



SRUC



SRUC Non-Executive Director

Candidate Brief

Introduction



SRUC is a specialist institution focused on the Natural Economy, with pan-Scotland locations and a global reach. Formed in 2012, but built on a history of over 100 years, we are a young institution with a long heritage. We are quite unlike any other institution, with a tertiary education model (from FE to PhD), a world-class research base, knowledge exchange and consultancy services. Therefore, we are uniquely placed to respond to the global challenges facing us collectively, and we have the strength, courage and audacity to do it.

Our vision is to become Scotland's Enterprise University at the heart of our sustainable natural economy. Our central purpose is to promote greater sustainability of our natural resources, and of the sectors that build the skills to deliver this for the benefit of Scotland as a whole.

At SRUC, we believe in the power of collaboration between government, business, academia, and communities – a synergy that catalyses growth and resilience. Our aim is to ensure that every SRUC campus is a microcosm of this collaboration; places where ideas are incubated, and enterprises are born that take root in rural communities and generate prosperity.

Entrepreneurial campuses and place-based initiatives at SRUC are more than educational offerings; they are the engines of change for Scotland's rural economy. By placing an unwavering emphasis on entrepreneurial skills and fostering an environment where innovation thrives, SRUC is leading the charge to create a sustainable, dynamic, and inclusive economic future for Scotland.

To place SRUC in the strongest possible position as we advance and develop our plans, to address a number of retirements from the Board, and to accelerate the

pace of transformational change, the Board is seeking to recruit up to five new Non-Executive Directors.

These roles present an opportunity to become involved and contribute to the future success of an organisation of strategic national importance at a period of exceptional change within the Tertiary Education Sector and the natural economy in Scotland and beyond.

Linda Hanna, Chair and Professor Wayne Powell, Principal and Chief Executive

SRUC – Who We Are

Our Vision: Scotland's Enterprise University at the heart of our sustainable natural economy.

Our Mission: Creating and mobilising knowledge and talent. Partnering locally and globally to benefit Scotland's natural economy.

These reflect the importance of the work that we do in helping meet the global grand challenges, in responding to the climate emergency, and in collaborating on unprecedented levels to make the changes of which our sector is capable. Our Vision and Mission translate not only from the global, but to the national and local scales. Given that SRUC's footprint reaches into many of the more remote and rural areas of Scotland, then our role as an anchor tertiary institution that understands deeply the communities and regions within which we sit, is critical.

Our specialism is the Natural Economy, with a focus on taking a systemic approach, on maintaining a customer focus, and embracing new ways of working.

The Natural Economy is defined as comprising six sub-sectors that either directly use, rely or contribute to conserving natural resources, namely:

- Tourism
- Food and drink
- Fishing and aquaculture
- Agriculture
- Energy (including renewables)
- Forestry, logging and manufacture of wood.

SRUC is home to approximately 2500 FE and HE students, 300 master's students and 100 PhD student undertaking study over a number of courses in the domains of circular economy, planetary health and science society and business. In addition, SRUC delivered short course training to over 2000 individuals in the last year.

The research power of Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Sciences at SRUC and the University of Edinburgh has been ranked as number one in the UK based on the quality and breadth of work. Research 'power' is an overarching measure of research quality and volume. SRUC and the University have increased both the quality and size of the joint submission since the last REF in 2014, highlighting the scale and excellence of their combined research capabilities.

All 11 impact case studies submitted – eight of which involved SRUC research – were classified as ‘world leading’ (receiving the top 4* REF grading) or ‘internationally excellent’ (3*) in terms of their impact on wider society. All – 100 per cent – of the research environment was also classified as world class or internationally excellent, highlighting the outstanding quality, equipment and culture of the research base. A total of 87 per cent of overall research activity was ranked as 4* or 3*.

SRUC has an annual turnover of £90m and employs approximately 1,300 staff operating from 6 campuses, 8 farms, 25 consulting offices, 6 research centres and 8 veterinary surveillance centres located primarily across Scotland. SRUC’s main purpose is to advance education, science, research and environmental protection and improvement in the rural and land-based industries, both domestically and internationally. The commercial consultancy, and commercially-focused aspects of skills training and some research activities are undertaken through SAC Commercial Limited.

It is SRUC’s intention to become a fully-fledged university – a new and unique kind of university for the 21st century that is regional, accessible, market-focused and responsive to a diverse range of challenges in the emerging natural economy. We will remain a strong and unique anchor institution where research, skills and business converge. Such convergence will create new insights that deliver big strategic leaps and new propositions for business, society and government.

