

Ethics & the Charity

The Charity's Ethical Approach

Updated to Royal Osteoporosis Society on 5 February 2019

1. Introduction

Operating ethically and transparently is an important value of the charity. This statement outlines the charity's ethical approach in the areas of:

- **Fundraising**
- **Corporate Partnerships**
- **Research**
- **Investments**

The charity seeks to maximise return and income in order to fund its activities, however the methods chosen to do this must always be in line with the aims, objectives and values of the charity.

The ethical policies and statements for the above core activities enable the charity to clearly define any areas of working which are considered to be exclusions and should therefore be avoided.

This ensures that all those operating in the above areas adhere to the Ethical Policy and make ethical considerations part of any business planning, financial investments or purchases.

2. Accountability

Accountability for ethical practice in the areas outlined above, Fundraising Corporate Partnerships, Research and Investments is held by those responsible for decision-making within these areas – a flow diagram is provided to diagrammatically show the accountability chain. The decision makers and employees working in these areas provide information and assurance to the relevant committees, including the executive team and board subcommittee - FGP&A who hold them accountable for adhering to the ethical approach outlined above and other relevant guidelines as referred to in this statement. Ultimate accountability for ethical practice sits with the Board of Trustees

However, all employees and volunteers representing the charity are responsible for operating in line with this ethical statement as it is an approach which shapes and influences all the activities of the charity. The Charity's Ethical Approach is therefore a key part of the induction and training programme undertaken by all employees and volunteers.

3. Fundraising

The Fundraising Ethics Policy outlines the Charity's approach to ethical fundraising practices and ensures that all fundraising activities are ethical. It outlines how the charity ensures practice is ethical in the following areas:

- Data (personal data, data protection and consent)
- Marketing and Communication
- Vulnerable people
- Third party suppliers

The charity has signed up to the Fundraising Regulator, is committed to its Fundraising Promise and abides by the Fundraising Code of Practice. For further information see the Fundraising Ethics Policy, Supporter Charter and Privacy Policy, on our website.

In addition, our ethical approach to Fundraising is reported on as part of the Trustees Annual Report which can be found on the website entitled Financial Statement 2016.

4. Corporate Partnerships

The charity relies on donations to fund its work and partnerships with companies assist the charity in achieving its aims and objectives.

We are proud though to be an independent charity which represents the voice of people affected by osteoporosis and fragility fractures. As such we have a robust statement which outlines how we work with companies, including pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers.

The principles the charity is governed by in this area are outlined in our Working with Companies Statement. See Appendix 2. We ensure transparency with our beneficiaries by listing our Company Partners and publishing our Financial Accounts on our website.

5. Research

The charity funds a research programme made possible by the generosity of its members and donors. The charity is a member of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC); The charity is committed to the AMRC governance guidelines of accountability and probity in the allocation of grants and awards for research in order to uphold the standards which enabled the charity to obtain a certificate in 'Best Practice in Medical and Health Research Peer Review'.

The key criteria for research grant applicants are:

- To qualify for a research grant, proposals must demonstrate the following principles: excellence, financial need, sustainability, relevance, originality and pathway to impact.
- To be eligible to apply, applicants must be based at a university, postgraduate institute, medical school, NHS trust or Health Board in the UK or other British Islands.
- Applications for any one grant round will be restricted to one per lead investigator.
- The charity will consider "top up" funding, when a grant is awarded to supplement funds that have already been secured by another funder in order to support ambitious projects.
- The charity will only fund direct costs in line with the AMRC policy. This may include: salary of the applicant (and/or scientific/technical assistant excluding

PhD), the running costs (consumables) of the project and/or the purchase of items of essential equipment (justified)

- All applications must include a clear plan for public and patient involvement (PPI).
- Given the significant cost of conducting phase II/III clinical trials, direct support by the charity for numerous large-scale trials is not a viable option.
- The charity does not directly fund animal research.

The Research Strategy sets out how the Research Programme identifies potential research collaborators and seeks to form partnerships with other funders.

