



Chair of the Board of Scripture Union NI

About Scripture Union NI

Scripture Union Northern Ireland is part of the worldwide Scripture Union movement. Working with the churches, Scripture Union aims to:

- Make God's Good News known to children, young people and families
- Encourage people of all ages to meet God daily through the Bible and prayer, so that they may come to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, grow in Christian maturity and become both committed church members and servants of a world in need.

The outworking of these aims varies across the globe, as local movements in over 120 countries work in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ and in reliance on the Holy Spirit in a way which is appropriate to their particular context. SU's work in Northern Ireland began with Portrush CSSM in 1893. The first boys' camp was at Carrickfinn in 1928, with the first girls' camp taking place in Guysmere in 1933. A committee was formed in 1947, the first part time staff member appointed in 1953, schools' work developed throughout the 60's, SUNI became a company in 1970, moved to its own premises in 1988, and has gone from strength to strength in the decades since then. Many things have changed over the years, but we remain a mission movement with a central focus on the Bible, seeking to help children and young people across Northern Ireland discover the Good News of God. The three core areas of work for SUNI are Schools, Camps & Missions and Ministry Development. Today, SUNI runs well over 40 camps and missions each summer, supports SU groups in almost 250 schools, trains dozens of pupil leaders each year, has local Schools workers in 10 areas across the province and provides 700 Bible notes each quarter. With 26 members of staff and around 2,500 volunteers partnering with local churches across Northern Ireland, SUNI reaches over 12,000 children and young people with the Good News every year. SUNI has recently outlined its strategy to 2030, establishing clear goals for moving forward in each area of the work as we hold to four key values of Collaboration, Dignity, Excellence and Integrity. Our strategic priorities for the next 5 years are:

- Biblical Depth
- People Development
- Transformative Delivery
- Underpinning all we seek to do are the five foundations of Spiritual Disciplines, Excellent Governance, Financial Stability, Compelling Communication and Adept Administration.

The role of chair of the board

Responsibility for the governance of SUNI rests with its Board of Trustees (known as Council). The number of trustees serving on Council varies but is generally between 9 and 12. The Chair of the Board is stepping down after several years of faithful service and Council is seeking a new Chair to lead Council in its governance of the charity.

The new Chair of the Board will play a crucial role in SUNI delivering on its strategy, helping shape the Board's membership and capabilities to match the development of SUNI and the opportunities and challenges we will face. The Chair will also need to share our heart for reaching all children in Northern Ireland with the good news of Jesus through schools' ministry, camps and missions, and ministry development.

Chair of Trustees Job Description

The primary tasks of the Chair are outlined below.

1. Leading the Board to fulfil its responsibilities

- a. Taking a lead on ensuring that SUNI is focused on and achieving its charitable aims, and complying with relevant legislation/regulations, policies, charity or company law
- b. Ensuring the Board is equipped with the necessary information and tools to review, appraise and support the vision, strategy and work of SUNI
- c. Being willing to interrogate the information provided to the Board to ensure it is transparent, complete and accurate, and encouraging all Board members to do likewise
- d. Ensure the Board's membership and capabilities develop to match the needs of SUNI and the opportunities and challenges we will face
- e. Reviews of SUNI's long-term strategic aims and operational performance

2. Chairing meetings effectively

- a. Ensuring the agenda and conversation is focused on governance and strategic matters
- b. Facilitating robust discussion and sound decision making
- c. Monitoring the implementation of decisions taken by the Board

3. Building a constructive relationship with the General Director and any sub-committees of Council

- a. Developing an effective relationship with the General Director, characterised by support, interest and a willingness to hold them to account
- b. The relationship between the General Director and Chair is crucial. An effective relationship between a CEO and Chair is characterised by the following:-
 - Knowing each other outside of the meetings so that a relationship can be formed
 - Openness and honesty
 - Building respect for and understanding of each other's different abilities
 - Having clearly talked through and written down roles/guidelines on expectations of each other

- Feeding back to each other what is going well and what is not going well
 - Praising each other successes, while at the same time tackling difficult issues
 - Supporting each other prayerfully and personally
- c. Be part of, and communicate regularly with the chairs of, any sub-committees to ensure oversight of current matters. Currently, there is one sub-committee, known as ExCo, which provides input on a range of financial and operational matters and which is chaired by the Treasurer
 - d. Build a positive working relationship with the Treasurer

4. Developing an effective Board

- a. Supporting the recruitment of new trustees who will provide strategic support, aiding SUNI to achieve its vision
- b. Harnessing the skills, experience and energy of Council to its common purpose
- c. Leading the performance appraisal of Council on an annual basis
- d. Attending and being a member of working groups when appropriate

