Board Handbook

Operation Smile Ireland seeks to reflect the principles and standards of the Charities Governance Code and supporting guidance documents.

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Operation Smile Ireland

Board Governance Handbook *2025*

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Introduction

The Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook sets out Operation Smile Ireland's policies and procedures in relation to all aspects of the charity's governance from the perspective of the Board of Trustees. The handbook documents the legal obligations of the charity trustees as well as the processes that the charity has in place to meet good governance standards, including those set out in the Charities Governance Code.

This handbook will be reviewed every three years, although changes can be proposed at Board meetings and the handbook adapted accordingly. Any change that would affect the constitution of the charity must be ratified at an Annual General Meeting or Emergency General Meeting.

Principles Guiding the Board of Charity Trustees of Operation Smile Ireland

The Board of Operation Smile Ireland is committed to the principles of the Charities Governance Code.

As such, each member of the Board of Operation Smile Ireland is understood to commit to:

1. Advancing the Charitable Purpose of Operation Smile Ireland
2. Behaving with integrity
3. Leading people within Operation Smile Ireland
4. Exercising control over Operation Smile Ireland
5. Working effectively.
6. Being accountable and transparent.

Operation Smile Ireland is currently compliant with the Charities Governance Code.

1. Advancing the Charitable Purpose of Operation Smile Ireland

Charitable purpose has a specific meaning in charity law. The Charities Act 2009 sets out four categories of charitable purpose: prevention or relief of poverty or economic hardship; advancement of education; advancement of religion; and any other purpose that is of benefit to the community – Charities Governance Code.

1.1 The main objects of Operation Smile Ireland are:

To preserve and protect the physical, mental and emotional health of children, with facial and functional deformities throughout the world. See Appendix 1 for summarised copy of our constitution.

These objects fall under the definition of charitable purpose for public benefit as set out in the Charities Act 2009.

1.2 Operation Smile Ireland is satisfied that any private benefit arising to anyone employed or providing services to Operation Smile Ireland is reasonable, necessary and ancillary to the public benefit that our charity provides.

1.3 Operation Smile Ireland conducts a strategic planning process involving the charity trustees, management, staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders and develop a 3-year strategy and strategic implementation plan. This plan is supported by annual operational plans for each functional area.

1.4 The Board of charity trustees commits to ensuring that Operation Smile Ireland has the resources it needs to carry out planned activities.

1.5 The Board of charity trustees regularly review our work to ensure we continue to act in line with our charity's purpose and provide public benefit We regularly review our constitution.

2. Behaving with integrity

Ethics are fundamental in the charity sector. Statements about ethos can undoubtedly play an important role, but it is when these values are lived out that they are at their most powerful. Charity trustees have the power to create an ethical culture and set a tone where agreed values are reflected in everything the charity does. The behaviour of individual charity trustees is very important; they must lead by example – Charities Governance Code.

2.1 The Board of Trustees have agreed the values of Operation Smile Ireland and publicise them widely (for example, on our website, annual report, employee handbook, reception area). The values are:

- **Resilience** – We must reach more patients. The urgent need for cleft care is staggering, the fact remains that every 3 minutes a child is born with a cleft. We remain focused on building healthcare solutions to reach those children still in need of our care to give them the chance to grow up without life-threatening health problems and stigma.

- **Integrity** – As part of a global organization with over 42 years of experience delivering cleft surgical care to some of our world's most challenging places, we remain united under the belief that access to safe surgery is not a privilege, but a universal human right.

- **Impact**– One child's smile becomes a healthier future for an entire community. We strengthen local surgical capacity across 37 countries, improving the overall quality of healthcare where we work, by partnering with local hospitals, and medical professionals to provide training, education, supplies and equipment. We transform lives, communities and local health systems.

- **Compassion** – What if your child was born with a cleft and your family was beyond the reach of hospital care… We remain compelled to find care for our patients, their families, the communities we serve and gratitude for the

volunteers and supporters who, together, help make our medical programmes happen, as part of one global Operation Smile family.

2.2 Operation Smile Ireland has Conflicts of Interests policies which all charity trustees are required to sign on joining the Board of Operation Smile Ireland. See Appendix 2.

The purpose of these policies is to assist charity trustees of Operation Smile Ireland to effectively identify, record and manage any conflicts of interest or loyalty to protect the integrity of Operation Smile Ireland and to ensure that charity trustees act in the best interest of the charity.

A conflict of interest is any situation in which a charity trustee's personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen to, prevent the charity trustee from deciding in the best interests of the charity. This personal interest may be direct or indirect and can include interests of a person connected to the charity trustee. These situations present the risk that a person will decide based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the charity and therefore must be managed accordingly.

2.3 Operation Smile Ireland has a Code of Conduct which all charity trustees are required to sign. This document sets out the standard of behaviour expected from trustees to ensure that:

- Operation Smile Ireland is effective, open and accountable.
- the highest standards of integrity and stewardship are achieved.
- the working relationship between charity trustees and any volunteers or employees is productive and supportive.

See Appendix 3.

3. Leading people within Operation Smile Ireland

The most essential resource of any charity is its people. This means people should feel valued and have clarity around their own roles and the roles of others. Charity trustees are responsible for providing leadership to volunteers, employees and contractors. This includes taking their duty of care towards these people seriously and promoting a culture of respect – Charities Governance Code.

3.1 All new charity trustees joining the board of Operation Smile Ireland receive an induction where their roles and duties as trustees are discussed. All new board trustees are given a formal letter of appointment and a requisite CRO Document to be completed and forwarded to CRO as trustees of Operation Smile Ireland and their duties as directors (as our Charity is a Company Limited by Guarantee) which is signed by the trustee and a copy returned to the CEO/Secretary. All staff members and/or volunteers are provided with a job description (if Chairperson/Secretary/Treasurer) which sets out their roles and responsibilities.

3.2 Operation Smile Ireland uses a Volunteer Management Policy, Volunteer Role Descriptions and a Volunteer Handbook in order that volunteers are clear about their roles & have all the support they need in carrying out their duties. Documents are available on SharePoint folder under the sub-heading, Volunteers.

3.3 Operation Smile Ireland has arrangements in place that comply with employment legislation for staff members all of which are captured in our **Employee Handbook** which is approved by the Board and reviewed every 3 years.

3.4 In addition to policies contained within the Employee Handbook Operation Smile Ireland has a comprehensive range of other operational policies. Trustees on the board of Operation Smile Ireland are responsible for the development, approval and review of all the charity's policies. See List of Policies in Appendix 4.