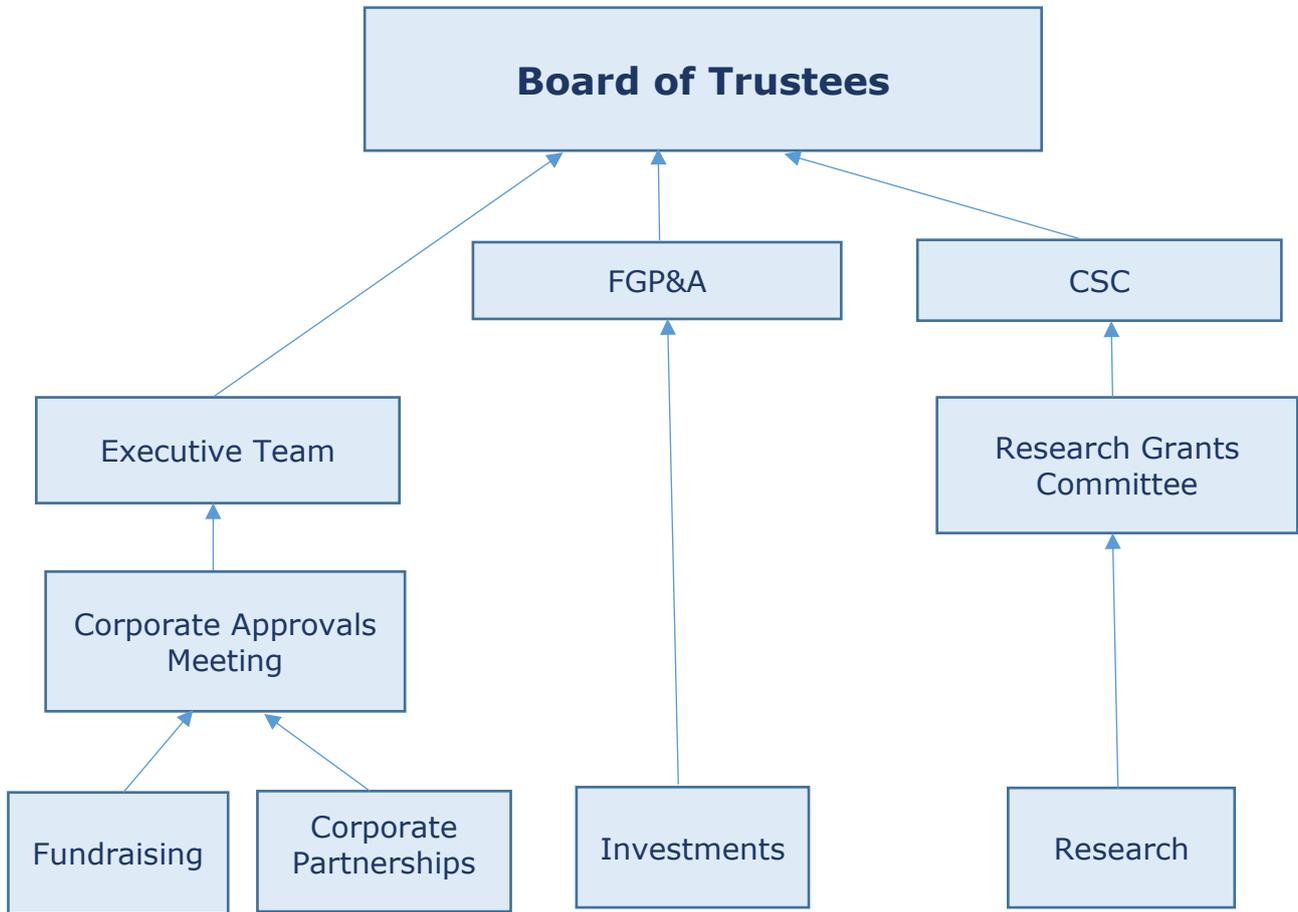
6. Investments

Our investment portfolio is currently managed by independent investment advisors. Investments are held in a multi-asset class diversified fund which ensures an appropriate level of risk and return for the charity.

The Finance, General Purposes & Audit Committee (FGP&A) monitors the investments and undertakes quarterly reviews of investment performance at FGP&A Committee meetings. The investment advisors are required to attend the FGP&A Committee meeting annually in order to give a formal presentation on investment performance.

The Charity is currently developing an Ethical Investment Policy in line with the Charity's strategic aims that will consider an evidence based approach to any ethical restrictions.

Accountability Flow



Working with Companies Statement

The Royal Osteoporosis Society relies on donations to fund its work and partnerships with for-profit companies can help with the charity's vision to create a brighter future for people with fragile bones.

We are proud to be an independent charity which represents the voice of people affected by osteoporosis and fragility fractures, who are at the centre of all that we do as a charity.

The following principles set out how the organisation collaborates with companies, including pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers:

- Any partnership must clearly support and align with our objectives. It must be in pursuit of our mission, with public good, patient benefit and welfare as the primary aims.
- Whenever we partner with a Company we do so with the belief that the partnership will have a positive effect, and be mutually beneficial and of benefit to those with or at risk of osteoporosis and fragility fractures across the UK; that the relationship enhances people's awareness of us and thus they think better of us.
- We strive to abide by the principles of independence, integrity and transparency. To preserve this, the charity will not recommend or explicitly endorse individual products, medical devices or treatments.
- We will always seek to work with a minimum of two companies per sector, to not give one company competitive advantage. Where this is not possible, for example with new innovations, each proposal will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- All partnerships must comply with the relevant guidance set out by the Charity Commission. All partnerships with pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers must comply with the code of practice for the *Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry* or the *Association of British Healthcare Industries*.
- The level of income the charity receives from pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers is capped at 15% of total fundraised income per annum. This information is published in our Financial Accounts on our website www.theros.org.uk.

- Companies applying to work with the charity will be assessed on an individual basis using set criteria. Decisions will be made based on available evidence. Reasonable endeavours will be made to understand the relevant background of a company, individual or product before a decision is reached.
- The charity commits to following a clear process for deciding whether a relationship with a company can be approved. This assures the quality and governance aspects of all applicants.
- It is our policy to assist the media if they approach us for comment about a specific product or service. In this situation, if we feel that the media request is relevant and worth our investment in time, whether that company is a partner or not, we will seek, where possible, to provide an expert, evidence based impartial opinion on that product.
- All advertising must meet all the requirements of the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) code and must pass the test set out by the Advertising Standards Authority that "All marketing communications should be legal, decent, honest and truthful and be prepared with a sense of responsibility to consumers and to society."
- The charity commits to ensuring, its relationships are transparent and honest and all funding, sponsorship or advertising arrangements with companies are clearly defined and recorded.
- Wherever possible, the charity commits to ensuring our partnerships with companies are governed by relevant legal agreements and contracts.

Our annual income figure is published in our Financial Accounts on our website www.theros.org.uk.

A list of our Company Partners is available on our website in the interest of transparency. <https://theros.org.uk/about-ros/annual-report/>