to socio-economic activity is more important than ever, for its own sake and to ensure the UK is making the most of the talents of all of its citizens. This is an exciting opportunity to fundamentally shape this agenda and spread opportunity to every part of the UK.

The government is focused on equality of opportunity and I am committed to ensuring that public appointments better represent the views of the communities which they serve. I particularly encourage applicants from underrepresented groups across sectors, those based outside London and the South-East and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes.

I am looking for someone who can act as a close adviser to Government – providing expert advice and able to hold frank conversations with Ministers on how the government is meeting its commitment to level up and indeed expand opportunities. They will be responsible for fulfilling the Commission's functions, including by building and maintaining effective working relationships with my Ministerial colleagues and me, the Deputy Chair(s), other members of the Commission, and the Secretariat, to ensure the remit of the Commission is fulfilled fully, promptly, and properly.

Thank you once again for your interest in this role and for taking the time to read through this pack. If you have the skills and experiences we are seeking, I hope that you will apply.

The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP

Diversity and Equality of opportunity

Diversity of opportunity is something the Cabinet Office cares passionately about.

Applications are encouraged from all candidates regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, sex, gender identity and socio-economic background. We particularly welcome applications from women, those with a disability and those from a black or ethnic minority background.

We would also particularly welcome applications from those currently working in, or with experience of, the private sector, and those who have not previously held public appointments. We want to explore the widest possible pool of talent for these important appointments.

Offering an Interview to Disabled People

As a Disability Confident employer, we will ensure that a fair and proportionate number of disabled applicants who **meet the minimum criteria for this position** will be offered an interview.

[The Equality Act 2010](#) defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. If you wish to indicate that you are disabled or have a long-term health condition, please complete **the Disability Confident - Offering an Interview to Disabled People** declaration in the supporting documents and send it with your application.

It is important to note that in certain recruitment situations such as high-peak times, the employer may need to limit the overall numbers of interviews offered. This will include the number of interviews offered to disabled people that meet the minimum criteria for the job. In these circumstances, the employer would be expected to offer a proportionate number of interviews to disabled applicants.

Championing social mobility

The Social Mobility Commission champions social mobility in all of its policies and is committed to opening up opportunities on its Board for people from all backgrounds, all socio-economic classes and all regions of the UK.

Reasonable Adjustments

If you have a disability and require reasonable adjustments to enable you to attend your interview, please advise us when you return your application or contact the SMC Sponsorship Team smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Flexible working practices

The Social Mobility Commission supports flexible working practices, and we will consider applicants who apply as job-sharers. As a national organisation, the SMC has video conferencing available for day-to-day communication, however its Board members might be required to attend meetings and events in person once it is safe to do so.

Pre-appointment scrutiny

In line with measures to increase Parliamentary scrutiny of appointments to key posts, the preferred candidate for the post of Chair of the Social Mobility Commission will be required to appear before a Parliamentary Select Committee prior to appointment.

Background to the organisation

The Social Mobility Commission (SMC) exists to create a United Kingdom where the circumstances of birth do not determine outcomes in life. Formerly the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2012–16) and originally the Child Poverty Commission (2010–12), the SMC is an advisory non-departmental public body that has recently become the responsibility of the Cabinet Office.

For further information about the Commission, please visit its website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/social-mobility-commission>

Size and composition of the Board

The Board currently comprises 12 Commissioners. Members of the Board are listed below and biographical information for each Board Member can be found on the [SMC's website](#):

- Sandra Wallace (Co-Chair, Transport and Regional Engagement)
- Steven Cooper (Co-Chair, Apprenticeships, Labour Market and the Economy)
- Saeed Atcha MBE - Young People and Vulnerable Groups
- Alastair Da Costa - Adult Skills and Further Education
- Pippa Dunn – Enterprise and Small Business
- Sam Friedman – Data, Insight and Downward Mobility
- Harvey Matthewson – Disability and Health
- Jessica Oghenegweke – Early Years and Families
- Farrah Storr – Culture, Arts and Media
- Jody Walker – Employment, Progression and Housing
- Liz Williams MBE – Digital and the Future of Work
- Sammy Wright – Schools and Higher Education

Location

The role will be based in London. Some travel may be required. The Social Mobility Commission supports flexible working practices. As a national organisation, the SMC has video conferencing available for day-to-day communication. It will be at the Chair's discretion to decide their working pattern.

