National Family Mediation
Chair & Trustees

Candidate Recruitment Pack

March – April 2017
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About National Family Mediation

The mission of National Family Mediation (NFM) is to help parents who live apart stay close to their children.

Family Mediation is more important today than ever before and NFM is looking for a new chairman and a maximum of three trustees able to assist in the changes driven by client’s needs, technology and Government.

The importance is evidenced in the Legal Aid Agency’s recent statement in ‘Civil news: delivery of family mediation work from 2018’:

'The government remains committed to family mediation as a key route to helping family disputes avoid court proceedings. So, we will not be making significant changes to the delivery of family mediation services when compared with current contracts.'

This is a great opportunity either as Chair or Trustee to steer NFM and services through this change and many others including responding to the changes in technology, client demands and the need to provide 24x7 service.

Overview

Established in 1981, NFM is a network of family mediation services offering help to those affected by separation and divorce. The network operates in over 500 locations right across England and Wales.

NFM’s main objective is to alleviate hardship and distress caused by the break-up of a marriage and a family or families in dispute or difficulty; and, to preserve and protect the health, both mental and physical, of adults and children involved in the break-up of a marriage and a family or family disputes or difficulties.

A registered charity, NFM is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in 2000 to take over the activities of the previously unincorporated organisation of the same name that had been established in 1981.

NFM’s strategic aims:

- To provide a national voice for NFM family mediation services
- To represent its services to government and within the Family Justice System
To increase the number and spread of services in order gradually to offer mediation to up to 10% of separating and divorcing couples
- To provide a high standard of training to mediators that guarantees high standards of practice and enhances career opportunities, and
- To provide a stable, effective and sustainable national organisation to stand up to internal and external change over time as it supports services to meet the demands of families at a challenging time in society.

To achieve these aims NFM actively
- Promotes and co-ordinates these services to be provided by members;
- Promotes education and training for those involved in providing mediation and conciliation services;
- Provides assistance through mediation and conciliation services to couples whose relationships appear to be breaking down or who are otherwise in dispute or difficulty
- where such relationships have already broken down, NFM advises and helps in the settlement of differences or potential differences over associated matters such as the residence of and contact with children and financial matters; and
- Promotes and co-ordinates services and provides support to not for profit mediation and dispute resolution services working in other fields of mediation or dispute resolution.
- Provides through NFMD (National Family Mediation Direct) mediation services in geographies where members services are not available

NFM operations

NFM is the only voluntary sector provider of family mediation services in England and Wales. It is the umbrella organisation for various member service organisations which all aim to offer high quality family mediation services in all communities to help families through the process of family breakdown.

Service providers that are affiliated to NFM are all financed and managed locally. NFM is centrally financed by affiliation, training and other fees, and receives some support from charitable funds and grants. Services specifically assist couples (married or unmarried) who are in or have been through the process of separation or divorce, and the children who are affected by this.

NFM provides continuing training for mediators who help clients to reach joint decisions about the issues associated with separation - children, finance and property.
A national voice

The NFM national office provides the voice and representation for its members to government and through working with other voluntary sector organisations. The family mediation concept was developed in about 1982 by NFM. The organisation has developed, maintained and managed the development of training and professional standards, and the delivery of services.

Several NFM services also provide specialist services for children. NFM has well established quality assurance standards where mediators are carefully selected and trained to a high standard nationally. NFM is a founding member of the Family Mediation Council (the FMC is recognised by the Legal Aid Agency and the Ministry of Justice as the regulatory body for family mediation). It supports the development and maintenance of professional practice standards for family mediation and regulates family mediation practice. NFM services represent approximately 25% of the Legal Aid Agency’s total contracted providers and undertake 65% of all publicly funded family mediation

Unique and defining characteristics

- a focus on children
- a not-for-profit system of providing services
- mediation that seeks to improve communication as well as achieving settlement
- specialised experience in the field

NFM and its member services differ from other family mediation providers because:

- Services are distinct and separate from legal practices
- They provide a range of support services to help families achieve settlement after relationship breakdown
- The fee structure is set to be affordable
- It is a network of services linked by affiliation criteria that supports professional and business practice
- The network provides national coverage and is responsive to local need
- NFM mediators help clients to reach joint decisions about the issues associated with separation - children, finance and property.
National Family Mediation – Chair Role Description

The primary role of the chair of NFM is to lead the Charity, ensuring that its aims and objects are carried out. He/she will do this by chairing the Board in its role of governance and overseeing the management of NFM activities by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Core responsibilities

1. To ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibility of governance.
2. To work in partnership with the CEO to help him or her carry out the aims, objectives and strategy set for NFM.
3. To ensure that there is an effective relationship between the Board, the sub committees, the staff team and the affiliated Services.

1. The Board
   • To chair Board Meetings, agreeing the agenda with the CEO and ensuring that the committee carries out its legal and organisational duties effectively.
   • To ensure that the Board adopts an overall policy and strategy and regularly monitors its implementation and periodically reviews it.
   • To co-ordinate sub Committees and assist them in its task as a bridge between management and governance.
   • To ensure that decisions are clearly made, recorded and carried out.
   • To ensure that finances are properly managed, recorded, audited and made publicly available in accordance with Charity Law.
   • To ensure the proper investment of finances not in current use.
   • To ensure that Board members are appropriately recruited and that the next Chair is appropriately appointed.
   • To ensure, with the CEO, that all members of the Board are appropriately informed and equipped to carry out their role.
   • To serve as an additional spokesperson for or promoting of NFM.

