



National Register of
Public Service Interpreters

**INFORMATION PACK FOR APPLICANTS
FOR THE POSITION OF
LAY NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The purpose of this brief is solely to provide potential applicants with further background information to assist them in deciding on whether they wish to apply, and if so, how they could seek to position their covering letter and accompanying CV.

The NRPSI website will enable you to update yourself, particularly on current issues and news.

The website also gives a brief outline of our current board members, both practitioner and lay members.

If any further explanation or comment is needed or you wish to arrange a telephone discussion to assist in your understanding please contact our Executive Director, Mike Orlov, at mike@nrpsi.org.uk, from whom further information such as accounts and minutes of previous board meetings is also available.

November 2022

1. The reason for the vacancies (two lay vacancies)

A lay board director has recently died and another lay board director has taken the Chair's role following the retirement after 11 years of the previous chair

2. Background

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters Ltd (NRPSI) was established on 1st April 2011 as an independent company limited by guarantee.

It was previously a wholly owned subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CioL) who after a number of years of discussion around issues such as potential conflict of interests undertook a detailed review of the future of the NRPSI in 2009.

The result was that the CioL decided to set up NRPSI as a completely independent not-for-profit body.

4. The Board and the staff team

Our constitution provides for a board of 7 non-executive directors of whom 4 are lay members and 3 are practitioners (NRPSI Registered Interpreters.) The chair is one of the 4 lay members.

The current Board members are:

Alan Kershaw	Chair, and Lay Member
Nick Whittaker	Lay Member
VACANT	Lay Member
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Lalia Pessoa-White	Practitioner Member
Madeleine Lee	Practitioner Member
Phil Muriel	Practitioner Member

NRPSI's Executive Director is Mike Orlov

Board papers are prepared and presented by the Executive Director and the Chair together with our external accountants.

The Executive Director participates fully at Board meetings and although he does not have voting powers is relied upon for advice and comment on all issues.

The minutes are taken by one of the key senior staff and after distribution to the Directors and approval at a subsequent board meeting are also placed in the 'Interpreter's Room' (which is the access-controlled part of the website which provides Registrants with privileged access to the Minutes and Annual Accounts).

The Executive Director has a team of six staff of whom two (our Professional Standards Manager and our Registration Manager) have been with NRPSI since before it became independent from the CloL in April 2011 and therefore have extensive experience. Our registration team of four staff are involved in maintaining the Register, which requires in depth understanding of the registration criteria. Great efforts have been made to retain experienced staff. Complaints against our Code of Conduct are managed by our Professional Standards Manager.

The Executive Director is accountable to the Board for the way in which they manage the NRPSI's affairs. All the Directors are non-executive, so do not normally get involved in day-to-day operations (although on occasion the chair has done so in the past when the Executive Director has not been available).

The Directors do however provide a range of skill sets and contacts that the Executive Director can and does call on as the occasion requires and the Chair has regular and detailed contact with the Executive Director.

The lay directors are particularly valuable in both supporting the Executive Director in maintaining the operations of NRPSI and ensuring an understanding of and application of best-practice and good governance.

5. NRPSI's relationships

To a significant degree we have as NRPSI sought to distance ourselves from some of the confrontational activity that has been taking place around the issue of the changes in the justice sector, seeking to position ourselves as an independent regulator, in touch with what is going on but retaining a degree of impartiality. Our constant message is that of the need to secure proper standards in public service interpreting and to stress that the use of the Register provides reliable assurance in that regard.

A view of our website (www.nrpsi.org.uk) will give some examples of the way in which we have so engaged and positioned ourselves over the past year – and also the links we have with others in the interpreting community.

In this context we have an alliance with a number of interpreter representative organisations to present a united front in addressing the concerns caused by the Ministry of Justice's changes to the way in which interpreters are booked and used in the courts in England and Wales. The alliance is known as Professional Interpreters for Justice (PI4J) and one of our practitioner Directors sits on the committee alongside our Executive Director. The Chair is also part of the communication network of PI4J.

We have also submitted evidence to parliamentary committee investigations and the Chair appeared before the Justice Select Committee.

Saying that quality is what we are all about has to be demonstrated by the way in which we conduct ourselves and manage the Register. Our Code of Professional Conduct and our disciplinary procedures are an essential part of this and both have been regularly reviewed and updated since the company was formed.

Complaints against the Code are managed by the Professional Standards Manager who issues them to a panel (the Professional Conduct Committee, or PCC) to consider whether there is a case to be answered and then if necessary on to a Disciplinary Committee for a hearing and decision. The Chair of the board is also the chair of the Appeals Committee.