Role of the SMC Chair

The Minister for Women and Equalities is seeking a new Chair for the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) to make the case for social mobility in England and hold Government and other leaders in the public sphere to account.

The Chair will lead the Social Mobility Commission in promoting social mobility both within and outside Government, oversee work to strengthen the evidence base and improve public understanding of how opportunity is created and made accessible to all.

Importantly, the Chair will lead the Commission in realising a more defined role in national life and launching a more clearly defined framework for assessing the impact of public policy on social mobility. This will include:

- the establishment of headline metrics through which the Commission can consistently measure the UK's progress and inform public understanding;
- a refocusing of the Commission's work around the 'three E's' as priority areas:
 - employment;
 - education; and
 - enterprise.

As such, the SMC and its Chair have a crucial role to play in the realisation of the Government's levelling-up agenda.

The Chair has overall responsibility for providing effective leadership on matters such as:

- advocating the social mobility agenda and shaping the debate about equality;
- demonstrating what 'good' looks like, and challenging key institutions;
- raising the profile of the Social Mobility Commission and social mobility by being a public spokesperson for the Commission;
- providing strategic leadership of the Commissioners and Secretariat in setting the overall direction, policy and plans for the Commission;
- working collaboratively with Ministers, Parliament and other strategic partners;
- overseeing work to strengthen the evidence base and publish key reports, including the Commission's Annual Report, which is laid before parliament.

Person specification and eligibility criteria

All candidates must demonstrate, in their CV and supporting letter, how they meet the selection criteria for the post through their knowledge, skills and experience.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate the following essential selection criteria:

- a strong understanding of and demonstrable commitment to social mobility with the ability to think strategically about cross-cutting issues in, for example, housing, education, or family support.;
- a commitment to exercising impartial and independent judgement, drawing sound conclusions that differentiate and weigh up competing arguments which are capable of justification under close scrutiny;
- the ability to lead a high-profile organisation, including ability to chair the board and provide effective challenge and support to the organisation;
- outstanding relationship-building skills, with the ability to command respect, build networks quickly and work with and through others to achieve objectives;
- an understanding of a political landscape in Great Britain and an ability to develop a strong and credible relationship with Ministers and senior Whitehall officials;
- excellent communication skills, including the ability to operate effectively and comfortably as an ambassador for the organisation;
- a demonstrated understanding of and engagement with the critical economic and cultural divides that have come to the fore in modern Britain – between graduates and non-graduates; between the metropolitan cities and the countryside and towns; and between the nationally or internationally mobile and those more rooted in place and tradition – and the importance this has in developing public policies that serve those seen as being left behind;
- the ability to lead and develop the Commission with a diverse membership that represents often-competing priorities;
- the ability to understand and interpret financial information and to provide effective challenge on the regularity and propriety of the SMC's spend and business activities;
- high standards of integrity, commitment to public service values, and an understanding of the principles and practices of corporate governance.

Applicants will be assessed against these criteria in their application and any subsequent interview.

For this post, a person cannot be appointed as a Board Member if he or she is employed in the Civil Service of the state, has unspent criminal convictions, is subject to bankruptcy, or disqualification as a company director. There must be no employment restrictions, or limit on your permitted stay in the UK.

Conditions of appointment

Remuneration, allowances and abatement

- The per diem allowance paid to the Chair is £350.
- Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 (as amended) and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions.
- Legitimate expenses, including travel and subsistence costs, will be paid.
- The post is not pensionable.

Appointment and tenure of office

Board Members are appointed by the Minister for Women and Equalities. Appointments are for between 2 and 5 years, with the possibility of re-appointment for a further term, at the discretion of Ministers. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory annual appraisals of performance during the first term in the post. If re-appointed, the total time served in post will not exceed more than two terms or serve in any one post for more than ten years.

It will be important that a Chair's other commitments do not cast any doubt on their ability to act independently and impartially in discharging the role; any potential conflict of interest must be declared.

All Board Members are required to adhere to:

- [The Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#)
- [The Seven Principles of Public Life](#)

Performance appraisal

The Chair will be assessed against their performance for each year of their appointment, which will be carried out by the Senior Sponsor – Director of the Government Equalities Office - on behalf of the Minister for Women and Equalities.

Time Commitment

The time commitment for the Chair is up to 6 days a month (up to 72 days per year): within this, the exact number of days shall be determined with the selected candidate.

