**Job Description: Chair of the Governing Board**

**Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)**

**Location**: Oban, Scotland

**Position Type**: Voluntary (with reasonable expenses covered)  
**Time Commitment**: Approximately 12 days per year (excluding travel).

**About SAMS:**

The Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) is a world-leading research institution dedicated to advancing marine and coastal environmental science to address global challenges. SAMS is committed to pioneering scientific discovery about the marine environment, disseminating that knowledge through inspirational education, to all ages, and providing expert solutions and advice about today’s problems for governments, business and the public. The organisation is based in Oban, Scotland, and fosters a collaborative environment between scientists, stakeholders, and the public.

**Role Overview:**

The **Chair of the Governing Board** plays a critical role in overseeing the strategic direction of SAMS, ensuring that the organisation achieves its mission of advancing marine science for a sustainable future. As the leader of the Governing Board, the Chair works closely with the Board and Executive Team to provide leadership, guidance, and accountability, ensuring that SAMS remains a leader in all that it does.

This position is voluntary but provides a unique opportunity to influence marine science on a global scale, collaborating with top scientists, policymakers, and institutions.

**Key Responsibilities:**

* **Leadership & Governance**:
  + Provide strategic leadership to the Governing Board and ensure the effective governance of SAMS, demonstrating and implementing best practice governance principles and process.
  + Lead the Board in setting the long-term strategic vision and objectives of the organisation.
* **Board Management**:
  + Chair Board meetings and support the recruitment of new board members to ensure a diverse, skilled, and effective governance team.
  + Foster an environment of transparency, collaboration, and accountability within the Board.
  + Ensure that Board members are aware of and fulfil their governance responsibilities.
  + Serve as an ex-officio member of governance Committees.
* **Strategic Direction**:
  + Work alongside the Chief Executive and senior leadership team to ensure SAMS achieves its strategic objectives.
  + Help drive the long-term vision for the organisation to be a leader in the international and national marine science and innovation community.
  + To align SAMS goals with the needs of its range of international and local stakeholders.
* **Fundraising & Advocacy**:
  + Represent SAMS at high-level events, conferences, and forums, promoting the importance of marine science and SAMS' role in the field.
  + Build relationships with government, academic institutions, businesses, and potential donors to support SAMS’ mission.
* **Financial Oversight**:
  + Ensure the Board is effective in monitoring the financial health of the organisation, and making sure SAMS adheres to financial best practices.
* **Stakeholder Engagement**:
  + Serve as a key ambassador for SAMS, building strong relationships with stakeholders in government, academia, the private sector, and the public to advance the work of the organisation.
* **Risk Management & Compliance**:
  + Ensure SAMS complies with all relevant legal, financial, and ethical standards.
  + Provide strategic guidance on risk management to safeguard the reputation and sustainability of the organisation.

**Key Attributes & Skills:**

* **Strategic Vision**: Strong understanding of the landscape of research, sustainability and policy in a scientific or related field.
* **Leadership Experience**: Proven experience in leading organisations or boards, with a track record of effective decision-making, governance, and fostering collaboration at senior levels.
* **Passion for the Environment**: A keen interest in environmental sustainability, and the role of research in addressing global challenges.
* **Communication & Advocacy Skills**: Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to influence and inspire a range of stakeholders.
* **Financial Acumen**: An understanding of financial management and the ability to oversee budgets and funding strategies effectively.
* **Collaborative Approach**: Ability to work in a collaborative, consensus-driven environment, both within the Board and with the Executive Team, and external stakeholders.
* **Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion**: A commitment to ensuring diversity and inclusion is embedded in SAMS’ work, both within its governance structures and its research practices.

**Qualifications:**

* Senior leadership or governance experience; ideally in research, academia, non-profit, or public sector organisations; or if from a commercial background an understanding of these types of organisations.
* Demonstrable knowledge of marine science or related environmental fields is desirable but not essential.
* A strong professional network within relevant sectors would be advantageous.

**Benefits of the Role:**

* **Impact**: Lead the strategic direction of a world-renowned institution and make a significant contribution to marine science, sustainability, and policy.
* **Networking**: Access to a global network of researchers, policymakers, and leaders in the marine and environmental sectors.
* **Personal Development**: Gain valuable experience and exposure to senior leadership in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment.

**How to Apply:**

For more information, please visit <http://www.aspenpeople.co.uk/SAMS/>

For a confidential discussion, please contact Donogh O’Brien, Katherine Price or Gillian Blackadder at Aspen People on 0141 212 7555.

The Chair of the Governing Board is a voluntary position, but it offers the opportunity to make a lasting contribution to the future of marine science in Scotland and internationally. If you are passionate about ocean conservation, scientific innovation, and governance, we would love to hear from you.

**SAMS is an equal opportunities employer, committed to promoting diversity and inclusion.**