4. Exercising control over Operation Smile Ireland

All charities, no matter what their complexity, must abide by all legal and regulatory requirements that are relevant to the work they do. The charity trustees are responsible for making sure this happens. Charity trustees must understand that the governing document of a charity is a legally binding document in its own right. The trustees are also responsible for a charity's funds and any property or other assets that it holds. As much as is possible, they must also consider and reduce risks to which their charity is exposed – Charities Governance Code.

4.1 Operation Smile Irl. is a non-profit organisation and is registered as a charity. As such, it is governed by the Charities Act 2009. The Board is responsible for ensuring it remains aware and informed of future changes to the Act. It is the responsibility of the CEO to keep the Board updated on this.

Operation Smile Irl. is a company limited by guarantee not having share capital. (If applicable)

As per the legal requirement of a company, the constitution of Operation Smile Irl. is comprised of a Memorandum and Articles of Association, which comprise the governing documents for Operation Smile Irl. .

All trustees are provided with a copy of the Operation Smile Irl. constitution on joining the Board. In line with legal requirements, the constitution is lodged with the Companies Registration Office (CRO) and Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) and is publicly available. The Board of Operation Smile Irl. is responsible for ensuring the constitution accurately describes the organisation's structure and activities.

Where there is a change in charity mission, objectives or structure, or a significant change in activities or governance procedures, the constitution is reviewed and amended if necessary. Legal advice may be sought where any significant changes are made and changes are made at an AGM or EGM. The Company Secretary ensures the CRA and the CRO is informed of any changes.

4.2 The CEO of Operation Smile Irl. provides a full compliance report to Trustees once a year as part of his/her Annual Report. The CEO may provide updates on other items during the year if needed. The compliance report includes updates on the following topics:

Topics	Reporting framework
• Health and Safety	Training/Issues arising etc.
• Complaints	Number open/closed.
• Child Protection	As necessary
• Staff Performance Management /Human Resources issues	Monthly/Qrtrly Report
• Data Protection	Annual
• Compliance with funders reporting requirements.	(Trusts/Legacies/US)
• Any other issues in relation to risk management	Governance
• Compliance Requirements – CRO	As necessary
• Compliance Requirements – CRA	As necessary
• Standard Operating Compliance Requirements	As necessary
• Employment Law Compliance Requirements	Auto-enrolment - +2025
• Finance Compliance Requirements	As necessary
• Register of Lobbying compliance Requirements	As necessary

The CEO is responsible for informing the Board of any significant issues in a timely manner, determined by the nature of the issue. In serious or urgent matters requiring Board input, the Chairperson is informed as soon as possible. The Chairperson in conjunction with the CEO then determines the next steps in resolving the issue and ensures the Board is updated within an appropriate timeframe.

4.3 Operation Smile Irl. has a Fundraising Policy & Strategy document which reflects the Charity Regulator's Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the Public and the CEO of Operation Smile Irl. reports to the Board on all fundraising issues. **See List of Policies in Appendix 4.**

4.4 Financial Controls - Operation Smile Irl. takes seriously its duty to maintain proper books of account and does so in accordance with the Financial Management Policy of the charity. The CEO presents management accounts to the Board monthly for consideration and discussion. The Audit & Finance sub-committee receives copies of the management accounts monthly and reviews the finances of the organisation regularly and in advance of the board meetings. Due to the nature of the Audit & Finance sub-committee's work, at least one member must have a financial qualification and experience as a financial manager, in financial accounting or similar. **See Appendix 5.**

Filing Accounts
Ensuring that the filing of accounts takes place at the appropriate time is the responsibility of the Secretary. Operation Smile Irl. takes seriously its duty to file an Annual Return and Annual Accounts, which are true copies as laid before the AGM and include:

- Balance sheet
- Statement of financial activities
- Directors' report
- Auditor's report

Trustees are responsible for approving the Financial Management Policy of Operation Smile Irl. which outlines all financial procedures, systems and controls. This policy includes clarity on the level of financial authority given to the CEO and other staff as applicable. Other finance related policies which Operation Smile Irl. has in place include **Reserves and Investment policies. See List of Policies in Appendix 4.**

Auditing
As per the legal requirements of a company, Operation Smile Irl. accounts are audited annually. The audit is an examination of Operation Smile Irl. financial statements, providing an informed statement regarding to what extent the financial statements:

- have been prepared according to: the companies acts, relevant legislation and standard accounting practices, and:
- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs, profit or loss for the financial year and assets and liabilities at the end of that year.

The Board of Operation Smile Ireland is responsible for ensuring there are adequate internal financial controls and risk management systems including: budgeting and planning, appropriate financial procedures, monitoring of these and adherence to relevant legislation. **Specific tasks are delegated to the Audit and Finance sub-committee on behalf of the Board. See Appendix 5.**

Auditor
The appointment, remuneration and removal of the auditor is dealt with by the Finance and Audit sub-committee in the first instance, but approval for any such decision must be granted by the Board. The removal of the auditor needs to be passed by ordinary resolution at a general meeting of the company.

Remuneration and Charity Trustees
Charity trustees on the Board of Operation Smile Irl. are entirely voluntary and receive no payment for their work. Expenses may be reimbursed in accordance with the Financial Management Policy of Operation Smile Irl. Charity trustees can choose not to reclaim expenses if they so wish. Trustees will not receive payment for a professional service from Operation Smile Irl.

4.5 Risk Management – The Board of Operation Smile Irl. is responsible for ensuring that the charity has a risk management system in place including a business continuity plan. The Operation Smile Irl. risk management system consists of:

Risk Management Officer:	**CEO**	
Risk Management Policy	**created 18th March 2025**	**For review in March 2026**
Risk Register	Issued Nov 2024	For review Nov 2025
Business Continuity Plan		

The Risk Register is reviewed annually by the Board of Operation Smile Irl. and is updated as required.

4.6 Operation Smile Irl. takes advice on insurance needs as needed and has appropriate and adequate cover in place including **Public Liability, Employers Liability, Professional Indemnity, Directors & Officers Liability, Cyber Risk, Personal Accident.**

5. Working effectively

Running a charity well means you need capable charity trustees who work together as an effective team. Board meetings are especially important, as this is where charity trustees exercise their collective authority. It is also important that there is a good mix of skills, experience and background amongst charity trustees and that these are refreshed on an ongoing basis. It is vital that new charity trustees receive a proper induction to the charity – Charities Governance Code.

