

The Association of Real Estate Funds (AREF)

Role: Secretariat Associate

Date: July 2022

Reports to: Head of Marketing & Events

About the Association of Real Estate Funds

The Association of Real Estate Funds represents the interests of UK real estate fund managers, those firms that advise and support them and the end customers that invest in our member funds.

Our membership includes over sixty funds spanning the leading real estate fund management houses in the industry, through to smaller, specialist boutiques, with a collective net asset value of over £64bn. We have more than fifty Affiliate members, a number of Associate members and hundreds of Investor members.

Our work focusses on four complementary areas: the Code, the Forum, the Lobby and Data.

The Code - Our unique Code of Practice & Quality Mark are widely recognised as the gold standard in corporate governance for unlisted real estate funds. All AREF Fund Members are required to confirm annually their compliance with the Code of Practice.

The Forum - AREF brings together stakeholders from across the real estate investment spectrum to discuss and debate topical issues, to learn and to network. We seek to bring the industry together to help influence its evolution, for the benefit of both the practitioners working in the industry and the investors in the funds.

The Lobby - AREF is the collective voice of the UK real estate funds industry, recognised by and working with regulators in the UK, the EU and around the world. Current important issues of engagement are climate change, where the real estate industry has a major part to play, the place of real estate and other illiquid assets in UK DC pension funds, and the UK's levelling up agenda.

Much of AREF's policy engagement is driven by our various committees. AREF members benefit from (and can participate in) this extraordinary resource, drawing on the committee members' extensive breadth and depth of expertise and experience. Furthermore, events and workshops are organised to discuss and take on board the wider membership's views.

Data - AREF originated and continues to sponsor the AREF/MSCI UK Property Funds Index, now run by MSCI, with whom we have a close relationship. The Index acts as a repository of member funds' data, much valued by investors, analysts and academics. The Index continues to evolve with the market to cover emerging sectors and to include new performance measures such as ESG.

AREF works alongside other UK real estate trade associations and is a member of the Property Industry Alliance, which also includes the British Council for Offices, the British Property Federation, the Commercial Real Estate Finance Council Europe, the Investment Property Forum, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Urban Land Institute.

Overview of the role

Reporting to Head of Marketing & Events, the Secretariat Associate will support the team in providing secretariat support for various AREF committees (around 6 in number) and associated working groups. We would expect the successful candidate to oversee updates to AREF's Code of Practice and members confirmation of their compliance with the Code.

Main duties in this role include:

- Plan for committee and working group meetings, including scheduling committee and working group meetings, drafting and agreeing the agenda with the chair, collating and distributing meeting papers and taking minutes or notes and circulating them after the meeting.
- In line with AREF policies and processes, coordinate the membership of the committees, including the annual review of committee members.
- Keep committees updated, on an ongoing basis, of activities by other committees, AREF or externally that is appropriate to them.
- Annually and in line with the agreed Corporate Governance Committee procedures, agree updates to the Code of Practice, prepare for signoff and manage the communication and self-certification submissions process from start to completion.
- Ensure the webpages for the committees are kept up to date.
- Work closely with the Head of Marketing and Events to help set the AREF events agenda, ensuring that the views of committees are appropriately represented.
- Ensure AREF's guidance for members is up to date and relevant, liaising with the appropriate committees to follow the correct practices and processes are used to update and publish the guidance.
- Attend ad hoc meetings and events on behalf of the AREF team, and answer ad hoc queries from members.

Skills and experience:

- A strong understanding and a keen interest in the real estate fund management industry. Previous work experience or education in real estate would be beneficial;
- Ability to plan and prioritise important tasks and work to deadlines with accuracy, at times under pressure
- Ability to write well, with excellent spelling and grammar, and comfortable with minute taking
- Ability to articulate ideas well, and sufficiently confident to talk with senior people
- Being able to build and maintain strong rapport networks with members
- Proven attention to detail is essential
- A desire to learn from others
- Comfortable working with data and numbers
- Problem solving, flexible and forward thinking 'can do' mindset
- The ability to work collaboratively within a small team
- A good working knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook.

AREF is a Special Member of the Investment Association and some of our team are technically employed by the IA and seconded back to AREF. This enables us to offer corporate benefits through the IA such as a pension, medical insurance and life insurance. As well as offering this option, we are also happy to consider applicants who wish to work as a self-employed contractor.

AREF welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of their ethnicity, race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, age, marital status or whether or not they have a disability.

To apply:

If you are interested in this role, please send your CV with a covering letter as to why you feel you are suitable for the position, by email to Clare at cwhyte@aref.org.uk by Friday 19th August 2022.