

# Sortition Foundation Independent Director

## Job Description

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Directors of the Sortition Foundation. We hope this document encourages and inspires you as you consider this opportunity.

### Background info about the Sortition Foundation

The Sortition Foundation believes today's politics needs citizens at the centre of decision-making, and that everyday people should decide how we live together. We want to transform local, regional and national democratic processes by institutionalising citizens' assemblies, for example by creating a second sortition chamber in Scotland or by replacing the House of Lords with a permanent citizens' assembly.

### Vision, Purpose, Values

Our Vision is real democracy: randomly selected and representative groups of people make the decisions about how we live together fairly, through informed deliberation

Our Purpose is to publicly advocate for real democracy.

Our goals are guided by the following values:

**Equality**

**Wisdom**

**Social Justice**

Our culture is guided by the following values:

**Helpful**

**Responsible**

**Honest**

In the last few years, citizens' assemblies have become commonplace in many countries (UK, Australia, Canada, Ireland, Poland) and spread to many more, such as France, Spain, Austria, Germany, Belgium, among others. A regional parliament in Belgium created a permanent citizens' assembly - the first of its kind in Europe - and we are seeing local councils in the UK and Australia follow suit.

While this represents considerable success, there is still much work and campaigning to do. We want to see citizens' assemblies become more prevalent, for them to become a permanent feature of our democracies, and we understand that for this to happen we need more people, organisations and decision makers to know about and advocate for these assemblies.

In recent years the Sortition Foundation:

- Supported around 100 citizens' assemblies and other sortition events in the UK, Australia, Hungary, the UK (and elsewhere), sent hundreds of thousands of assembly invitations to households, and recruited thousands of people for random representative assemblies. Some examples include Scotland's Climate Assembly, the Budapest (Hungary) Climate Assembly, a citizens' jury on assisted dying in Jersey, the UK government's Public Advisory Group on COVID-19, and many community panels in Australia for councils in Victoria.
- Developed a network of democracy organisations campaigning for the institutionalisation of citizens' assemblies; we have an ongoing campaign in Scotland for the House of Citizens, have developed and tested messaging and framing guides for communicating our campaign goals, and have laid the groundwork for this transformative democratic change.
- Reviewed and refreshed our strategy and structure to get clear on what we can hope to achieve with the resources we can wield in the best possible organisational structure.
- Grew our annual turnover dramatically, from almost zero turnover five years ago, to £350,000 in the last financial year.

We achieved all this thanks to our growing and dedicated staff; our continued partnerships with organisations including the Electoral Reform Society, Unlock Democracy and Involve in the UK, and MosaicLab in Australia; our ongoing participation in the Democracy R&D International Network; and with the help of our **Independent Directors such as yourself**.

The directors' team (made up of three Staff Directors and up to a maximum of eight Independent Directors) will make a significant contribution towards achieving our ambitions, through focusing on strategy and governance and providing constructive support and advice on all relevant aspects of the company.

## Independent Director Requirements

The Sortition Foundation is a not-for-profit company organised along the lines of a workers' cooperative, with staff in ultimate control of most of the organisation's processes. The three Staff Directors are ultimately responsible for the day-to-day running of the company and for organising the processes in which staff contribute to important strategic and resource questions.

**Independent Directors** are responsible for:

- **Setting and reviewing all pay levels.** As a not for profit organisation that seeks funding from outside sources, it is important to us to have independent oversight of our pay levels and structure.

- **Actively contributing to one or more of our working groups** within the organisation (Campaigns, Communications, DNA, Finance, Governance, Outreach, People, Supporters) that aligns with their specific field or area of expertise. Many of these groups meet monthly (online) for 1-2 hours.

Independent Directors are also welcome to contribute to wider strategic discussions (approximately 4 times per year) and Staff General Meetings (which occur 8 times throughout the year). At these meetings you could meet staff, find out more about what is going on inside the company, and contribute to the discussions. We emphasise that **this extra contribution is voluntary** and not expected as part of being an Independent Director.

## We ask our Independent Directors to have:

- A strong commitment to and passion for our vision and strategy.
- An international perspective.
- A good understanding of the responsibilities of directors and the distinction between governance and management. Previous director experience is desirable but not essential.
- Experience of strategy development and effective implementation.
- Excellent communication, leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Relevant networks and networking skills.
- The ability to work well as part of a diverse team.
- The ability and willingness to devote time and energy to the role.
- To be willing to be listed as a director on the [Companies House webpage](#)
- To have read our '[Articles of Association](#)'

## Terms of office

The normal term of appointment is three years, up to a maximum of two terms (i.e. a maximum of six years). Independent Directors currently work unpaid, and contribute approximately 3-10 hours of their time per month, including preparing for and attending the relevant working group and Staff General meetings, communicating by email, preparing or reviewing documents, etc.

## Sortition Foundation Strategic and Staff General Meetings

All meetings take place on Zoom, typically during working hours on or around the fourth Tuesday of each month. Independent Directors are welcome though not required to attend these meetings.

Working group meetings occur on a schedule determined by each working group.