

Position Profile

Scotland's Regeneration Forum

Chief Executive Officer





Contents

1. Welcome Note from Kate Wimpess, Chair of the Board	3
2. The Organisation.....	3
3. The Opportunity	5
4. Preferred Candidate Background	6
5. Remuneration.....	8
6. The Recruitment Process.....	8



1. Welcome Note from Kate Wimpres, Chair of the Board

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new CEO.

SURF's overall objective is to improve the lives and opportunities of residents in Scotland's disadvantaged communities. To meet this aim we provide the space for all sectors and players in Scottish community regeneration to share their knowledge and experience; stimulate challenging debate about community regeneration policy and practice; maintain a high status for community regeneration on Scotland's political agenda; and provide relevant and constructive feedback to key policy-makers.

SURF currently has over 300 members and over 3000 individual contacts in its extensive network of practitioners, policy makers and academics. The prestigious SURF Awards, and SURF's innovative Alliance for Action, Shared Learning and Sector Connector services, have helped to promote and inform more collaborative and successful regeneration in Scotland's communities, towns, cities and regions.

SURF's USP is its ability to inclusively and intelligently connect all players, disciplines and levels of regeneration in Scotland and beyond. It is internationally respected as being independent, informed and influential. SURF has deliberately remained a lean and agile social enterprise, often admired for punching well above its weight.

As Andy Milne steps down after 18 years as SURF CEO, we now seek an outstanding leader to build on our success and actively promote better understanding and practical cooperation between all regeneration partners, sectors and perspectives. You will have the opportunity to bring fresh thinking, creativity and ultimately make a difference for communities across Scotland.

This role will be both rewarding and challenging as we seek to continue to strengthen the organisation and respond to impacts of the unfolding pandemic.

SURF members range from small community groups to large private companies, and include local authorities, housing associations, health boards, academic institutions, professional bodies, and third sector organisations. Your job will be to harness their thinking, trust, enthusiasm and resources to improve lives across the country.

I hope the following pages inspire you to apply.

Thank you.

Kate Wimpres
Chair of the Board



2. The Organisation

Scotland's Regeneration Forum (SURF) was established in 1992 as a not-for-profit membership organisation, limited by guarantee. Since its inception, SURF has operated from two basic principles:

- Successful and sustainable regeneration is only achievable when all aspects of physical, social, economic and cultural regeneration are addressed in a holistic approach.
- The people who are the intended beneficiaries of any regeneration effort must be meaningfully involved in the process if it is to be successful in planning, implementation and maintenance.

With the overall objective to improve the lives and opportunities of residents in Scotland's disadvantaged communities, SURF's key aims are:

- To provide a neutral and inclusive space for all sectors and players in Scottish community regeneration to share their knowledge and experience
- To stimulate challenging debate about community regeneration policy and practice
- To maintain a high status for community regeneration on Scotland's political agenda
- To provide relevant and constructive feedback to key policy-makers

As an organisation SURF prides itself on celebrating the successful regeneration efforts of communities, highlighting the challenges projects, organisations and communities face on a day to day basis, whilst also providing a voice to those who are often not heard.

SURF's members range in size from small community groups to some of Scotland's largest private companies and also include local authorities, housing associations, health boards, academic institutions, professional bodies, voluntary organisations and charities. Providing the primary arena for debate on community regeneration in Scotland, the SURF network acts as a channel for information, consultation and policy proposals, based on the knowledge and experience of its extensive membership and wider connections.

SURF's three main income sources are from service delivery contracts/grants, membership fees and event fees with the first presently accounts for more than 70% of SURF's income. The second two sources are smaller in scale but still sufficient to ensure adequate political and financial independence, which is essential for how SURF is perceived and how it operates.

3. The Opportunity

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO will be responsible for the leadership and management of the operational and financial affairs of the charity including developing, promoting and facilitating strategies, objectives and policies and ensuring the organisation meets all its legal and statutory requirements.

The CEO will also ensure SURF continues to be a 'safe' and inclusive forum for regeneration practitioners, policy makers and academics to exchange their cross-sector experience, knowledge and ideas. Its role is to enhance shared understanding and cooperation; and in the process to inform and influence better regeneration policy and practice.