All of this activity is firmly rooted in our distinctive ethos of a Scotland-wide presence through regional centres of global excellence. Our objective is to deliver on shared goals with government, business and other partners to drive forward the natural economy through inclusive growth, job creation and generation of commercial opportunities. We will be a research-led organisation pushing on to fulfil higher, world leading goals aligned with the UN SDGs. We will maintain our regional presence in Scotland; essential to allow us to be responsive to local needs. The unique integration of our research, education and consulting specialisms are key to allowing SRUC to deliver an unparalleled service to our students and customers.

We are moving towards a business model comprising integrated regional specialisms/faculties, which maximise the potential of our people and expertise while creating new opportunities for partnerships, co-location, investment and growth.

Each faculty’s activities will have a strong focus on, but will not be limited to:

NORTH: Rural Land Use and Veterinary & Animal Science

CENTRAL: Natural Sciences, Policy and Enterprise & Business

SOUTH & WEST: Land Use, Pasture-based Agriculture and Forestry

The locations of all our campuses across Scotland can be found here – [Study at SRUC | Campuses](#)

SRUC Board and Governance

The SRUC Governance model is being reviewed to drive our ambitious vision and strategy and will be subject to change in the coming months.

The current members of the SRUC Board are:

Chair

- Linda Hanna MBE

Non-executive SRUC Board Members

- Mia Aitchison (Union-nominated Member)
- Dave Bell
- Jane Craigie
- Craig Davidson (Staff Member)
- Professor Sir Pete Downes
- Damson Ellen (Student Member)
- Julie Fortune (Union-nominated Member)
- Margaret Khinichich
- Andrew Peddie
- Chris Sayers
- Professor Mike Smith
- Catherine Stewart (Student Member)
- Vacant (Non-academic Staff Member)

Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

- Principal and Chief Executive, Executive Board Member – Professor Wayne Powell
- Provost and Deputy Principal – Professor Jamie Newbold
- Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Executive – Gavin Macgregor
- Finance Director – Hugh Anderson
- VP of Commercial – Andrew Lacy
- VP of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange – Dr Susanna Bolton

- VP of Skills and Lifelong Learning– Dr Mary Thomson
- VP of External Relations and Student Experience – Caroline Bysh

Governance

SRUC is a company limited by guarantee (SC103046) and is a registered Scottish charity (SC003712). SAC Commercial Ltd (SC148684), a wholly owned subsidiary of SRUC, undertakes SRUC’s commercial activities in the areas of Consultancy, Education and Research.

SRUC’s learning activities are funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). SRUC continues to receive a proportion of its funding for its research, veterinary and advisory activities directly from the Scottish Government.

Academic and government funded not-for-profit business is conducted through SRUC, while commercial (for-profit) activities are conducted through SAC Commercial Limited.

The SRUC Board consists of at least one executive director (the Principal and Chief Executive) and up to 19 non-executive directors which includes the Chair, staff, union and student members.

The Role of Non-Executive Director at SRUC

SRUC is seeking to appoint up to five Non-Executive Directors. These appointments would carry the responsibilities of a Company Director and Charity Trustee.

Board Members collectively provide high-level strategic oversight and ensure that adequate control and monitoring arrangements exist to support executive management in exercising proper stewardship and working towards agreed strategic objectives.

Board Members are asked to bring their expertise and experience to bear on this work. All members question intelligently, debate constructively, challenge rigorously and decide dispassionately, having listened sensitively to the views of others, inside and outside meetings of the governing body.

The Board is entrusted with funds, both public and private, and has a particular duty to observe the highest standards of corporate governance. This includes ensuring and demonstrating integrity and objectivity in the transaction of business, and wherever possible following a policy of openness and transparency in the dissemination of its decisions.

Board Members are expected to develop an understanding of SRUC, its teaching and research mission and internal structure and culture. In addition, members are expected to build understanding of SRUC's relationships with relevant external agencies and the Scottish and UK higher education systems.

Qualifications and experience required:

Candidates are sought who can assist in taking SRUC through the next stage of its development.

Applications are particularly welcomed at this time from individuals with skills and experience in the following areas:

- Audit and Risk
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Finance and accounting
- Property and Estates
- Research and Enterprise
- Rural Industries and the Natural Economy
- Tertiary Education

Applications are also invited from individuals who can demonstrate experience and skills in the following areas:

- Communication and Marketing
- Cyber Security,
- Digital Transformation

Individuals joining the Board will be expected to bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, policy and performance and to offer high level advice on the development and management of programme and policy initiatives. These are challenging opportunities for highly motivated individuals to put their experience and expertise to use in support of rural businesses and communities, education and research.