5. Liaising between Council and General Director, staff and external stakeholders as appropriate

- a. Keeping up to date with the charity's affairs, including regularly liaising with the General Director, Finance Manager and Treasurer to stay informed about SUNI's work and finances
- b. Representing SUNI to funders, partners and other external stakeholders on occasion
- c. Representing Council in conversations with the General Director
- d. Acting as final stage adjudicator in disciplinary, grievance and complaints procedures as required
- e. Developing an oversight of SUNI's ministry including keeping up to date with current priorities, issues or concerns affecting any aspect of SUNI

Time commitment

In accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Chair is appointed for a term of one year and eligible for re-election at the end of the one-year term. It is envisaged by Council that the new Chair of the Board will assume this role for a 3-year period, which may be extended for a further 3-year term subject to mutual agreement.

We anticipate that the Chair needs to be able to give an average of 16 to 20 hours per month to fulfil their role.

Approximately 30% of time is spent in meetings, 20% of time is spent preparing for meetings and the other 50% would be a combination of emails, assisting with ad hoc queries, progressing follow up actions from meetings, driving forward new ideas and overall keeping a watching brief/inputting into wider matters affecting the organisation as and when required.

In practical terms, the role involves the following:

Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to ad hoc emails with SUNI staff, primarily the General Director, PA to the General Director and Finance Manager, pertaining to matters arising. • Being available to assist with queries or concerns relating to matters arising as necessary.
Regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending meetings of ExCo (currently once per month except July and August) and preparing for these meetings by reading the papers in advance. • Catch up phone call with General Director (usually one per month). • Catch up phone call with Treasurer (usually one per month). • Preparation for Council meetings to include inputting into the agenda, reviewing and approving the minutes from the previous Council meeting before these are circulated to other Trustees and reading any other relevant papers in advance. • Chairing Council meetings. There are 9 scheduled Council meetings each year – in each month apart from July, August and December. January is a half day on a Saturday; the other meetings take place on Tuesday evenings. • Following up and/or progressing any actions from the most recent Council meeting before the next one.
Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the annual Board appraisal at the January half day Council meeting. • Holding an annual appraisal with the General Director. • Reviewing the draft budget in advance of circulation to Council; raising and seeking to address any queries arising with the Finance Manager, General Director and Treasurer. • Attending and helping to organise the annual Staff / Council meal. • Reviewing and commenting on the Annual Accounts before these are circulated ahead of the AGM. • Holding the role of Deputy Chair of the Crisis Communication Plan (and, in the General Director’s absence, the Chair role). This is applicable on an ongoing basis but is primarily relevant throughout July and August.
Every 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending a Crisis Communication Plan simulation (2-3 hours during a working day at SUNI’s offices with the Senior Management Team). • Leading the review of any sub-committees’ terms of reference. • Leading the review of SUNI Council’s Trustee Terms of Reference (next due for review September 2027). • Leading the review of SUNI Council’s Trustee Recruitment Policy (next due for review October 2027).
Ad hoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having conversations with Trustees approaching the end of their current term to discuss future plans and re-appointment. • Leading meetings with external professional advisers as necessary. • Taking the lead on the drafting and/or review of other governance related documents as and when required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising and leading additional Council meetings to facilitate unique items of business if necessary, typically in conjunction with the Treasurer and/or General Director. • Facilitating regular skills audits amongst the Trustees and providing a lead to Council in connection with the appointment of new Trustees. • Delivering an induction to Council for new Trustees, alongside the General Director and Finance Manager.
--	---

The role of the Chair is voluntary, and not remunerated.

The current Chair will step down from the role in November 2026. We anticipate a new Chair will become a Trustee in mid-2026, attending some meetings before taking on the responsibilities of the Chair from the AGM in November 2026.

Administrative support

The Chair will be supported by a secretary (the PA to the General Director) who will provide administrative support by:

- Arranging meetings
- Sending documents to Council members
- Taking minutes of the meetings

Person specification, experience and qualities

The Chair will need to demonstrate the following qualities:

- Mature Christian faith and character and actively involved in their local church
- Commitment to the aims, beliefs and working principles of Scripture Union NI
- Full agreement with the Scripture Union NI Statement of Ethos (available at interview)
- Understanding and interest in youth and children’s ministry and young people
- Proven leadership ability
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to duties as Chair
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Informed and independent judgement
-

We are looking for an individual with the following experience.

- Experience as a trustee is essential
- Experience chairing meetings is essential
- Experience of charity governance, finance and fundraising is desirable
- Experience leading an organisation through a period of growth and development is desirable
-

Further details in relation to the revised governance structure of SUNI can be provided on request.

How to apply

To apply, please submit an expression of interest, explaining why you are interested in the role (400 words max), by email to damian@suni.co.uk by 7th August 2026.