5.1 Charity trustees are appointed to the Board of Operation Smile Irl. in accordance with the Operation Smile Irl. constitution and the **Charities Act 2009**. When recruiting new charity trustees Operation Smile Irl. also follows the guidance from the Charities Regulator as set out in their documents:

- **Succession Planning**
- **Due Diligence for prospective Charity Trustees**
- **Recruitment and Induction of Charity Trustees and**
- **Induction Pack Checklist**

Before recruiting a new charity trustee, the board of Operation Smile Irl. will always consider what is working well with the current Board and what could work better. The Board will also be mindful of what skills, experience and knowledge are available to it already from existing charity trustees. This process is led be led by the Chairperson and should help to identify any competency / skills gaps on the board.

5.2 The Board of Operation Smile Irl. meets 6 times a year with meetings planned a year ahead. The Operation Smile Irl. constitution states that the minimum number of Trustees required for the Board to conduct business (the quorum) is 5. Meetings may go ahead without a quorum, but decisions made require ratification (either virtually or at the next meeting of the Board).

Board members are expected to attend all meetings, although it is understood that there may be times where other events prevent attendance. Where appropriate, participation by conference call will be arranged. Where a Board member cannot attend, they are asked to send apologies in advance to the Chair as far as possible in advance.

In the event that a specific decision must be made/ input is required, but the Board member cannot attend the meeting, the Chair may invite the Board member to indicate their position, which will be reported to the meeting.

Board members who miss three meetings in a row or four meetings in a rolling 12-month period will be contacted by the Chair. Non-attendance may result in a requirement to resign from the Board.

5.3 Agenda setting

The Chair of the Board should consult (in person or via telephone or email) with the Country Director/CEO in advance of the Board meeting to discuss any issues arising and develop the agenda for the Board meeting.

Board members can propose items for the agenda by communicating directly with the Chairperson, Company Secretary or the Country Director/CEO.

The Country Director/CEO or the Company Secretary will ensure that the agenda for the upcoming meeting is communicated to the members of the Board and any additional attendees (either by e-mail or post).

Supporting material should be circulated with the agenda to provide background to any topics included, i.e. minutes of previous meetings, agreed actions, management accounts, and relevant reports at least five days prior to the meeting.

Members of the Management Team wishing to address the Board should apply in the first instance to the Country Director/CEO at least 14 days in advance of the Board convening, outlining the nature of their request.
The CEO will discuss the request with the Chair of the Board in advance of the agenda being developed & distributed.

The Chair of the Board will then decide whether to include the request/issue on the agenda.
Where it is not appropriate to apply to the Country Director/CEO, management team member should apply in the second instance to the Chairperson outlining the nature of their request.

In agreeing the agenda, the Chair of the Board and the Country Director/CEO should confirm the appropriate members of the Management Team to attend specific Board meetings.

The Chair has discretion as to whether items can be raised under Any Other Business (AOB) section of the meeting agenda. Items that require a board decision should not be taken as items under AOB, unless in exceptional circumstances and there is unanimous agreement by all Board members present that a Board decision can be taken on the item raised under AOB. It is good governance practice to restrict items raised under AOB to matters of information and not matters requiring a board decision.

5.4 A board pack with the necessary supporting board papers is prepared and issued 7 days before the meeting.

Minutes and Action Items

The Company Secretary, or a designated individual approved by the Board, will be responsible for taking the minutes:

- Minutes are a record of key actions and decisions discussed and agreed at the meetings.
- Before the meeting concludes, the Company Secretary or designated individual may be asked by the Chair to provide a summary of the meeting's captured main points
- The Chair of the Board will review the minutes once they are drafted, prior to circulation.

The Company Secretary or Country Director/CEO will ensure that the minutes are circulated (preferably within two weeks of the Board meeting). The minutes will include a summary document (1-2 pages) outlining key issues discussed, key decisions made, key actions agreed and associated completion responsibility and timeframe and a detailed minute of the meeting:

- These key actions agreed should be the fourth item agenda item at the next sitting of the Board (following apologies, declarations of any conflicts and previous meeting minutes).

Every effort should be made to ensure that key decisions have the full support of the board members. However, where necessary key decisions will be made using a majority of votes:

- Every board member shall have one vote
- Where there is an equality of votes, the meeting Chair shall be entitled to a casting vote
- Attendees and ex-officio members do not have voting rights. They may be asked to leave the meeting if a vote is deemed necessary.

Board decisions/approvals in between scheduled meetings.

There may from time-to-time be a requirement for the Board to decide or approve a matter outside of a normal scheduled meeting. In situations where the Country Director/CEO requests a board decision or approval for a matter that cannot wait until the next scheduled Board meeting, the Country Director/CEO should contact either the Chairperson, Vice Chair or Treasurer setting out the background to the matter and outlining why a decision or approval is required before the next scheduled meeting of the Board.

The Chairperson, Vice Chair or Treasurer may decide depending on the nature of item requiring decision/approval to call a special board meeting where board members are physically present at the meeting or via conference call. The required quorum of 6 board members also applies to this type of meeting. If it is not practical to call a meeting, he/she may alternatively ask the Country Director/CEO or Company Secretary to email the board members setting out the matter requiring the decision/approval. A minimum of 5 board members must give their consent by email for the approval to be valid. The matter must then be formally ratified and minuted at the next meeting of the Board.

The use of the email to board members procedure for board approvals in between scheduled meetings should only be used infrequently and should not become standard practice for making board decisions.

5.5 Charity trustees are appointed to the Board of Operation Smile Irl. for a term of 3 years. For further details on term limits see the Operation Smile Irl. constitution.

5.6 The induction process for new charity trustees to the Board of Operation Smile Irl. involves the provision of an induction pack, and meetings with the existing charity trustees, the Chairperson and other key employee(s) or volunteer(s) within the charity. An induction pack with also be given to each new trustee which will include the following key documents:

- **A letter of welcome and appointment (from Chairperson).**
- **The charity's governing document (Appendix 1)**
- **A brief history of the charity and an outline of the current work (Appendix 8)**
- **A recent progress report describing the charity's position in relation to any targets or goals**
- **An organisation chart (Appendix 9)**
- **A list of current charity trustees and the Chairperson, the charity secretary and their contact details**
- **The minutes of recent board meetings**
- **A schedule of forthcoming board meetings (schedule listed on minutes of Board Meeting)**
- **A list of the board sub-committees, names of trustees serving on the sub-committees and their meeting schedule**
- **The annual report and accounts for the past two years (upon approval by Chairperson).**
- **The charity's Code of Conduct for charity trustees**
- **A Register of Interests form (See Appendix 6)**
- **All policies within the charity, or a list of such policies and an indication of where they can be obtained (See Appendix 4)**
- **Details of the guidance documents available on the Charities Regulator's website**
- **The Charities Governance Code.**

5.7 Board of Charity Trustee Roles - The Board of Operation Smile Irl. has both authority and responsibility to carry out the following roles:

Leadership

- To define, uphold and work towards the vision, mission, values and objectives of Operation Smile Irl. and to fully comply with the Operation Smile Irl. constitution, charitable purpose and public benefit
- To provide overall strategic direction and leadership for Operation Smile Irl. by developing and approving a strategic plan in line with the constitution of Operation Smile Irl.
- To monitor progress against the strategic plan through regular reporting from the Country Director/CEO and Board sub-committees as relevant and to review the plan periodically
- To ensure that an appropriate system is in place to assess the impact of the work of Operation Smile Irl.