2. Partnership with the CEO
   • To assist the CEO to achieve NFM’s short and long term strategy.
   • To monitor progress in carrying out both strategic and business plans.
   • To ensure that appropriate use is made of resources in terms of personnel, financial and material terms.
   • To help represent NFM to government and other key stakeholders and to promote it to donors where appropriate.
3. Establishing an effective relationship between the various elements of NFM’s elected and management framework to the overall satisfaction and benefit of Services.

- To ensure that NFM complies with employment and equal opportunities legislation and good practice.
- To agree with the CEO, a calendar of meetings and events.
- To ensure clear and effective communication and consultation where appropriate between the Board, the CEO, the management team and the affiliated Services.

5. The place of family mediation

*In conjunction with the CEO:*

- To provide to NFM informed leadership about the place of affiliated Services in the context of Family Justice and Legal Services Commission, in particular:
- To ensure as far as possible, in consultation with the government, that the statutory framework for mediation provided by affiliated Services accords with NFM principles, policies and best practice.
- To assist the Board to be an appropriate initiator, developer and watchdog for the future place of mediation in the lives of families involved in separation and divorce.

6. Mediation standards of practice and management

*In conjunction with the CEO:*

- To maintain NFM’s lead in the setting and maintaining of high standards of practice and management in the context of the Family Mediation Council.
- To ensure the NFM reviews and develops its standards of management and practice in the provision of family mediation by affiliated Services.

7. Promotion and Liaison

*In conjunction with the CEO:*

- To ensure the appropriate promotion of NFM in political and public spheres
- To communicate with government ministers and departments
- To ensure sound communication with the media
- To ensure that the Services are listened to, encouraged and advised appropriately and that NFM policies are communicated and explained to them.

- To act as a national link between NFM and other relevant bodies:
  - Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
  - Young People’s Justice Board
  - Family Justice Board
  - Other influencers on policy matters of material relevance to the achievement of NFM’s Objects.
8. Financial Management

*In conjunction with the CEO*

- To be responsible for securing the necessary resources, spending it wisely and effectively and ensuring its proper management and accounting.

9. Regulatory responsibilities

- To act in accordance within the specific statutory duties imposed by the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The principal duties of a trustee are summarized in the Charities Commission document CC3 (The essential trustee: what you need to know)

National Family Mediation – Trustee Role Description

To actively participate in and contribute to the effective governance of National Family Mediation, ensuring its staff and trustee/directors and stakeholders own NFM’s vision and goals.

Core responsibilities

- To ensure that NFM complies with its governing document, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- To ensure that NFM pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- To ensure NFM applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. NFM must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees’ role in giving firm strategic direction to NFM, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- To safeguard the good name and ethos of NFM
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of NFM
- To ensure the financial stability of NFM
- To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity’s funds
- To participate on committees and panels, e.g. personnel, selection of staff, etc., as appropriate.
- To act in accordance within the specific statutory duties imposed by the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006. The principal duties of a trustee are summarized in the Charities Commission document CC3 (The essential trustee: what you need to know)
Additional responsibilities

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have in order to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives and other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Time commitment

- 4 board meetings a year and one AGM
- Board meetings are held from 12 noon to 3pm usually in central London

Person Specification for both the Chair & Trustee roles

Core attributes

- A commitment to NFM
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Strategic vision for NFM
- Ability to demonstrate independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Effective communication and interpersonal skills
- A commitment to Nolan’s seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)

Secondary attributes

- Ability to set effective targets, monitor and evaluate performance and programme agreed by the Board
- Effective financial management skills
- Knowledge and/or experience of personnel management
- Experience of public relations and/or marketing
- Ability to be an Information Technology champion
- Knowledge and/or experience of mediation
Recruitment Timetable

The closing date for applications is Monday 15th May

Please also note the following dates:

- For shortlisted candidates:
  - Informal telephone call with NFM Chairman: by arrangement following a review of applications, and not later than the 24th May.
  - There will also be a face to face or Skype meeting with the Chief Executive and Chairman (by arrangement and subject to diaries)

- Final panel interviews with NFM Nominations Committee: TBC mid-late May

- Appointed candidate to attend first HMS board meeting as an observer: Wednesday 19th July (subject to NFM Board agendas)

**Remember to please advise us about any dates that are really not convenient for you when your application is submitted**

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please supply the following via the relevant fields on the website

- A supporting statement, explaining how you believe your skills and experience match the requirements of the role, directly addressing the person specification

- A comprehensive CV including details of your achievements in each role, and including details of two referees (who will not of course be contacted without your prior knowledge or consent)

A reminder that this like most trustee roles is unremunerated. For an informal and confidential conversation about the role, please contact Emma Patmore 01582 697765 / 07825 459789.