

## Caithness Futures Fund Panel Member Role Description

Thank you for volunteering to become a Panel member with Caithness Futures.

The Caithness Futures Panel guides how funds are distributed from the fund. Foundation Scotland has been appointed by RWE to manage the fund. As part of that role, Foundation Scotland is responsible for setting up and facilitating a panel of local community members. The Caithness Futures Panel's main purpose is to help decide how local community benefit funding gets used. You can read more about how the Panel works in its Terms of Reference. The Fund Panel has a named Fund Adviser who works for Foundation Scotland, and who is your main point of contact.

This document sets your role and responsibilities as a volunteer Panel member and what you can expect from Foundation Scotland's team.

*Some Fund Panels will also include representation from local organisations that play a formal role in the fund arrangement. If you are joining the Panel as an organisation representative, please also read the Annexe.*

### Your Role

As a Panel member, your role will include the following:

Work with the Fund Adviser, to **set and review the Fund Strategy**, such as the fund's priorities, grant sizes, how often the fund can accept applications and the methods used to distribute the money.

**Review assessment reports.** Foundation Scotland will assess grant applications made to the Fund and send these reports to you, so that you can read these ahead of the decision-making meeting. The number of reports depends on how many people apply to the Fund.

**Regularly attend Panel Meetings** to discuss assessment reports and agree awards to be made and any rejection or deferral feedback. The number of Panel meetings is agreed each year by the Panel, working with the Fund Adviser. Meetings are expected to last around two hours and suitable timings and venue will be discussed, as well as the use of online meetings

**Review grant monitoring information** provided by Foundation Scotland on progress regarding awards made and contribute views where actions are required

**Participate in fund review** processes initiated by Foundation Scotland, which take place every three to five years in line with good practice

**Act as an advocate for the positive impact of the fund**, promoting the fund and opportunity to join the panel locally. You may be asked to put up posters, promote the fund on social media, attend occasional publicity events and to signpost interested community members and groups to the Funds Adviser for support with making an application. You are not expected to deal with project or grant questions or help people with their applications; this is the Fund Adviser's role. Be mindful of not inadvertently representing personal opinions as facts about the fund or the agreed views of the Panel.

**Follow relevant Foundation Scotland policies and procedures** as set out in the 'How We Work Together' panel member agreement provided.

## What you need to be a Panel Member

You don't need to have any specialised qualifications to become a Panel member.

### **Essential:**

You do need to care about your community and its future and **want to see the community benefit fund making a positive impact** locally.

You should have the ability to make **fair and balanced decisions, respect different views and be open to new ideas**. The role will involve listening to other opinions and taking those into account, even when you don't agree, and being able to reach a compromise. You must be open to funding ideas or activities that are unfamiliar to you, but still have the potential to provide benefit to your community.

You need to have **enough time** to be able to read through the Panel papers and assessments reports.

You also need **access to the internet, and a device** to read papers with and join online meetings on. You may find a mobile phone screen is too small. If you require documents in an accessible format, reasonable adjustments can be made. Contact the Funds Adviser to discuss.

The **ability to commit to regular Panel meetings is important**. Dates are provide in advance.

### **Desirable:**

It does help if you are **involved in community life** – this doesn't need to be in a formal way – this can be as simple as taking an interest in what is happening locally, taking part in some community activities, volunteering with a local group or using local facilities.

Your knowledge of the local community context is useful because understanding local priorities and the groups that are active in the area, forms a big part of delivering the fund successfully.

**Experience of applying for grants is not a requirement for the role.** If you have this, that can be helpful, but Foundation Scotland's Fund Adviser team are there specifically to support Panel members with grantmaking best practice and advice.

### What you get in return

In return you get to play a **valuable community role** in delivering benefit to your community;

**A network of fellow Panel members**, not just in this fund but across other funds in Scotland also managed by Foundation Scotland, and

**Access to support, information and training** on good grant making and community development from Foundation Scotland.

### Annexe:

#### If you are a Community Council/other named org Representative

The role of the Caithness Community Planning Partnership representative is to provide a link between the Fund Advisory Panel and Caithness Futures.

A Panel Member who is has been appointed to the Panel as a representative is **not** acting for Caithness Community Planning Partnership when taking part in grant decision making; they do this as an individual and should be acting in the best interests of the community rather than the organisation they represent.

However, as appropriate to the role of the Caithness Community Planning Partnership as a potential listening and consulting body for Caithness Futures, the representative is expected to bring their knowledge of key community issues or any local action plans as identified through the Caithness Community Planning Partnership to the table, where these are relevant to Fund business.

The Representative will:

- Maintain a working knowledge of the Caithness Futures Fund Strategy.
- Report back to the Caithness Community Planning Partnership, any funding decisions made at each Panel meeting using the Awards Summary which will be provided by the Fund Adviser after the meeting;
- Report any other important business to Caithness Community Planning Partnership that was explicitly agreed by the Panel for sharing. This can become

a standing item on the agenda if helpful – ‘Matters to be Reported to the Caithness Community Planning Partnership.

- If Caithness Community Planning Partnership requests a set of Panel meeting minutes, these can be provided once approved by the Fund Panel; however approval of minutes usually takes place at the subsequent Panel meeting, so these will not be as current as the representative’s report provided above.
- Take any ideas, queries or concerns about Fund business arising from Caithness Community Planning Partnership discussions to the Fund Panel meetings for consideration