- To approve all policy, systems and controls necessary to govern the activity and maintain the ethos of Operation Smile Irl.

Roles

- To appoint a Country Director/CEO, agree the job description and put appropriate systems in place for their support and performance management
- To ensure that appropriate systems are in place for the support and supervision of all staff by delegating the responsibility for other staff management to the Country Director/CEO
- To establish and agree the terms of reference of any sub-committees that may be necessary
- To agree a schedule of matters specifically reserved for decision-making by Board. (See Appendix 7)

Resources

- To ensure that Operation Smile Irl. has the financial and human resources needed to implement its strategic plan and to promote the prudent and effective management of those resources.
- To ensure that appropriate financial management procedures are in place and are being implemented.
- To agree a risk management policy for the organisation.

Accountability

- To agree an appropriate process for communicating with and being accountable to funders, stakeholders and the general public.
- To identify and comply with all relevant legal, regulatory and funding requirements as outlined in this Board Handbook.
- To carry out board business efficiently and effectively.

Role of Individual Charity Trustees

- Comply with the Operation Smile Irl. constitution
- Ensure that Operation Smile Irl. is carrying out its charitable purposes for the public benefit
- Act in the best interests of Operation Smile Irl.
- Act with reasonable care and skill.
- Manage the assets of Operation Smile Irl.
- Make appropriate investment decisions.
- Ensure that Operation Smile Irl. is registered on the Charities Regulator's Register of Charities
- Ensure that Operation Smile Irl. keeps proper books of account
- Ensure that Operation Smile Irl. prepares and furnishes financial accounts to the Charities Regulator
- Ensure that Operation Smile Irl. prepares and furnishes an annual report to the Charities Regulator
- Ensure the Charities Regulator is informed if you are of the opinion that there are reasonable grounds for believing a theft or fraud has occurred (Disclosure obligation)
- Ensure that you comply with directions issued by the Regulator.

Role of the Chairperson

Each board of charity trustees should have a Chairperson whose duties include:

- Leading the Board of charity trustees
- Promoting good governance among fellow trustees
- To ensure smooth running of Board meetings:

- Liaising with the Country Director/CEO and Company Secretary to ensure all relevant items are on the agenda.
- Consulting with other trustees to ensure concerns are reflected in the agenda.
- Allowing sufficient time for discussion and ensuring that meetings are kept to time (prioritising discussions when necessary).
- Ensuring adequate information is available for productive discussion.

- Promoting maximum participation from all directors.
- Ensuring decisions are understood, recorded, implemented and/or followed up on.

To promote good governance:

- Initiating annual performance reviews/skills audits/etc.
- Leading on recruitment of new trustees.
- Supporting new trustees thorough induction.

To supervise and provide support to the Country Director/CEO:

- The Country Director/CEO reports to the Board, and the Chairperson is line manager to the Country Director/CEO.
- To support the Country Director/CEO in leading Operation Smile Irl. at the strategic level.
- To function as a Spokesperson for the Board or for Operation Smile Irl. if required (e.g. The Chairperson of the Board may be required to act as media spokesperson, supported by the Country Director/CEO.)

In the case where the Chairperson is aware that they will be unable to attend a Board meeting he/she will appoint another trustee to chair the meeting in their absence, as set out in the Operation Smile Irl. constitution. In the case where the Chairperson is unable to attend and does not give advance notice of same, the trustees who are in attendance may approve one trustee from their number to chair the meeting.

Where there is an unexpected or ongoing vacancy in the position of Chairperson the existing trustees may nominate from their number an interim Chairperson, for a period of up to six months.

Role of the Company Secretary

As per the legal requirements of a registered company, Operation Smile Irl. has a Company Secretary. The Company Secretary will be one of the directors of the company supported by a member of staff who is not the Country Director/CEO. However, it is the Company Secretary's responsibility to ensure duties are completed. The duties of the Company Secretary follow the guidelines and requirements of the Companies Registration Office.

Role of the Secretary

The secretary of Operation Smile Irl. is a trustee with a specific role on the board whose duties include:

- Administration and compliance
- Preparing for board meetings
- Notification of Board meetings
- Circulation of papers prior to Board meetings
- Taking meeting minutes
- Keeping an action log of all decisions taken
- Attending other meetings

Operation Smile Irl. trustees must ensure that the person has the skills and resources to perform these duties.

Sub-committees

Sub-committees of the Board are established, when deemed necessary by the Board, to deal with ongoing areas of work or to progress specific pieces of work. The following sub-committees are currently in place:

- **Finance/Audit Committee**
- **Governance/Risk Committee**
- **Fundraising/Volunteers/Marketing Committee.**
- **Medical supervision/Patient care Committee.**
- **L&D, Team-Building -**

All sub-committee members are appointed by the trustees and all trustees can be members of sub-committees. Each sub-committee will have a minimum of two trustees with one of them chairing the sub-committee. External individuals may be invited to join based on their skills and/or experience. The Audit & Finance sub-committee should have a minimum of two trustees and at least one with recent and relevant financial experience. Each sub-committee will nominate a Chair and their appointment will be approved by the Board. The Chairperson of Operation Smile Irl. does not Chair the Audit & Finance sub-committee.

At the behest of the Country Director/CEO and approval of the Chair of the sub-committee, members of staff or Volunteers may also be asked to attend sub-committee meetings but are not considered members of the sub-committee. Any trustee, including the Chair, may attend any sub-committee meeting and may be invited by the sub-committee to do so.

Meetings of sub-committees may take place in person or virtually (e.g. via conference calls). All sub-committee members, apart from any additional trustees in attendance, have voting rights on sub-committees.

