

Research Ethics Committee – Lay member

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) Research Ethics Committee is currently inviting expressions of interest for the voluntary role of “Lay Member” to join the Research Ethics Committee.

The Research Ethics Committee is responsible for reviewing applications for ethical approval for all research undertaken in the university before data collection starts and for ensuring that all proposed research meets appropriate ethical standards

This position is not remunerated, although all reasonable expenses related to the role will be reimbursed. Appointment will be for three-years in the first instance with virtual attendance at six committee meetings each academic year.

Lay members should have no vested interest in the matters under review and have no prior affiliation with UHI. Whilst training and induction will be provided for this role, UHI wishes to appoint individuals with relevant experience. Lay members come from a variety of backgrounds and fields of work. Examples include academics from other fields, managers in areas unrelated to the research area, lawyers, ethicists, administrative staff, librarians, safety officers, and people from the local community, clergy or public services.

UHI seeks to represent all the communities it serves. Expressions of interest from people with disabilities, members of minority groups and women are particularly welcome.

Benefits of Lay Member participation

- Providing a different perspective - Asking questions that people more deeply involved in the research might not identify or consider asking; viewing established practice and accepted norms with a fresh eye; and stimulating new or different ways of thinking about the ethical issues.
- Helping to ensure the integrity of the research ethics committee - From an independent stand-point: checking that procedures are rigorous, that all participants play an active part, and that decisions and advice are acted upon.
- Supplying a degree of public representation - Bringing a societal perspective to consideration of research. It is unrealistic to expect individual lay members to represent the full spectrum of public opinion, but lay participation is a contribution to openness and can help researchers see how members of the public might view their work.

For informal enquiries about this role please contact Nick.Owens@uhi.ac.uk.

Formal expressions of interest including a brief curriculum vitae and covering letter should be submitted via email to Nick.Owens@uhi.ac.uk before 31st December 2023.