

Samaritans Research Ethics Board Member

Information Pack

We are looking for **2** people from relevant **academic and professional backgrounds in research**, to join the **Samaritans Research Ethics Board (SREB)**.

This role is home-based; there are two meetings per year (online), in addition to 3-6 hours a month of home working.

This voluntary (unpaid) role has a three-year term.

The application deadline is 10am on Monday 13th February.

About Samaritans

Samaritans is a charity working across the UK and Ireland with a vision that fewer people die from suicide.

- We provide free emotional support to anyone who needs to talk to someone through our 24-hour listening service, or through email, letter and face to face support.
- We work with communities, such as schools, workplaces, railways and prisons to encourage and support people to develop skills to be there for others.
- We run nationwide and community campaigns to raise awareness and influence decisionmakers in suicide prevention.
- We conduct research to understand our services, service-users, and to influence public policy to drive change that helps to save more lives.

You can find out more about us on our website here

<https://www.samaritans.org/aboutsamaritans/our-organisation/what-we-do/>

Samaritans Research Ethics Board (SREB)

The Samaritans Research Ethics Board (SREB) is an independent group, which provides ethical assurance of research within Samaritans.

- The aim of the SREB is to help ensure that any research projects and activities, that are carried out within or on behalf of Samaritans, meet the organisation's research ethical standards, as outlined in [Samaritans Research Ethics Policy](#).
- The SREB provides independent ethical review of research deemed to carry a higher level of risk and contributes to oversight and assurance of the overall research ethics review process.
- The members of SREB review research applications and provide recommendations for approval (or not).
- The SREB meets twice a year. Meetings take place during the day, usually for two hours in the afternoon. SREB members usually work alongside Samaritans Central Office staff, but may also meet other volunteers, or external researchers who are leading research activities, and may on occasion meet trustees, and volunteers in senior roles.
- The SREB will comprise up to 6 independent members (including the Chair of SREB), offering diverse expertise and experience.
- Members can be from a variety of academic disciplines or related professions (such as psychology, sociology, public health or market research), funding organisations or national research ethics bodies. In addition, members are appointed on the basis of expertise by experience – for example, as a Samaritans service user or volunteer, or someone with lived experience of suicide or self-harm.

What's involved?

- SREB members review research applications for ethical approval electronically and provide recommendations to Samaritans as to whether the research should be approved.
- This will also involve providing detailed feedback to support recommendations and requests for changes or further information on applications where needed.
- SREB members may also be asked to review amendments to applications based on SREB recommendations.
- SREB members will generally convene 'virtually' by email or virtual meetings (where needed) to discuss specific applications.
- Twice a year the SREB will meet virtually to discuss matters relating to the SREB and processes for ethical review within Samaritans. This will include discussion of a selection of previous applications to review the effectiveness of the process and address any changes needed. Members may be asked to review papers and materials specific to the meeting agenda in advance.

- We ask SREB members to commit to between 3-6 hours a month.
- We ask members to commit to a three-year term, but you may step down from the role at any point during your membership.

What's the process for ethical review?

- There are 3 levels of ethical review within Samaritans (as outlined in in [Samaritans Research Ethics Policy](#)). The SREB are responsible for reviewing level 2 and level 3 applications for ethical approval.
- Level 2 reviews will be conducted by 1-2 members of SREB, including one reviewer with significant expertise in research ethics from a relevant professional discipline or background.
- Level 3 reviews will constitute a 'full review' and will be conducted by 3-4 members, depending on the nature of the project and the different areas of expertise required, and will always include at least one expert by lived experience.

You can find further information about what's involved and SREB member responsibilities in the **role description**.

Who are we looking for?

- Samaritans is looking to appoint **2** new SREB members with relevant professional expertise;
"relevant academic and professional backgrounds in research related to the work of Samaritans (e.g. psychology, sociology, public health, user research, funding organisations, or national research ethics bodies) holding a postgraduate qualification or equivalent professional experience"
- We do not expect members to have prior experience of working on an Ethics Board or Committee, but such experience is desirable.
- We are keen for the SREB to include people who have a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds. For example, we are keen to hear from people who are from minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+, or living with a disability.

To help you decide if you'd like to apply to be a SREB member, please look at the **role description**. To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and expertise detailed.

Professional development opportunities

- Invitation to attend events related to this project and other Samaritans' research projects, for example 'Research Lunches' where recent Samaritans' publications are presented and discussed.
- Access to a suite of learning and professional development courses hosted by Samaritans Learning & Development team.
- Develop new skills and experience through working at a strategic level for a national charity.

How do I apply?

To apply for this role, you should complete and submit the application form along with a short (no more than 2-page) CV detailing your relevant experience.

Applications should be submitted by 10am on Monday 13th February. You can also email Louise Thomas, Samaritans' Head of Research & Evaluation (l.thomas@samaritans.org) if you have any questions about the role or your application before this.

What's the selection process?

- We will assess all applications against the bullet points listed under '*General qualities & expertise required of SREB member*' in the role description.
- You will be notified about whether your application has been shortlisted. Feedback on applications will be available to all who request it.
- Applications will be reviewed by the Head of Research & Evaluation, and the Chair of the Board.
- Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an informal conversation. This will be an opportunity for us to discuss together whether this role is right for you at this time, and for you to ask any questions. We'll also discuss any extra support or adjustments you might need to take part.
- Recruitment of the role of members is by invitation from the Chair of the SREB and approval by the Chair of the *Policy, Partnerships, and Research Committee*.
- Character references will be requested and taken up.

Additional information

Topics discussed by the SREB include specific factors that are associated with suicide and self-harm, and conversations may include real-life examples. While we work within a supportive environment, with wellbeing support in place, if you think you may find this triggering or distressing, we recommend you do not apply for this position.

Get in touch

If you have any questions or would like to hear more about the role, please contact Louise Thomas, Head of Research & Evaluation, at l.thomas@samaritans.org.