Sub-committees always have Terms of Reference agreed by the full Board detailing the name, purpose, membership and authority of the group. Sub-committees deliberate issues within their remit separately from the full Board, and present recommendations to the full Board for ratification. See Appendix 5 for the Terms of Reference of sub-committees. The Country Director/CEO of Operation Smile Irl. may be invited to attend sub-committee meetings. All sub-committees report in writing to the Board.

Working Groups

From time to time, Board working groups may be established to progress specific pieces of work. . The following working groups are currently in place (if applicable):

- **Finance/Audit Committee .**
- **Governance/Risk Committee.**
- **Fundraising/Volunteers/Marketing Committee.**
- **Medical supervision/Patient care Committee.**
- **L&D, Team-Building.**

5.8 Trustees are committed to resolving problems and emerging issues as quickly as possible and in the best interests of Operation Smile Irl. This is achieved by:

- Effective engagement in the strategic planning process
- Holding regular board meetings and ensuring that emerging problems or issues are included in the Country Directors/CEO's report or put on the meeting agenda
- Board sub-committees reviewing and assessing emerging issues or problems.
- The development and review of the Risk Register and
- Comprehensive financial management

5.9 Review of the Board – Good practice recommends that the performance of the Board should be formally appraised on an annual basis. The Chair of the Board of Operation Smile Irl. will ensure that a process is put in place with the approval of the Board to assess the performance of the Board.

The Chair will recommend and agree an appropriate approach for conducting this performance appraisal.
Examples of possible approaches include:

- Self-Assessment Questionnaire completed by Board members. Under this approach, the questionnaire to be circulated to board members is developed and analysed by the Chair, the Vice Chair or agreed person/organisation.
- Interviews with Board and Sub-Committee members - would be conducted by the Chair or an external (independent) third party to bring increased objectivity
- Board / Sub-Committee group discussion – this could be led by the Chair of the Board, or one of the Chairs of the Sub-Committees or by an independent facilitator.

6. Being accountable and transparent

Accountability for your charity does not just mean accounting for the money you have brought in and spent (although that is clearly very important). It involves being open and transparent about all charity matters. It is about being able to: stand over what your charity does and how it does it; and justify this to any person or group who queries what your charity has done or is doing. As an organisation set up to provide public benefit, this means you should be able to explain this to anyone who asks – Charities Governance Code.

6.1 Operation Smile Irl. displays our RCN, CRO and CHY numbers on our official Charity letterheads, website, emails, annual report and social media platforms.

6.2 Operation Smile Irl. stakeholders are any individuals or groups of people who have a legitimate interest in our work. Identifying who they are is important in order for us to consider how we might communicate with them and how they might communicate with us. Operation Smile Irl. stakeholders include:

- Beneficiaries
- Members
- Employees and volunteers
- Partner organisations and supporters
- Funders and donors
- Regulators
- Public representatives
- The general public

Operation Smile Ireland has a **Communications Strategy in** place to ensure that all stakeholders are communicated with and can easily communicate with Operation Smile Irl.

6.3 Operation Smile Irl. involves relevant stakeholders in the strategic planning process and, where appropriate and possible, involves stakeholders in other significant decisions involving Operation Smile Irl.

6.4 Operation Smile Irl. has a Complaints policy in place detailing the procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint being made. The policy is displayed on Operation Smile Irl. website. **See List of Policies in Appendix 4.**

6.5 Operation Smile Irl. is committed to following the reporting requirements of all of our funders and donors, both public and private.

Appendix 1 - Constitution

Charitable Purpose:	Relief of poverty or economic hardship
Specific Nature of Benefit to the Community:	Other purpose that is of benefit to the community Promotion of health, including the prevention or relief of sickness, disease or human suffering.
Charitable Objects:	Operation Smile is an international medical charity whose global network of thousands of credentialed medical volunteers from more than 80 countries is dedicated to helping improve the health and lives of children from more than 60 countries. Since its founding in 1982, Operation Smile has provided more than 400,000 free surgical procedures for children and young adults born with cleft lip, cleft palate and other cleft conditions. To build long term sufficiency in resource poor environments, Operation Smile trains doctors and local medical professionals in its partner countries so they are empowered to treat their local communities and help others around the world. Operation Smile also donates medical equipment and supplies and provides year-round medical treatments through its worldwide centres.
Trustees:	Jack O'Keeffe Teresa Cosgrove David Orr Pat Millar Rory Stapleton Michael Nolan

Appendix 2 - Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to assist charity trustees and staff of Operation Smile Ireland to effectively identify, record and manage any conflicts of interest to protect the integrity of Operation Smile and to ensure that the charity trustees act in the best interest of their charity.

2. Objective

The Operation Smile Ireland Board of Directors aims to ensure that the charity trustees and Staff are aware of their obligations to disclose any conflicts of interest that they may have, and to comply with this policy to ensure they effectively manage those conflicts of interest as representatives of Operation Smile Ireland.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the trustees and staff of Operation Smile Ireland.

4. Definition of conflicts of interests

A conflict of interest is any situation in which a charity trustee's / Staff members' personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen to, prevent the charity trustee from making a decision in the best interests of the charity. This personal interest may be direct or indirect and can include interests of a person connected to the charity trustee or staff member.

These situations present the risk that a person will decide based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than in the best interests of the charity and therefore must be managed accordingly.

5. Policy

This policy has been developed because conflicts of interest commonly arise, and do not need to present a problem to the charity if they are openly and effectively managed. It is the policy of Operation Smile Ireland, as well as a responsibility of its charity trustees, and staff that ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest be avoided and that any such conflicts (where they do arise) do not conflict with their obligations to Operation Smile Ireland.

Operation Smile Ireland will manage conflicts of interest by requiring charity trustees and staff to:

- avoid conflicts of interest where possible
- identify and record any conflicts of interest
- carefully manage any conflicts of interest, and
- follow this policy and respond to any breaches.

5.1 Responsibility of the board of charity trustees

The board is responsible for:

- establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across the charity;
- monitoring compliance with this policy; and
- reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.
- The charity trustees should ensure they are aware of their legal obligations in the management and control of their charity and should refer to the Charities Regulator's 'Guidance for Charity

Trustees' for further information on this see the Charities Regulator website.

Responsibility of the Staff of Operation Smile Ireland:

Staff and Management are responsible for:

- establishing a system for identifying, disclosing and managing conflicts of interest across their work within the charity.
- monitoring their own and others' compliance with this policy; and
- reviewing this policy on an annual basis to ensure that the policy is operating effectively.

