

STRATEGY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Purpose of the Strategy Board

- 1.1.** The National Autism Project is a new initiative supported by The Shirley Foundation. Its aim is to provide authoritative recommendations on autism research and practice and to raise awareness at government level and among funders of how increased investment will benefit those with autism and society as a whole. By this means the National Autism Project intends to increase substantially the proportion of national resource, both statutory and charitable, devoted to research and intervention in the field of autism.
- 1.2.** The Strategy Board will establish a group of experts, consisting of leading UK researchers and practitioners in the field, to advise it, and will ensure that the group's composition is balanced so that all areas of research activity can be properly consulted.
- 1.3.** The Strategy Board will draw on the knowledge and experience of the group of experts and work in partnership with other relevant UK organisations to make recommendations about research and practice priorities. It will also identify the economic as well as the health and social bases of effective funding allocations.
- 1.4.** By identifying both those areas of research and practice that are likely to provide the greatest benefit and those for which information is currently lacking, the Strategy Board will be in a position to give an authoritative opinion on the evidence base supporting the effectiveness of different interventions and practices in autism and thus the value of further work in these areas.
- 1.5.** The Strategy Board will publish its conclusions in a report to be completed within 18 months of the first Strategy Board meeting
- 1.6.** The Strategy Board will consider before publication how the report can be used to greatest advantage, and it will agree at that stage on the development and future activities of the National Autism Project, with the primary aim of increasing the funding of research and practice in autism.

2. Membership

- 2.1.** The Strategy Board will include individuals, distinguished in their respective fields and influential at national policy level.
- 2.2.** The duration of membership will be not greater than 3 years.
- 2.3.** A Project Director for the National Autism Project has been appointed and will be a member of the Strategy Board.

3. Accountability

- 3.1.** The Project Director will be responsible for routine communication between the Strategy Board and the Shirley Foundation on Project progress and financial and governance issues.
- 3.2.** He or she will be accountable to the Strategy Board for the progress and management of the Project and to the Shirley Foundation for its finances.

4. Review

- 4.1.** The Strategy Board will receive a written progress report on the Project at least a week before each meeting.
- 4.2.** The Strategy Board will review progress towards its goals at each meeting and ensure that its Terms of Reference remain relevant.

5. Working methods

- 5.1.** The Strategy Board will meet at 6 monthly intervals (dates, times and venues to be decided).
- 5.2.** The Project Director will send the Strategy Board a bimonthly update.
- 5.3.** Agendas will be agreed by the Chair, and the Project Director will be responsible for circulation of papers in a timely way beforehand.
- 5.4.** Each meeting will review the progress of the Project.
- 5.5.** Draft minutes will be produced by the Project Director and agreed by the Chair of the Strategy Board.

6. Communication

- 6.1.** Other communication will be primarily by email.

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