

Role Description and Specification: President Elect and President

Purpose of the role

The President Elect serves as an observer and learner for one year before assuming the role of President for a first term of three years. This structured transition ensures continuity, stability and effective leadership of the Stroke Alliance for Europe (SAFE), in line with its Articles of Association and strategic objectives.

Role description

- i. As President Elect (one-year observer phase)
 - Attend all Board meetings as a non-voting observer, contributing insights and learning about SAFE's governance and operations.
 - Support and shadow the current President to understand all aspects of the role, including leadership, external relations, and governance.
 - Develop constructive relationships with the Director General, Secretariat, member organisations, and key stakeholders.
 - Become familiar with SAFE's strategy, finances, and major projects.
 - Represent SAFE externally at selected events with the President's agreement.
 - Prepare to assume the Presidency, ensuring a seamless leadership transition.

- ii. As President of the Stroke Alliance for Europe (initial three-year term)

Following the President Elect year, the individual automatically assumes the role of President for a three-year term, becoming a full voting member of the Board and Chairing the organisation.

The President leads SAFE, together with the Board and the Director General, ensuring that it remains focused on always achieving its objects and acts in line with SAFE's governance arrangements.

The President has all duties and responsibilities of a Board member, and the following additional responsibilities:

- Ensuring that SAFE operates effectively and that the Board fulfils its responsibilities for good governance.
- Acting as an ambassador for SAFE and upholding its ethics and values.
- Providing leadership in shaping strategy, setting policy, and overseeing delivery through clear objectives and performance monitoring.
- Ensuring that SAFE's financial affairs are properly managed, audited, and transparently reported.
- Chairing Board meetings efficiently using well-structured agendas and briefing papers prepared in consultation with the Director General.
- Approving Board minutes and ensuring that Board policies and decisions are implemented.
- Making the best use of Board members' skills and experience, encouraging participation, and fostering impartial, evidence-based decision-making.
- Planning the annual cycle of Board meetings and ensuring preparation of an annual Board work plan.

- Overseeing an appropriate authority register and framework for the election, re-election, co-option and retirement of officers and Board members.
- Ensuring the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy for SAFE.
- Ensuring that all Board members receive appropriate advice, training and induction.
- Supporting and reviewing the performance of individual Board members and the Board collectively.
- Establishing a regular communication and reporting framework with the Director General.
- On behalf of the Board, supervising and appraising the Director General, agreeing and reviewing their objectives, and ensuring appropriate remuneration.
- Leading the process to recruit and appoint a new Director General when required.
- Ensuring that SAFE's staffing and volunteer frameworks attract and retain high-performing, motivated individuals.
- Ensuring that all SAFE members are represented and engaged in delivering the organisation's strategy.
- Serving *ex officio* on any committees or working groups established by SAFE.
- Representing SAFE and leading high-level engagement with external organisations such as the World Stroke Organisation, European Parliament, European Commission and World Health Organisation.
- Undertaking other duties delegated by the Board or assumed as necessary for the effective operation of SAFE.

Requirements, skills and experience

i. President Elect

- Be a delegate of an ordinary member organisation of SAFE and eligible under the Articles of Association.
- Demonstrated leadership and governance experience in a not-for-profit or health-related organisation.
- Commitment to SAFE's mission: prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and life after stroke across Europe.
- Willingness and capacity to devote the time required over a four-year term (one year as President Elect followed by three years as President).
- Experience as a Board member of SAFE or another European NGO.
- Fluency in English (the working language of SAFE).

ii. As President of SAFE

The President must meet the requirements of a SAFE Board member (see Board Member Specification) and additionally demonstrate:

- Experience as President, Chair, or equivalent of a Board or committee.
- Up-to-date understanding of effective governance in the NGO sector.
- Familiarity with European health policy and advocacy environments.
- Strategic and visionary leadership, with the ability to guide a Europe-wide network.
- Strong communication and diplomatic skills, capable of representing SAFE at senior international levels.
- Experience chairing boards, committees, or multi-stakeholder groups.

- Ability to translate good governance principles into effective Board processes.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and develop a Board team.
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to represent SAFE at public events and conferences.
- Outstanding influencing and networking skills at the highest levels.
- Understanding of SAFE's work, the NGO sector, and European stroke networks.
- Strong people-management and mentoring abilities.
- Commitment to the time and travel required to fulfil the role.

Commitment and conditions

- Commitment to the expectations set out in the President role description.
- Attendance at all Board meetings and the Annual General Assembly.
- Additional time for strategic discussions, stakeholder engagement and representation duties.
- The role is voluntary and unpaid; travel and reasonable expenses will be reimbursed according to SAFE's policy.
- The total term is four years: one year as President Elect followed automatically by three years as President.

Key relationships

- SAFE Board and President
- SAFE Director General and Secretariat
- Member organisations across Europe
- Key external stakeholders and partner organisations