Once an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest is identified, it must be entered into **Operation Smile's register of interests**, as well as being raised with the board of charity trustees. The register of interests must be maintained by Country Director/CEO and record all information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflict of interest and any steps taken to address it).

Confidentiality of disclosures

[In order to support charity trustees to disclose their conflicts of interest, the level of confidentiality associated with any disclosure should be set out. Include details of who will have access to the information disclosed, such as restricting this to the board of charity trustees and the secretary to the board. It may also be necessary to provide for an alternative disclosure mechanism if additional restrictions on disclosure are required.]

6. Action required for management of conflicts of interest

6.1 Conflicts of interest of members of the board of charity trustees

Once the conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the board of charity trustees (excluding the disclosing charity trustee and any other conflicted person) must decide whether or not a conflicted charity trustee should:

- vote on the matter (this is a minimum),
- participate in any debate, or
- be present in the room during the debate and the voting.

In exceptional circumstances, such as where a conflict is very significant or likely to prevent a charity trustee from regularly participating in discussions, it may be worth the board of charity trustees considering whether it is appropriate for the person with the relevant conflict to resign from the board of charity trustees.

6.2 What should be considered when deciding what action to take

In deciding what approach to take, the board of charity trustees will consider whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially participate in

- decision-making
- alternative options to avoid the conflict
- the charity's objects and resources, and
- the possibility of creating an appearance of improper conduct that might impair confidence in, or the reputation of, the charity.

The approval of any action requires the agreement of at least a majority of the board of charity trustees (excluding any conflicted charity trustee) who are present and voting (if applicable) at the meeting. All details regarding the conflict of interest, including the action arising, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7. Compliance with this policy

If the board of charity trustees has a reason to believe that a person subject to this policy has failed to comply with it, it will investigate the circumstances. If it is found that this person has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, the board of charity trustees may take action against the person. This may include seeking the person's resignation from the charity.

If a person suspects that a staff member or charity trustee has failed to disclose a conflict of interest, they must discuss with the person in question, notify the board of charity trustees, or the person responsible for maintaining the register of interests.

Contacts

For questions about this policy, contact the board of charity trustees or CEO (Teri Cosgrove) or Country Director.

Appendix 3 - Code of Conduct

Operation Smile Ireland

By reading this document and accepting the role of a charity trustee of Operation Smile Ireland, all charity trustees agree to the following responsibilities:

General Conduct

- Charity trustees are required to act with honesty and integrity and exercise good judgement which may include seeking professional advice on appropriate matters on which charity trustees do not have relevant expertise.
- Charities trustees are required to act in the best interests of the charity at all times.

Independence

- Charity trustees are required to act independently, particularly in relation to assets, property, legal and regulatory obligations.
- Charity trustees should conduct themselves with integrity and in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the charity or its volunteers and employees. More specifically charity trustees:
    - should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their duties;
    - must avoid actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour.
- Charity trustees must not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves or for any persons connected to them such as their family, their friends, or any organisation that they own, manage or work for.
- Charity trustees should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence them in carrying out their role as charity trustee. Any gifts or hospitality received in any connection to Operation Smile Ireland should not exceed the value of €30 and should be declared to the Board.

Charity Trustee Roles

Charity trustees should:

- Understand and perform their roles and responsibilities to the best of their abilities at all times.
- Be prepared to provide adequate time and commitment as required to fulfil the role of charity trustee, adequately preparing for meetings and participating in committees and special events when required.

Board Meetings

Charity trustees should:

- Aim to attend all meetings, contribute appropriately and effectively, and avoid dominating the contributions of others.
- Always respect the authority of the Chairperson of the board, and the Chairperson of any meeting.
- Bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions of the board, maintain a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the best interests of the charity.
- Bring a genuinely independent perspective to enhance decision-making, given that charity trustees share responsibility for board decisions.
- Ensure their contributions are informed and impartial when presenting views on topics in meetings while listening to and respecting the input and experience of other charity trustees.

Volunteers/Employees within the Charity

Charity trustees should:

- Aim to support volunteers and employees in carrying out their duties and always, in terms of their conduct, serve as an example of how everyone in the charity should conduct themselves in order to reflect the values of the charity.
- Work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
- Accept and respect the difference in roles between the board on the one hand and volunteers and any employees on the other, ensuring that the board, volunteers and any employees work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the charity and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship by:

- respecting management arrangements and avoiding any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
- not interfering in the performance by volunteers or employees of duties delegated to them within the charity while ensuring that volunteers and any employees working for the charity are held to account through the manager/CEO, as appropriate.

Legal Requirements and Policies

Charity trustees must:

- Act in accordance with the charity's governing document and ensure that the charity complies with all applicable laws including charity law, company law, health and safety law, data protection law and employment law.
- Promote and preserve the obligations of confidentiality about sensitive board matters. However, the requirement for confidentiality may not apply if it becomes necessary for the charity trustee to inform the Charities Regulator or any other statutory body about any matter, which could threaten the future of the charity or could represent a breach of any law with which the charity is required to comply.
- Abide by the charity's conflict of interests or loyalties policy and ensure the charity's conflict of interest register is completed and updated as required.
- Abide by any equality, diversity, safeguarding, health and safety, bullying and harassment policies and any other policies agreed by the board.
- Ensure that claims for out-of-pocket expenses are made in accordance with agreed procedures.

Where a charity trustee is found to be in breach of the standards outlined by the board in its Code of Conduct he or she will be asked to meet with the Chairperson of the board to assess his or her suitability for the role. Consistent breach of the Code of Conduct by a charity trustee may result in the trustee's tenure being terminated.

The board of charity trustees should review this Code of Conduct for trustees at 3-year intervals or as appropriate.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____

Appendix 4 – Policies – Operation Smile Ireland

For Trustees	Created Date	Updated Date	Review Date	For review.
• Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028	created 2022.	6th Dec 2024	6th Dec 2025	Dec 2026
• Governance Handbook	created 2025.	To be agreed by Risk/Governance team for Board.		
• Operating Guidelines for the Board	created 2025.			
• Recruitment & Induction Policy	created 2025.			
• Code of Conduct Policy	created 2022,	updated 2025.		
• Conflict of Interest Policy	created 2025.			
• Register of Interests/Conflict of interests	created 2025.			
• Data Protection / Privacy Policy	created 2025.			
• Crisis / Communications Policy & Plan	created 2025.	To be agreed by Risk/Governance team for Board.		
• Fundraising Policy	created 2025.			
• Letter of Appointment - Board Member	created 2025.			
• Donor Charter	created 2025.			
• Complaints Policy	created 2025.			
• Whistleblowing Policy	created 2021,	updated 2025,	for review 2028	

