

Job Description: The Chair

Edinburgh Convention Bureau, Operational Group

About Edinburgh Convention Bureau

Edinburgh is one of the world's leading destinations for conferences, conventions and business events. Edinburgh Convention Bureau (ECB) is the city's official convention bureau, attracting business events that generate economic impact, support innovation, strengthen international connections and showcase Edinburgh's global strengths.

ECB is entering a new phase of delivery and sustainable value growth, supported by multi-year investment through the Edinburgh Visitor Levy, strengthened partnerships and renewed ambition.

This is an opportunity to chair the ECB Operational Group and act as a senior ambassador and public face for the Bureau, helping strengthen Edinburgh's position as a leading international destination for business events.

The Role

The Operational Group provides the bridge between ECB's strategic ambition and operational delivery, bringing together industry expertise, operational insight and delivery experience to support the development and implementation of ECB's strategy and business plan.

The Chair will provide leadership, constructive challenge and operational oversight, helping drive ECB's ambition, and to shape its contribution to the wider city.

Working with the Strategic Group, Operational Group, Delivery Team and destination partners, the Chair will translate strategic priorities into clear outcomes, and champion business events as a driver of fair work and inclusive growth, net zero and climate action, social impact and civic legacy, and economic development and revenue generation.

The Chair will also use their influence and networks to strengthen partnerships, build city-wide support and maximise the wider value of business events.

As a senior ambassador and public face for ECB, the Chair will build and nurture new and existing relationships across the business events and wider destination community and represent the Bureau at appropriate industry, stakeholder, civic and media engagements.

The role does not have day-to-day management responsibility for ECB staff; operational management and delivery remain with the Delivery Team. The role does provide guidance and support to the Delivery Team.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership, Governance and Oversight

- Chair the Operational Group effectively, ensuring constructive challenge, expertise and insight inform its work.

- Translate strategic direction into clear operational priorities, outcomes and measures of success for the Delivery Team.
- Challenge and refine proposals from the Delivery Team, ensuring they are ambitious, achievable and aligned with ECB's strategy.
- Review performance, risks and opportunities, identifying where intervention, adjustment or escalation is required.
- Ensure recommendations requiring strategic consideration are clearly presented to the Strategic Group and support effective communication between the Strategic Group, Operational Group and Delivery Team.

Industry, Partnership and Ambassadorial Leadership

- Build and maintain strong senior relationships across Edinburgh's business events ecosystem and wider destination partnership.
- Use personal networks, industry expertise and influence to strengthen collaboration, support ECB's objectives, apply for appropriate business tourism grants and funds applicable to ECB, and create opportunities for business development, partnership and destination advocacy.
- Encourage active engagement from venues, hotels, universities, transport, attractions, public sector and other relevant partners in delivering ECB priorities.
- Act as a senior ambassador and public face for ECB, representing the Bureau at key industry, stakeholder and civic engagements and, where appropriate, supporting media activity.
- Champion the economic, environmental, social, innovation, international and reputational contribution of business events to Edinburgh.

Strategic Relationships and Governance

- Maintain a constructive relationship with the Strategic Group and its Chair, representing the views and recommendations of the Operational Group where required.
- Work closely with the Delivery Team, providing challenge, guidance and support without taking on day-to-day management responsibilities.
- Develop effective relationships with senior Council officers and elected members, respecting the respective governance and decision-making responsibilities of the Council and ECB.
- Ensure external representation is aligned with ECB's agreed strategy, messaging and wider Council communications.
- Uphold high standards of integrity, transparency, independence and confidentiality, declaring and managing any conflicts of interest.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Senior leadership experience in business events, tourism, destination development, economic development or a related field.
- Experience of chairing or leading boards, committees, partnerships or multi-stakeholder groups.
- Strong understanding of the business events sector and its contribution to destination and economic development.

- Ability to translate strategic ambition into practical priorities and constructive challenge.
- Strong stakeholder management, influencing and relationship-building skills across public and private sectors.
- Excellent communication, facilitation and collaborative leadership skills.
- Credibility and confidence as a senior ambassador and external representative.
- Ability to act independently and in the interests of ECB and the wider destination.
- Commitment to good governance, integrity and transparency.
- Established networks across the business events, tourism and wider destination sectors.

Desirable

- Experience within a convention bureau, destination management organisation or comparable partnership.
- Strong knowledge of Edinburgh's business, academic, cultural and visitor economy landscape.
- Experience of public-private partnerships and/or industry leadership.
- Understanding and appreciation of sustainability, fair work, net zero or inclusive growth.
- Experience of media or public representation and relevant national or international industry networks.

TIME COMMITMENT AND TERMS

- Time commitment: Up to one day per week (approximately 52 days per year), although the actual commitment may be lower depending on the needs and priorities of ECB.
- Commitment may vary throughout the year, with additional time potentially required around strategic planning, major events and key stakeholder or industry activity.
- Activities will include, but not limited to, Operational Group meetings, Strategic Group meetings, Delivery Team meetings, stakeholder engagement, workshops, industry events, media opportunities and external representation.
- Term: Initial three-year appointment, subject to the agreed governance arrangements and potential reappointment up to two terms.
- Remuneration: £400 per day / £200 per half day.
- Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with agreed arrangements.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Interested candidates will be asked to submit a CV and covering letter outlining their relevant experience, leadership contribution and interest in the role.

Interviews will take place w/c 16 and w/c 23 November

The Chair will be appointed through a transparent, merit-based process, with final approval in accordance with ECB's agreed governance arrangements.

The appointment process will include shortlisting, interview and/or stakeholder discussion, in line with the agreed governance and appointment arrangements.