

From: Chair <chair@sfc.ac.uk>
Sent: 29 October 2024 10:15
To: Chief Executive <ceo@sfc.ac.uk>; Lynne Raeside <lraeside@sfc.ac.uk>
Subject: SFC CEO appointment
Importance: High

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Dear colleague

I am delighted to announce that we have appointed Francesca Osowska OBE FRSE as the new Chief Executive of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). This follows a robust appointment process supported by our recruitment partner, Gatenby Sanderson.

Francesca, who takes up the role in mid-January 2025, joins SFC from NatureScot where, as Chief Executive, she led a major change programme, rebranding and transforming the organisation to deliver a more focused and engaging strategy, delivering for people, communities and nature, with a clearer link to Scotland's national priorities, including a particular focus on addressing the climate emergency.

Francesca brings with her a strong track record of strategic leadership, team and relationship building, and the successful delivery of major projects. Before taking up the helm at NatureScot, she held a key Whitehall post as Director of the Scotland Office, where she successfully repositioned the UK Government in Scotland, leading a more proactive communication and engagement strategy that secured improved relationships with stakeholders and the public. Immediately prior to that, as Scottish Government Director for the Commonwealth Games and Sport, she led the delivery of a successful, safe and secure 2014 Games for which she was awarded an OBE for services to Government and the Commonwealth Games in the Queen's New Year's Honours in January 2015.

An established strategic leader with strong insight into the workings of government at Scotland, UK and international levels, Francesca has a wealth and breadth of experience in public service, ranging from her role as Principal Private Secretary to the First Minister from 2007 to 2009, through posts in education, justice, culture, external affairs, tourism, housing and regeneration, to her most recent post as CEO of NatureScot and its focus on the natural environment, research and science. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE).

Francesca joins us at an important time in the evolution of SFC. Building on the excellent work of her predecessor, Karen Watt, her skills as a strategic leader and her superb record of delivery will be crucial as together we navigate the reform programme, maximising the opportunities and addressing the challenges ahead.

As we get closer to Francesca's start date we will be in touch to arrange introductory meetings. In the meantime, Martin Boyle as Interim CEO, along with the Executive Team, will continue to support delivery of SFC's priorities in the months ahead.

Regards

Mike

Mike Cantlay

Chair | Chathraiche

Chief Executive's Office | Oifis an Àrd-oifigeir

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