Indicative timetable and how to apply

Timetable for recruitment

Closing date: **11 June 2021**

Shortlisting: **Late June**

Interviews held: **w/c 19 July 2021**

Select Committee hearing: **September 2021 (expected)**

Provisional appointment start date: **October 2021**

In the present circumstances interviews will be conducted remotely.

In order for us to progress your application please submit the following completed documentation:

1. A **Curriculum Vitae** (maximum three sides of A4) outlining your education, professional qualifications and full employment history.
2. An accompanying **Supporting Letter** (maximum two sides of A4, minimum font 11) – setting out your suitability for the role and how you meet the essential and desirable skills set out in the person specification - please ensure your full name is clearly noted at the top of your letter.
3. Completion of the online **Monitoring Form** (including conflicts of interest, political activity, diversity) which can be found [here](#). Any information you provide in Section A will not be used as part of the selection process and will not be seen by the interview panel. The form now includes questions about disability. Information to help answer these questions can be found on the Public Appointments website. If you experience any problems accessing the monitoring form please contact smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk .
4. **Disability Confident** – Offering an interview to disabled people declaration form (if applicable).
5. **Names and contact details of two referees who will be contacted if you are shortlisted for interview.**

Please send all the above required application documents to smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk. In the present circumstances of remote working, emailing the application is strongly advised, however if you are unable to email your application, you can send it in the post to:

SMC Sponsorship Team (for: SMC Public Appointments)
Government Equalities Office

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith St
Westminster
London SW1P 3BT.

We are happy to accept applications in Welsh language.

Please contact smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk if you require this advert in an alternative form, explaining what you need and why you require an alternative format. Please note that all documents can be provided in Welsh language upon request.

Please note that due diligence will be carried out during the application process, including searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. Further details on the use of personal information is provided below.

Please note also that applications may be passed, in confidence, to the Commissioner for Public Appointments (CPA) and the Commissioner's auditors for the purposes of complaints investigation and audit (4.4 of the Government's Governance Code of Public Appointments refers).

Privacy notice

This notice sets out how we will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Your data

Purpose

The purposes for which we are processing your personal data are:

- Considering applications for the vacant role for Chair of the Social Mobility Commission. Our recruitment campaign is compliant with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.
- Assessing and vetting appointable candidates including obtaining data from supporting letters and referees.
- Monitoring the diversity of our applicants and appointees.

The data

We will process the following personal data: Names and addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, CVs, educational background, potential conflicts of interest and political activity, supporting letters or statements about your suitability for the post. We will also process images if these are volunteered, although we do not request these unless you are successfully appointed. We use this data to process applications and to assess candidates. We will also use it to appoint successful candidates and attribute the appropriate level of fees. (Fee and expenses are paid by the SMC).

For appointable candidates we will process data provided by referees, and we will carry out due diligence on you using public data sources including your social media profiles.

We will process the data of referees and those providing supporting statements, which will generally include names, contact details and opinions.

We collect diversity data on a separate form. This data is not used to make appointment decisions, but is only used for equality monitoring purposes. We collect sex, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, and marriage or civil partnership.

Legal basis of processing

The legal basis for processing your personal data is:

- It is necessary to comply with a legal obligation placed on us as the data controller: for the Minister for Women and Equalities to appoint a Chair to the Board of the Social Mobility Commission, pursuant of the Child Poverty Act 2010.
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. In this case that is the Government Equalities Office's public function to sponsor the Social Mobility Commission.
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. In this case that is the Government Equalities Office's public function to sponsor the Social Mobility Commission.
- Sensitive personal data is personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation.
- The legal basis for processing your sensitive personal data, and any data about criminal convictions relating to recruitment and vetting is: Processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department; or the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment.
- The legal basis for processing your sensitive personal data relating to diversity monitoring is: Processing is of data concerning ethnicity, religious or philosophical belief, health including disability or sexual orientation, it is necessary for the purposes of identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with a view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained

Recipients

Your personal data will be shared by us with:

- A sift panel made up of Cabinet Office and SMC officials;
- The Advisory Assessment (selection) Panel, who select candidates for roles;

As your personal data will be stored on our IT infrastructure it will also be shared with our data processors who provide email, and document management and storage services.

Retention

Your personal data will be kept by us for two years in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments.

Where personal data have not been obtained from you

Your personal data was obtained by us from public data sources.

Your rights

- You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.
- You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.
- You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.
- You may have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.
- You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.
- You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data.