Organisational Policies		
• Financial Controls Policy	created 2025	
• Reserves Policy	created 2025	
• Risk Management Policy	created 2025	To be agreed by Risk/Governance team for Board
• Fundraising Policy	created 2025	
• Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan		To be agreed by Risk/Governance team for Board
• Fundraising Policy	created 2025	
• Communications Policy	created 2025	
• Crisis Communications Plan & Policy	created 2025	To be agreed by Risk/Governance team for Board
• Fundraising Policy	created 2025	
• Complaints Policy	created 2025.	
• Data Protection Policy	created 2025	
• Lobbying Policy -	May 2024	Our Charity organizes relief projects and provides essential services to people in need so we are less involved in the public policy space and do not normally engage in lobbying. **Review annually**.
• Safeguarding Policy	created 2021	(Dóchas Safeguarding Policy for NGO's)
• Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy	created 2025	(Dóchas Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy)
• Vetting Policy	created 2025	Vetting required for staff, Programs require credentialling & assessment by Medical Council Ireland and US).
• Accident or Incident Record Form	created 2025	

For Employees & Volunteers		
• Employee Handbook	created 2021	to be reviewed 2025.
• Volunteer Handbook	created 2019	updated Sept 2024.
• ICT, Property, Info & Equipment Policy	created 2025.	To be reviewed 2028.
• Anti-Harassment promoting dignity & respect	created 2025. To be reviewed 2028	
• Non-Discrimination/Equal Opps Policy	created 2021	updated 2025.
• Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy	created 2025	to be reviewed 2028.
• Health & Safety Policy	created 2025.	
• Disciplinary, Misconduct & Alcohol/ Substance misuse Policy.	created 2021	updated 2025.
• Environmental Policy	created 2025	to be reviewed 2026
• CCTV Policy	n/a	
• Whistleblower Protection Policy	created 2021	updated 2025.
• Recruitment & Induction Policy	created 2025,	
• Cookie Policy	created 2022	updated 2025.
• Data Protection / Privacy Policy	created 2019	updated 2025.

Appendix 5 - Sub-committees & their Terms of Reference

Operation Smile Ireland

Governance sub-committee

Purpose, role and remit:

- To lead the Board in its compliance with the Charities Governance Code
- To advise on Board succession planning and recruitment of new Trustees and the CEO
- To advise Board on induction of new Trustees and on-going training
- To evaluate the Board's performance and to ensure orientation for new Trustees
- To conduct an annual review of governance structures and processes
- To advise the board on all matters related to governance
- To conduct an annual review of our charity's compliance with the Charities Governance Code

Membership, attendance and appointments: as per the guidelines outlined in the handbook.

Frequency of meetings: the Governance sub-committee meets at least once quarterly or as necessary to discharge its duties.

Authority: the Governance sub-committee will operate in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Board. The Board remains ultimately responsible for all governance matters and is advised by the sub-committee. The sub-committee may invite any director, employee or other person to attend any of its meeting and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Record of meetings: the chair of the Governance sub-committee ensures there is an agreed written record of the meeting and that it is provided to the Board, including any comment or recommendation the sub-committee may have for the Board.

Performance review: The Board shall, at least annually, review the performance and terms of reference of the Governance sub-committee and determine any changes required.

Audit and Finance sub-committee.
Purpose, role and remit:

To ensure financial accountability and transparency of Operation Smile Irl. through:

Recommending:

- key financial projections and financial performance indicators with the CEO
- annual budget to the Board
- the annual contribution that should be made to the reserve based on projected surplus less prioritised spend.
- negotiating the terms of engagement of the external auditor and make recommendations to the Board about the appointment, pay and conditions of the external auditor

Monitoring and reviewing:

- financial performance indicators and management accounts
- the accuracy of the financial statements of the organisation and announcements about the organisation's financial performance and financial controls
- control and risk management systems.
- effectiveness of and compliance with Operation Smile Irl. internal financial systems
- arrangements by which staff of the organisation may, in confidence, raise concerns about possible improprieties in matters of financial reporting or other matters and ensuring that there are arrangements for independent investigation of such matters and for appropriate follow-up action
- Recommendations from the auditors on financial procedures including treasury and management
- Operation Smile Irl. financial reporting process, the audit process, the system of internal controls and compliance with laws and regulations

- the external auditor's independence and effectiveness of audit process
- the organisation's accounting policies and reporting requirements
- the implementation of recommendations made by the auditors
- the organisation's procedures for detecting fraud
- effectiveness of the internal audit role

Ensuring:

- compliance with terms and conditions of public and private grants received.
- financial reports comply with all statutory accounting requirements
- that the reports issued by auditors to management are those being received by the board

Membership, attendance and appointments: as per the guidelines outlined in the handbook. The Audit and Finance committee should have a minimum of two directors and at least one with recent and relevant financial experience. The Chair of the organisation's board can be an Audit and Finance committee member but cannot chair the committee.

Frequency of meetings: the Audit and Finance sub-committee meets at least monthly, or as necessary to discharge its duties. The sub-committee will meet privately with the external auditor.

Authority: the Audit and Finance sub-committee will operate in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Board. The Board remains ultimately responsible for all financial and audit matters and is advised by the sub-committee. The CEO may be invited to attend meetings as appropriate.

The sub-committee may invite any other director, employee or other person to attend any of its meeting and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Record of meetings: the chair of the Audit and Finance sub-committee ensures there is an agreed written record of the meeting and that it is provided to the Board, including any comment or recommendation the sub-committee may have for the Board. A description of the Audit and Finance committee's work during the year is included in the Annual Report.

Performance review: The Board shall, at least annually, review the performance and terms of reference of the Audit and Finance sub-committee and determine any changes required.

Human Resources, Coaching, Training Sub-Committee

Purpose, role and remit:

- to ensure that Operation Smile Irl. is a good employer of staff and complies with all legal requirements and best practice in relation to Human Resources;
- ensure effective implementation of any HR or volunteer plan, which is approved by Board.
- oversight of HR policy, handbook, and volunteer policy and implementation and review of same;
- oversight of recruitment and selection
- partake in disciplinary and grievance procedures as appropriate.
- to ensure that Operation Smile Irl. adheres to best practice in Volunteer recruitment and management

Membership, attendance and appointments: as per the guidelines outlined in the handbook.

Frequency of meetings: the HR sub-committee meets annually or more often if required to discharge its duties.

