

Perks of the job: why working in a Governance capacity here is so rewarding

We're a charity with a huge reach and an amazing cause. A charity that touches the lives and lifts the spirits of millions of people every year. We're completely independent of government funding and every penny of our profit goes back into our important work. So it's crucial that money here is being spent wisely. That's exactly why we have our own Senior Management Remuneration Committee (SMRC), the members of which work as voluntary non-executives to support, guide and advise on the pay, rewards and benefits we offer our Director-General and senior leadership team. We caught up with SMRC Member, David Conroy as his term comes to an end to discuss his experience and why it's been so rewarding:

What attracted you to the National Trust's SMRC?

I have been a remuneration consultant for many years and worked at the Hay Group and Mercer Limited before becoming an independent, so compensation and benefits has always been my main area of expertise. As well as being the perfect opportunity for me to 'give something back' and contribute to a charity whose values and ethos I share, I was excited by the professional challenge it would provide. There is no other not-for-profit organisation that offers the size and scale of the Trust. Being able to perform such a significant role here has been hugely rewarding.

What does the role of SMRC Committee member involve?

In simple terms, we look at what can be done to make senior people feel truly rewarded. This tends to cover three key areas: pay and benefits (leave, pension etc.), career development including learning and training, and work-life balance. Now we all know that, as a charity, the National Trust will never be able to compete with big corporations on pay and that makes looking at the total reward package even more crucial. The Trust offers outstanding career and personal development opportunities, and is better than most with work-life balance – for example key members of the Exec team work flexibly/part-time. How can we make even more of this? How can we think creatively to enhance and differentiate what the Trust offers its people? That's the main role of an SMRC Committee Member, which of course then extends into senior level recruitment and succession planning.

How did you fit your SMRC commitments around others in your life?

Quite easily. It doesn't take up huge amounts of time. We meet twice a year with the possibility of additional meetings or conference calls and provide some input and advice outside of this. It typically equates around two to four days a year. The Committee is organised very well – the meetings are planned well in advance, the papers are in good order, all activities run smoothly and you're given plenty of time to review and digest necessary information.

What would you say to someone thinking about joining the SMRC?

Do it. It's a fantastic opportunity to broaden your experience and use your expertise to help solve some of the challenges the organisation, and the charity sector as a whole, faces. The National Trust is such a significant organisation that it's a real pleasure to contribute to its future. My term on the SMRC has come to an end but I'm already talking about how I can continue to support in another governance capacity!

*If you're a professional looking for an impactful challenge, supporting a great cause, visit **our Governance careers webpage** to find out more and apply for this rewarding opportunity.*