International data transfers

As your personal data is stored on our IT infrastructure, and shared with our data processors, it may be transferred and stored securely outside the UK. Where that is the case it will be subject to equivalent legal protection through an adequate decision or the use of Model Contract Clauses.

Contact details

The data controller for your personal data is the Cabinet Office. The contact details for the data controller are: Cabinet Office, 70 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2AS, or 0207 276 1234, or publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

The contact details for the data controller's Data Protection Officer are: Stephen Jones, Data Protection Officer, Cabinet Office, Room 405, 70 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2AS, or dpo@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

The Data Protection Officer provides independent advice and monitoring of Cabinet Office's use of personal information.

Complaints about use of personal data

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, or 0303 123 1113, or casework@ico.org.uk. Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

How we will handle your application

The process is one of fair and open competitions, in keeping with [the Government's Governance Code for Public Appointments](#).

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will keep you informed at key stages:

- After the closing date we will acknowledge receipt of your application (by email if you have provided this).
- Your application will be assessed against the candidate profile and your experience relevant to the post. **Please ensure that your application includes a supporting letter (as set out above), providing evidence that demonstrates how you meet the criteria. Submitting a Curriculum Vitae alone will not be sufficient.**
- At the short-listing meeting the selection panel will decide which candidates will be invited for interview, taking account of the evidence provided by the candidates. **You will be advised of the outcome of your application (by email) as soon as possible. If successful, you will be invited to an interview, which will take place remotely via Google Hangouts.**
- The responsible Minister may wish to meet the candidates who are deemed appointable by the selection panel. You will be advised after the interview if this is the case and a mutually suitable time will be arranged as soon as possible.
- If your application is unsuccessful and you would like feedback, please write to the email or postal address to which you sent your application. We regret that we are only able to offer detailed feedback to candidates who have been unsuccessful at interview stage.
- If you have a complaint about the way your application has been handled at any stage of the process, please see the section on “How to complain” below.

Security Clearance

The successful candidate will be required to undertake Security Clearance in line with the Civil Service guidelines, which we envisage at baseline level.

Complaints Process

If you are not completely satisfied please contact, in the first instance SMC Sponsorship Team at smc.appointments@cabinetoffice.gov.uk or Pina Sadar, Head of the Equality Hub ALB Team on pina.sadar@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

We will reply to your complaint within 20 days. If, after receiving our response you are still not satisfied, you may contact the Commissioner for Public Appointments:

The Commissioner for Public Appointments
Room G/8, Ground Floor
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ
Tel: 0207 271 0849

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. More information about the role of the Commissioner and the Government's Governance Code on Public Appointments are available from [the Commissioner for Public Appointments' website](#).

Your response will be anonymous and will inform the Commissioner's on-going work with Government Departments to improve the public appointments process.

Standards in public life, political activity, disqualification from appointment and conflicts of interests

Standards in public life

Members of the SMC will need to confirm that they understand the standards of probity required of public appointees outlined in the "[Seven Principles of Public Life](#)" drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Political Activity

Members of the SMC will need to show political impartiality during their time on the SMC Board and must declare any party political activity they undertake in the period of their appointment.

Due to the nature of the SMC it is not appropriate for members of the SMC to occupy paid party political posts or hold sensitive, senior or prominent positions in any political organisation. Nomination for election to political office, for example, the House of Commons, the Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament, the European Parliament, is not considered compatible with membership of the SMC.

Subject to the above, Board members are free to engage in political activities, provided that they are conscious of their general responsibilities and standards for public life and exercise proper discretion.

You are required to fill out a Political Activity Declaration as part of your application, which will be kept separate from your application and will only be seen by the selection panel prior to interview. However, it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision-making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If, therefore, you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should include it separately in the main body of your application.

If you are successfully appointed to the post, details of your response to the Political Activity Declaration will be included in any announcement of your appointment.

Disqualification from appointment

Anyone in the categories listed below will not be considered for appointment as Board Member of the SMC (also see 'Political Activity' above):

- Employed in the civil service of the state
- Unspent criminal convictions
- Bankruptcy
- Disqualification as a company director.

Conflict of Interests

Public bodies are expected to maintain a register of members' interests to avoid any danger of the Board Member being influenced - or appearing to be influenced – by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties. Candidates invited to interview will be questioned about any real or perceived conflicts of interest. These do not constitute an automatic bar to appointment, but they must be manageable.