Again relevant details and the [Code of Conduct](#) are on our website.

Following the early decision to maintain the Register as open access for all, we also improved the way in which our Registrants could display information and contact details about themselves – if they wish to do so.

Engagement with others has been important, with the Executive Director having regular dialogue with the MoJ, Police Authorities, agencies and interpreting bodies –again, some of this activity is evidenced on the website and on social media such as LinkedIn; see <https://www.linkedin.com/company/2134408/admin/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/orlovsmike/> The Executive Director and his team (and on occasion the Chair) have also embarked on a programme of presentations and visits to universities and language centres to promote and explain the Register to newly/about to be qualified students and others. Some of the practitioner directors have also spoken at language conferences and exhibitions, served on relevant committees and on many occasions have been able to provide information on NRPSI to their own networks.

6. Support relationships and development

With a small team of staff, it was obvious very early on that the Executive Director and the Board required a degree of professional support and a range of services to enable the most effective use of our own resources.

An early priority was to appoint Crossley, an accountancy company based in Kent that does all our accounts and financial transactions, working closely with the Executive Director.

We also engaged the services of the HR Services Partnership for HR support and issues ranging from a new staff handbook, recruitment and disciplinary issues and advice. They also provide advice and support for any internal HR issues that might arise.

We also have a PR agency owned by Nina Croad, who works closely with the Executive Director.

We relaunched our website at the end of March 2014 and the website company, CNC, also provide basic but extremely valuable IT support.

We initially undertook a detailed strategic review of the business and have reviewed and restated this on a roughly three-year cycle. The current 2023-2025 plan has recently been updated and is available below.

7. Current issues and challenges

Please see the current strategy (below) for details.

8. Recent activity and other relevant information

We now devote much more effort than in the past to providing Registrants with information about registration, professional standards and events happening within the profession. We issue a Registrants Newsletter each month, as well as other news items published on the website and an increasing use of social media; see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-and-links.html>

We instituted access control for those wishing to search the National Register. While still being free to access, the required registration process is providing us with valuable information on which organisations are actually using the Register, as well as the means to communicate with the users and forge beneficial relationships with them.

At the end of October 2022 there were over 19,318 Website Users in the last 12 months who had registered to search, from over 1,000 different organisations, including 290 solicitors' offices and nearly every police force. Over 6,800 searches for an interpreter were made on our website in October 2022.

To emphasise NRPSI's role in setting standards, NRPSI sponsors the annual CloL Award for excellence in the Diploma in Police Interpreting, given that the DPI meets NRPSI's qualification requirements for registration.

New qualifications emerge from time to time and our Qualifications Committee reviews the way that the criteria for registration are framed and whether any new qualifications meet our criteria for registration. Increasingly the requirements will be defined by the National Occupational Standards in Interpreting.

With an overall agenda of greater transparency, we list the outcomes of all disciplinary panels-reviewed complaints.

9. Financial Information

Our formal year end is 31st August. We are working within our current budget for September 2022 – August 2024 agreed by the Board. Income derives primarily from registration fees which are accounted for on an accruals basis given that such fees provide for 12 months subscription and therefore service provision.

The financial risks are identified as including

- retention of Registrants on renewal
- attraction of new Registrants
- cost effective management of services
- and the market level of registration fees

The number of Registrants has fluctuated over the time we have been in existence from the 2,180 when we started in April 2011, reaching around 2,250 at one time to the current level of around 1,600.

There is no doubt that the MoJ changes and more recently the COVID crisis have meant that a number of interpreters have stopped working because they could no longer make a living, and therefore left the Register.

However, the number of new interpreters joining the Register each year has stayed relatively stable although the COVID restrictions and resulting cancellation or postponement of qualification examinations has undoubtedly had an impact on the number of new applications for registration. Details of the financial reports to the board are contained in the minutes and recent documents are available for you to review.

NRPSI Strategy **2023 – 2025**

Strategic Background

Professional practitioners in spoken language public sector language services

The UK, with a population of over 67 million, benefits from a multicultural society in which more than 4.2 million people have a language other than English as their main language and 27 per cent of these regard their English skills as 'non-proficient' (2011 Census data).

The UK issued 277,069 work-related visas in the year ending March 2022 (including dependents); a 129 per cent increase on the year ending March 2021 and surprisingly 50 per cent higher than in the year ending March 2020 (Home Office statistics).