Key Priorities:

- Work collaboratively with the SURF Chair and Board of Directors to ensure the continued success and long-term financial sustainability of the organisation, through ongoing evolutions in its operating context and the needs and priorities of its member organisations
- Ensure SURF continues to remain relevant, productive and consistent with the interests, concerns and priorities of the SURF membership and funding partners and continues to positively respond to the changing external environment
- Maintain and enhance SURF's reputation, credibility and profile, re-affirming its position as the collective voice of the diverse regeneration sector and ensuring its clear ethos of reducing the impact of poverty and inequality is consistently reflected in all activities
- Ensure SURF continues to play a leading role in creating cross-sectoral alliances and developing and shaping policy, including influencing Scottish Government's thinking on future economic development and regeneration policy, investment and practice
- Build networks whilst developing and maintaining strategic partnerships that will ensure SURF delivers on its vision of alleviating poverty and inequality whilst also improving wellbeing and opportunities in Scotland's most disadvantaged and disconnected communities
- Continue to raise awareness of the positive impact of regeneration and proactively promote best practice and success stories through the SURF annual awards, increasing participation across all categories and geographically across Scotland
- Broaden and diversify SURF's income base, for reasons of operational independence as well as financial sustainability
- Oversee the appropriate development of SURF and its role, aims, capacity, activities and influence, as Scotland's Regeneration Forum

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership and work with the Executive Committee and wider Board of Directors to develop and implement strategic and operational plans, monitoring and reporting progress against key priorities



- Ensure effective systems of robust governance, risk management and financial management are in place and regularly reviewed
- Lead by example, adopting a style which inspires, empowers and develops the individual and collective capabilities of the SURF staff team
- Build effective relationships with Scottish Government's Regeneration policy team and SURF's diverse membership ensuring as an organisation SURF is responsive to the external environment and the needs of Scotland's most disadvantaged and disconnected communities
- Maintain and develop mutually productive and influential relationships with SURF's existing and emerging key partners
- Ensuring SURF has sufficient support and resources to successfully carry out and develop its work as an inclusive and independent forum
- Maintaining and developing appropriate systems of monitoring, evaluating and enhancing SURF's activities and outputs
- Provide informed and influential comment on current and emerging regeneration issues, on behalf of SURF in a variety of public and targeted formats and setting
- Effectively promote SURF and its role, views and aspirations
- Ensure the SURF board is broadly representative, well informed and appropriately engaged with SURF's ongoing work and activities

Dynamics of the job

Complexity – Understanding the differing perspectives and priorities and gaining the trust and participation of a wide range of regeneration stakeholders.

Creativity – Within limited resources, devising and delivering diverse programmes of activity that meet the needs of different partners while raising the wider profile of SURF and the challenges and successes of collaborative regeneration efforts.

Connections – Cultivating formal and informal good relations with leading policy and practitioner figures in all regeneration sectors, national and Local government officials and elected representatives, sectoral network leaders, campaigning groups and community-based leaders, media contacts and academic experts.

4. Preferred Candidate Background

A proactive, solutions focused and visionary leader with relevant experience of leading either an organisation or business function to deliver against key strategic priorities, and relevant regeneration knowledge or experience. As an accomplished communicator, you will have instant credibility when engaging with both internal and external stakeholders, coupled with the ability to create strategic alliances and encourage increased collaboration.

Key skills and experience

- Detailed knowledge and understanding of the economic and social challenges associated with Scotland's poorest and most disadvantaged communities
- Relevant experience of assessing, developing, delivering and influencing regeneration policy and practice
- Knowledge of the historical development, current challenges and anticipated dynamics of regeneration policy, agencies, partnership processes and delivery practice in Scotland
- A proven track record of strategic leadership coupled with experience of managing, motivating, and developing staff both individually and collectively
- Direct experience of effectively managing resources and budgets, as well as experience of delivering long term financial sustainability and value for money
- Experience of leading both strategic and operational planning processes
- Excellent leadership skills with a focus on strong, positive team culture
- Strong stakeholder management experience coupled with a proven track record in building and maintaining a wide range of collaborative relationships and partnerships
- Experience of dealing with a range of complex issues in both a political and demanding stakeholder environment
- An understanding of the expectations of Members within the context of a representative organisation
- Demonstrable awareness of the opportunities that emerging digital technology in delivering operational efficiencies and transforming member engagement
- A good understanding of positive governance; ideally with direct experience of working with a voluntary board
- Working knowledge of the financial, administrative and legal requirements of managing a charitable social enterprise, operating under company law
- A competent and effective public speaker

Personal Attributes

- Commitment to SURF's mission to alleviate poverty and inequality and improve the lives and opportunities of residents in Scotland's disadvantaged communities
 - Strategic thinker with creative and pragmatic problem-solving skills
 - The ability to authentically engage personally with a wide range of individuals, from different backgrounds and perspectives, in a way which enables the building of mutual understanding and the development of trust and cooperation.
 - High level of interpersonal communication (verbal and written) and influencing skills
 - Willingness to listen and take opinions of key stakeholders into account
 - The ability to intelligently and creatively analyse information and undertake robust options appraisals and present research and evidence
 - Strong personal and professional resilience
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5. Remuneration

Salary: £60,000

Pension: Stakeholder Pension Scheme (Matched contribution up to 6%)

Holidays: 27 days + public holidays

6. The Recruitment Process

Interested candidates should provide a tailored CV and covering letter, explaining your motivation for applying, to douglasadam@livingstonjames.com

Key Dates:

Shortlist meeting between Livingston James & SURF w/c 30th November

Final Panel Interviews w/c 7th December