Authority: As a sub-committee of the Board, the HR sub-committee has a non-executive role. This sub-committee will operate in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Board. The sub-committee may invite any director, Volunteer, employee or other person to attend any of its meeting and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Record of meetings: the chair of the HR sub-committee ensures there is an agreed written record of the meeting and that it is provided to the Board, including any comment or recommendation the sub-committee may have for the Board.

Performance review: The Board shall, at least annually, review the performance and terms of reference of the HR sub-committee and determine any changes required.

Safeguarding Sub-Committee

Purpose, role and remit:

- to ensure that Operation Smile Irl. adheres to its own Safeguarding Policies;
- to review Operation Smile Ireland's Safeguarding Policies regularly against new developments/legislation and refer policy recommendations to the Board;
- to be available to the CEO/Management Team to discuss safeguarding issues.

Membership, attendance and appointments: as per the guidelines outlined in the handbook.

Frequency of meetings: the Safeguarding sub-committee meets at least quarterly per year or as necessary to discharge its duties.

Authority: the Safeguarding sub-committee will operate in accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the Board. The sub-committee may invite any director, employee or other person to attend any of its meeting and is authorised to seek any information it requires to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

Record of meetings: the chair of the Safeguarding sub-committee ensures there is an agreed written record of the meeting and that it is provided to the Board, including any comment or recommendation the sub-committee may have for the Board.

Performance review: The Board shall, at least annually, review the performance and terms of reference of the Safeguarding sub-committee and determine any changes required.

Appendix 6 - Register of Interests

Operation Smile Ireland

Name of charity trustee	Date of appointment	Description of Conflict / interest	Has the board of charity trustees been notified of the interest?	Date of disclosure

Signed: Date: [/ /]

Operation Smile Ireland

Appendix 7 - Schedule of Matters reserved for the Board

Operation Smile Ireland

Board approval (minuted) is required for the following matters:

(1) Business purpose and strategic focus

- Changes to Operation Smile Irl. mission and its constitution
- Operation Smile Irl. strategy statements

(2) Finance and Risk

- Annual income and expenditure budget
- Expenditure of a single budgeted item over €20,000
- Expenditure on a single non-budgeted item over €10,000
- Multi-annual service contracts that have provided for in the annual budget and where the total value of the contract is greater than €40,000.
- Investment policy and investment decisions where the sum involved is in excess of €50,000.
- Operation Smile Irl. reserves policy
- Annual audited accounts
- The Risk Register and risk mitigation measures

(3) Employment

- Appointment of the Country Director/CEO and the remuneration of the Country Director/CEO
- New/additional permanent staff posts that increases Operation Smile Irl. headcount.
- Employment contracts for management grade and above.

(4) Board membership and governance

- Appointment of the Board Chairperson
- Appointment of the Company Secretary. The Board can only remove the Company Secretary. The Company Secretary does not have to be a member of the Board of Directors
- The co-option of new board members to fill vacancies that may occur (subject to a limit of four co-opted board members. The appointment of these new board members would be subject to ratification at the next AGM.
- The establishment of sub committees of the board and setting the terms of reference of the committees
- Corporate Governance policy and the code of conduct for Board members (the board members handbook)
- Compliance with the Charities Governance Code

(5) Membership of the Charity

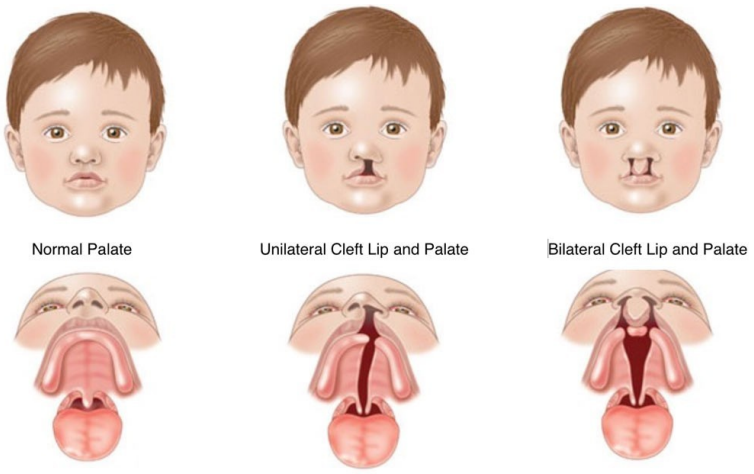
- Membership criteria (nominated by Board Members, having expertise which is required by Board Memberships/outlined by a Skill-Gap as outlined by Board Members).
- Applications for Membership by way of referral through Board Members, interviewed by Chairperson, ratified by Board members thereafter.

Appendix 8 – History & Outline of Operation Smile Ireland

Operation Smile - Cleft Lip & Cleft Palate Children's Charity, advocating for equity in Global Healthcare.

Operation Smile Inc was formed in 1982 by Dr Bill and Kathy Magee.
https://www.operationsmile.org/about-us/leadership/kathy-magee/
https://www.operationsmile.org/about-us/leadership/dr-bill-magee/
What started as one family's passion to provide surgery and care to children in need has grown into the largest volunteer-based medical nonprofit in the world, boasting over 6,000 medical volunteers from 67 countries, providing world-class cleft care in over 38 countries. We are dedicated to improving the health and lives of children with cleft conditions, through access to safe. free, effective surgery and comprehensive cleft care.

What we do
As well as life-changing cleft surgery, Operation Smile provides comprehensive cleft care including nutrition dentistry, orthodontics, speech therapy and psychosocial care.
Get involved
Every three minutes, a child is born somewhere in the world with a cleft lip or cleft palate. Your support provides access to life-changing care and helps children with cleft conditions to live the happy, healthy lives they deserve. https://www.operationsmile.ie/get-involved/
Safe surgery
Safe surgery - Operation Smile - Cleft Lip & Cleft Palate Children's Charity. It's a sad fact that millions of people across the world simply can't get the safe, surgical care they need, when they need it.
Cleft research
Our medical research is vital to finding out the causes of cleft and understanding why cleft conditions affect so many children around the world. With the knowledge gained from research, we can influence global health systems and health policy as well as improve care for our patients.
What is a cleft condition



Causes of Cleft conditions
Many risk factors can increase the likelihood of cleft conditions. While some causes are still unknown, genetics and family history, pre-existing medical conditions, poor nutrition and exposure to harmful environmental substances can affect the healthy development of a baby. There are steps a woman can take to reduce the risk of having a baby born with a cleft lip and/or palate, such as taking folic acid supplements, stopping smoking, giving up alcohol and maintaining a healthy weight.

Appendix 9 - Organogram

