

NUFFIELD FAMILY JUSTICE OBSERVATORY BOARD MEMBER

About the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory

The [Nuffield Family Justice Observatory](#) improves the lives of children and families by using data and research evidence to hold up a mirror to the family justice system.

The research we commission, synthesise or undertake ourselves helps to shed light on children and parents' experiences before, during and after their cases are heard in the family court.

In publishing research, convening discussions between professionals and getting alongside innovative practice, we aim to inspire changes in practice and policy that improve children's and families' lives.

Nuffield FJO was established by the Nuffield Foundation, an independent grant giving organisation, in 2019. Nuffield FJO is fully funded and hosted by the Nuffield Foundation, with funding currently secured until 2031.

The work of the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory has already had an impact on policy and practice within the family justice system. Since 2019 we have:

- Helped to shape the family justice system response to the pandemic, by providing clear insight into how [hearings conducted over video or telephone](#) during lockdown were being experienced.
- Raised awareness of a [hidden practice to deprive children with complex needs](#) of their liberty because of the shortage of suitable provision to meet their needs.
- Drawn attention to the [significant vulnerabilities of children and parents](#) in private law (separating families) cases.
- Exposed [the limited opportunities that children have to participate](#) in private and public law proceedings.
- Shed light on the ways in which [newborn babies are removed from their parents](#) in care proceedings.

We are now looking to increase our impact as an organisation and we are developing a new strategy for 2026-2031 which will focus on working towards a family justice system which:

- Has a shared mission to help children and young people to thrive
- Enables children and families to participate in vital decisions about their lives
- Treats people fairly and with equity.

At this very exciting time for the organisation, candidates will join an enthusiastic and energetic board committed to the mission of improving the lives of families who come into the contact with the FJS, driven by appetite for creating positive social impact.

About the Nuffield FJO Board

The [Nuffield FJO Board](#) is an advisory board, rather than a legal entity, and the ultimate responsibility for the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory rests with the Trustee Board of the Nuffield Foundation. Nevertheless, the Nuffield FJO Board plays an important role, advising the Nuffield FJO on its strategy and supporting its development.

The Board regularly takes stock of progress against the goals of the organisation's strategy and supports the Nuffield FJO team by scanning the horizon and reflecting on the context in which Nuffield FJO is operating to ensure that it is well positioned to make change happen and is anticipating the opportunities and threats lie ahead. Although funding for the Nuffield FJO is currently secure, the Board will also be expected to consider the long-term sustainability of the organisation. In between board meetings board members may be asked to troubleshoot key challenges, provide professional insights and help to expand Nuffield FJO's reach and influence.

We are currently looking to recruit some new members to the Nuffield FJO Board as several of our existing Board members have completed their terms. We are open to applications from a variety of backgrounds, we are particularly keen to receive applications from individuals:

- Pioneering strategic changemaker(s) with experience of leading change across complex systems, ideally involving children's services with education/police/health or similar
- Individuals with knowledge of the Welsh family justice context, including a Wales-wide view of children's social care, family courts, Cafcass Cymru.
- Individuals with senior level experience of children's services (ideally a current or former Director of Children's Services)
- Government/Civil Service policy experience
- Experience of working to increase equity in access to, and experience of, public services.

The Nuffield FJO Board is strongly committed to ensuring that the experiences of children and families are better understood and more visible within the family justice system. The Board has a commitment to equality and diversity underpinning all its work, recognising that different forms of inequalities combine to affect children and families in the family justice system and that Nuffield FJO's work needs to illuminate and address these inequalities. We will expect all applicants to be committed to this approach.

The Board acts collegiately and everyone contributes to the wider board and strategy of the organisation, beyond their own expertise. You will relish the challenge of understanding a range of views which are sometimes at odds.

Board members are expected to attend four meetings per year and undertake additional work in between meetings (such as chairing events or providing ad hoc advice). There is an honorarium of £2,000 per annum. Board members are appointed for three years in the first instance, with the possibility of a further three-year appointment.

Job Description

Board members will be expected to work closely with Jenny Beck, the Chair to:

- adhere to good governance principles
- set the strategy to fulfil the mission and remit of the Nuffield FJO, ensuring that the Nuffield FJO aims are delivered effectively and sustainably,
- review the work programme and budget to ensure that is in line with organisation's strategy
- scan the horizon and consider the context in which Nuffield FJO is operating in order to anticipate future opportunities and risks
- consider the sustainability of the organisation in the medium and long term
- act as ambassadors for the Nuffield FJO, including attending or leading Nuffield FJO events if required.

Person specification

Board members must have:

- a commitment and in-depth understanding of the aims and vision of the organisation
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- strategic vision
- integrity, good and independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- a willingness to speak their mind
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- tact and diplomacy
- good communication and interpersonal skills
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.

Terms of appointment

- **Location:** Board meetings are held at our London office, or via video where necessary.
- **Time commitment:** The Board usually meets around 4 times each year. Meetings are usually scheduled for a two-hour meeting 4.30-6.30pm (meetings in 2026 will be held on 20 July, 28 September and 30 November). Board members should be available for consultation and support outside of meetings, however the overall commitment is not expected to exceed 6-8 full days each year.
- **Terms of appointment:** 3 year term, with the possibility of renewable once.
- **Remuneration:** This role offers an honorarium of £2,000 per annum.

Further information and to apply

To apply, candidates should email a CV and a cover letter (no longer than 2 sides of A4, and which sets out their relevant experience and motivations for applying) to recruitment@nuffieldfoundation.org. Candidates are also welcome to send any questions to this address.

The closing date for applications is 09:30am (GMT) on Monday 16th February with interviews expected to take place w/c March 16th.

We are hopeful that successful candidates will be able to join the Board meeting taking place on Monday 23 March 2026, after which the next Board meeting takes place on Monday 20th July 2026.