



Director Application 2024 - 2026

The Oxford Farming Conference (OFC) is a charity and a limited company. The conference itself, which runs in early January every year, has become ever more high-profile within the farming industry, but more importantly to wider audiences and stakeholders. The OFC's mission is to *'Inform, Challenge and Inspire'*.

The conference is designed and run by the OFC Council, a secretariat team and a marketing professional agency. You can view the Council at www.ofc.org.uk

The OFC Council is made up of 10 voluntary directors, one of whom is the treasurer. With the exception of the treasurer, each director serves a three-year term. In other words, the make-up of the Council changes every year, with three new directors joining and three retiring. Its members are drawn from a range of agricultural, agri-business, land management and food industry areas.

The chairmanship of the OFC changes each year too, with the Chairman being chosen by the Council from among the three directors serving their third year. The annual report and accounts can be downloaded from the website.

The OFC is a charity with a remit to educate and transfer knowledge in the agricultural sector. As part of our charitable undertakings, the OFC supports young people to attend the conference and offers a bursary program to first time attendees.

The requirements of an OFC Director

We are now inviting expressions of interest for joining the Council for the 2024 - 2026 conferences; to reflect the disruption caused by successive lockdowns, applicants do NOT have to have attended the conference in the past for their application to be considered. The positions are wholly honorary but reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Those selected as members will be invited to attend two Council meetings in November (in London with remote dial in an option) and December (in Oxford in person) (prior to formal appointment) and will then be expected to attend approximately eight Council meetings each year (some are online meetings) and the Oxford Farming Conference itself for their three-year term in office. Heavy use of IT is made (documents are shared through Teams, for example).

In addition to meetings, the time commitment expected of directors is expected to be 1-2 days per month, perhaps more depending on particular responsibilities taken on. The time commitment of the Chairman is considerably greater. Your availability to travel to meetings, and your ability to give the time needed to the organisation of the conference, reading board meeting minutes etc, is vital, but we use online platforms to ensure participation is as inclusive as possible.

Successful candidates will be expected to attend the 2023 Conference (4 - 6 January), before being formally appointed as a Director, at the close of the Conference. Reasonable accommodation and travel expenses will be paid (full details of the expenses policy can be obtained from the secretariat by emailing secretariat@ofc.org.uk).

More information about the Conference is available at www.ofc.org.uk and more details about the Council can be obtained from the Secretariat on 0845 6520 945 or email secretariat@ofc.org.uk. The Secretariat will also supply contact details for directors should you wish to talk through the role in more detail.

The closing date for 2024 – 2026 Council applications is **5pm on Friday 8 July 2022**.

Interviews

We will score applications against the Candidate profile shown below and will be in touch with shortlisted candidates by 28 July 2022 to arrange interviews, which will be held in person (venue to be confirmed) or online in early September 2022. We will only seek references from shortlisted candidates. Appointments will be confirmed at the OFC Council meeting on 9 September 2023 and successful applicants notified thereafter. Successful applicants will be expected to keep their appointment confidential until confirmed via press announcement in October.

Candidate Profile

Core skills and attributes that we seek from Directors are:

Team Player	Track record in working as a key player as part of a team, including conflict resolution and negotiation skills.
Organisational Ability	A well organised individual with good administrative abilities, who can manage their business or employment along with the commitment of being a Director of OFC and other responsibilities.
Time Management	The ability to respond to internal and external communications in a timely manner, meeting deadlines and keeping appointments.
Project Management	Being confident in the application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve specific project objectives.
Communication	Effective written and verbal communication skills, including in stakeholder management and/or public speaking.
Commercial Skills	The ability to understand budgets, profit and loss, set prices and other business management skills. Fundraising and sponsorship skills are particularly welcome.
Leadership	Demonstration of ability in leading a business, team, sector, or community.
I.T. Skills	Ability to use Teams and other I.T. systems effectively.
Network	Broad network of contacts, established or growing industry profile, and a willingness to expand your network for the benefit of the Conference

This year, in addition, we are particularly interested in individuals who can demonstrate skills in one or more of the following areas:

Governance and board/ committee experience	Experience of developing and implementing governance processes in charitable or private sectors and being well-versed in the workings of organisational boards or committees.
Business development	Experience of pursuing strategic opportunities for a particular business or organization, for example by cultivating partnerships or other commercial relationships.
Media/Press	Experience in audio visual, press and/or media, across traditional media or digital platforms.
Farmers	We seek to have a balance of production sectors represented on the Council and this year would be particularly interested to hear from those with experience in environment/natural capital, dairy, poultry, pigs, and those within the tenanted and organic sector.

Diversity and Inclusion

The OFC believes creating an inclusive and diverse culture supports the attraction of talented people, improves effectiveness, and enhances the success of OFC. We value diversity of experience, skills, knowledge and expertise, as well as gender, race and socio-economic background, as can be seen by the existing members of our Council listed on our website.

Our Board brings together people with different experience and backgrounds, and sometimes divergent opinions, but with shared goals. Whilst we have set out here the main criteria that we are looking for, applications are welcome from all individuals who want to contribute to the future of the Conference and the farming industry – please do not feel that you have to ‘tick every box’ to be considered.

All of our Council members are available to speak with anyone who may wish to find out more about the roles.

A copy of the Oxford Farming Conference Volunteers’ Handbook can be obtained from the Secretariat.

APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form and attach it with your CV (on no more than two sides of A4), and email both to: secretariat@ofc.org.uk by 5pm on Friday 8 July 2022

Your Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Mobile:	
Email:	

1. What are the three main reasons why you believe people should attend the OFC?

1	
2	
3	

2. What is your motivation for wishing to become a Director of the OFC?

3. For each of the core skills and attributes (described above), please outline one example from your employment, business or voluntary experience which demonstrates how you meet each criteria area.

Team Player	
Organisational Ability	
Time Management	
Communication	
Commercial Skills	
Leadership	
I.T. Skills	
Network	

4. From the other key skills that OFC is looking for in a Director, please choose from the following.

1	Governance & board/ committee experience
2	Business development
3	Media/Press/Audio Visual
4	Farmers - environment, dairy, pigs, poultry, fresh produce
5	Other

Please describe your experience in **two** of these key areas. Please explain what this experience could bring to the future development of the OFC.

- 1.
- 2.

5. Which three things would you like to change about the Conference and why?

1	
2	
3	

6. Which speaker did you find most inspiring at the Conference in recent years? Please also explain why.

7. What is the single biggest issue facing UK farmers at the current time, and how should OFC focus on it and offer solutions?

8. How will you meet the time commitment required for being a Director of the OFC with your other commitments?

9. **Before making an appointment to the Council we undertake due diligence on each candidate. Is there anything you feel that we should be aware of regarding your suitability to be a Director of the OFC?**

10. **Please supply the names and contact details for two references:**

Referee 1	
Name	
Email	
Phone No	
Association to you	

Referee 2	
Name	
Email	
Phone No	
Association to you	

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