There is a continuing, growing need for professionalism in public sector spoken language services. Effective regulation of those working as interpreters and translators in potentially life-changing interactions with the public services has never been more important.

NRPSI Launch

The 1993 Runciman Royal Commission recommended the establishment of a register of public service interpreters with the aim of using only interpreters with proven competence and skills, who are governed by a nationally recognised code of conduct in court. In 1994, NRPSI was established by the then Institute of Linguists (now the CIOL). NRPSI became an independent body in 2011.

The core activities of NRPSI remain as relevant now as when it was founded in 1994. The NRPSI Board exists to enhance the organisation's regulatory role, acknowledging that registration is voluntary and therefore requires the engagement of both the interpreters and the users of their services. A current initiative will extend the regulatory function across public service translating through the National Register of Public Translators (NRPST).

Purpose

Protecting the public who are in need of language services by providing access to registered, regulated language professionals.

Developing, upholding, raising and promoting standards in public sector language services

Maintaining standards among those who achieve the status of registered, regulated public service spoken language professionals

Vision

To secure recognition for the organisation as the definitive independent strategic resource for government, the public sector and linked private sector in setting standards for language services delivery

To achieve a position where public sector organisations are mandated to engage only with registered, regulated language service professionals

To secure for registered, regulated public services language professionals:

- Protection of title
- Statutory recognition
- Professional status, ensuring this is valued by government and public sector organisations as well as related private entities
- Terms, conditions and remuneration commensurate with the qualifications and experience of registered, regulated practitioners
- Standards in language services delivery, upholding these standards and protecting those who need it most and giving voice to the voiceless

By securing these we will fulfil our remit to uphold standards in language services delivery, protecting those who need it most and giving a voice to the voiceless.

Values

Confidence

Inspiring and motivating all stakeholders to have confidence that the NRPSI regulation process is working in everyone's best interests; and to celebrate the assurance this offers them at every opportunity

Consistency

Reliably delivering high quality services in a transparent manner

Commitment

Respecting people, cultures and all stakeholders; maintaining strong social and environmental responsibilities, especially in the management of the funds that Registrants invest in the regulation of their profession

Compliance

Acting with integrity, honesty and openness, always adhering to proper ethical and moral standards in all aspects of the organisation's activities

Better regulation

In all our work we will be guided by the Better Regulation Principles: *Proportionality, Accountability, Consistency, Transparency and Targeting*.

Mission

Across the UK:

- Determine the standards required for registration
- Recognise the required qualifications and experience levels
- Secure the procedures that protect the required standards
- Maintain publicly and freely accessible registers
- Promote our role to government and public sector organisations and, where appropriate, to other countries
- Promote the services of Registrants to the public sector and related private entities
- Promote the need for professional practitioners to continue to grow and develop through their careers
- Promote the need for registration and regulation amongst possible new Registrants
- Administer a robust, proportionate process for handling complaints about a Registrant's fitness-to-practise
- Manage the organisation effectively and sustainably
- Work alongside other organisations that share our purpose, vision and values

Our Goals

- Maintain sustainability of the organisation through volatile times
- Review and develop the Code of Professional Conduct
- Review the procedures for handling complaints
- Establish NRPST and grow NRPSI
- Embed the organisation's delivery across the UK

- Build on our conversations with Registrants and extend our services (such as NPPV3) where viable
- Increase effectively our use of media platforms
- Become active across all areas of public service interpreting and translating, matching levels of attainment to the complexity of work
- Continue effective dialogue with public sector organisations
- Develop dialogue with executive and legislative functions across the UK
- Secure protection of title for public service language professionals
- Lobby for statutory regulation for public service language professionals
- Lobby to obtain appropriate remuneration, terms and conditions, commensurate with the qualifications and experience of registered, regulated practitioners

Our Objectives

- Redouble efforts to maximise cost savings given the volatile environment
- Continue to do all possible to maintain and increase NRPSI numbers
- Secure NRPST as a viable and well perceived register by 2025
- By 2026 have a plan for a Community Register and launch registrations
- By 2026 change the company name to cover the three brands: NRPSI/NRPST/L3
- Conclude overhaul of the Code of Professional Conduct and fitness to practise procedures by March 2024
- Promote the work of the organisation and Registrants more effectively across all platforms with greater Board involvement
- Continue lobbying for statutory regulation of public service language professionals
- Continue lobbying for fair terms, conditions and remuneration commensurate with the qualifications and experience of registered, regulated practitioners
- Seize any opportunity to further the purpose and vision of the organisation notwithstanding any environmental uncertainty

NRPSI Board
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