Successful candidates will have the personal credibility and rounded experience to make a significant contribution to Board discussions. Through a persuasive and engaging personality, candidates will demonstrate the ability to be creative, incisive, objective, challenging, thought provoking and constructive.

SRUC is committed to ensuring that the Board represents the community, stakeholders, staff and students and welcomes expressions of interest from all suitably experienced individuals who have the experience and expertise needed

to help direct and shape the organisation into the future. Expressions of interest are welcomed from applicants currently underrepresented on the Board who would further enhance its diversity. This includes women, young people, ethnic minorities, and those with disabilities.

Fees and Terms

Non-Executive Directors are appointed for a period of 3 years in the first instance with the possibility of extension for a further three years subject to a satisfactory appraisal. This post is remunerated at approximately £9400 per annum. The remuneration of SRUC's non-executives is reviewed every three years. Travel and subsistence expenses are reimbursed.

Flexibility on the amount of time to be committed to SRUC business is required but is expected to be at least 18 days per annum, which includes four Board meetings a year, one strategy session.

If successful, new Board Members may be invited to become a member of a Board sub-committee. Current sub-committees include Remuneration & Appointments, Audit & Risk, Finance & Estates, Student Liaison, and Strategic Performance. Committees meet four times per year and Committee Chairs receive additional remuneration.

These positions will be subject to a Disclosure Scotland check.

The SRUC central office is located at King's Buildings, West Mains Road, Edinburgh, EH9 3JG.

The location of the Board meetings alternates when practicable between all SRUC campuses. A full list of locations can be found here – [Study at SRUC | Campuses](#)

Application Process

Aspen People Ltd. have been appointed to support SRUC with the recruitment of these exciting Non-Executive Director positions.

To apply, please upload your application (CV, covering letter and equal opportunities form) by clicking [HERE](#).

All applications must include the following:

- A full CV with your education and professional qualifications and full employment history.
- A short covering letter of no more than two A4 sized pages explaining why this appointment interests you and how you meet the appointment criteria and key competencies as detailed in the candidate brief.
- Names of at least three referees. Please note, referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.
- Please provide daytime, evening and mobile telephone numbers, together with an appropriate, confidential and acceptable email address for all correspondence relating to your application.

You should receive an automatic acknowledgment of your application – if you do not please contact Melissa Scholes at Aspen on 0141 212 7555.

Contact Information:

Should you wish to have an informal, confidential discussion about the post, please contact either Donogh O'Brien or Gillian Blackadder on 0141 212 7555.

Closing Date:

The closing date for all applications is **Monday 15th January 2024**.

Interviews:

Candidates selected for interview will be individually informed in writing of the date and location.

Interviews: **w/c 29th January 2024**

Equal Opportunities Policy Statement:

It is the policy of SRUC to provide equality of opportunity for all applicants for employment and for all its employees.

This policy of equal opportunity will apply regardless of a person's gender, age, marital status, parental status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, HIV status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, transexualism or physical or mental disability, or any other inappropriate distinction.

SRUC is committed to the development and use of employment procedures and practices, which do not discriminate and which will provide genuine equality of opportunity for all employees.

Links to Supplementary Information on SRUC and SAC Consulting

The following additional links may be of particular interest for this role.

The SRUC website, [Home | SRUC](#), provides a significant amount of information about the organisation which may be of interest to prospective candidates.

Strategy: [sruc-strategy-2018-2022.pdf](#) (An updated strategy document will be published shortly)

Accounts:

SRUC Annual Accounts to 31 March 2022

[sruc-report-financial-statements-document-2022-typesigned.pdf](#)

Governance: Information on the current Board members of SRUC and SAC Commercial Limited can be found at [Governance | SRUC](#)

Studying at SRUC:

[SRUC | Pathways to study](#)

[SRUC | Student life](#)

[SRUC School of Veterinary Medicine](#)

Research at SRUC:

[Challenge Centres | SRUC](#)

[Research areas | SRUC](#)

[Research impact | SRUC](#)

Business Services:

[SAC Consulting \(sruc.ac.uk\)](#)

[Veterinary & laboratory services \(sruc.ac.uk\)](#)

[Enterprise Academy for the Rural & Natural Economy | SRUC](#)

[Commercial opportunities | SRUC](#)



SRUC

At the heart of the natural economy

SRUC is a company limited by guarantee (SC103046) and is a registered Scottish charity (SC003712). SAC Commercial Limited (SC148684) is an SRUC company. Registered Office: Peter Wilson Building, King's Buildings, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JG.