



# Recruiting Trustees



## Trustees

Whatever the size of your organisation, having the right trustees is critical because they perform such an important role.

It can be challenging to recruit trustees but it can also be an exciting opportunity to bring in new experiences, skills and ideas to your organisation.

## Tips On Getting The Right Trustees

### Plan Ahead

- **Team Work:** are the current trustees ready and willing to work together? Are there any problems or issues that need to be resolved before taking on new board members?
- **Time:** allow plenty of time! Recruiting the right trustees can take several weeks and sometimes months and is not something you to rush. So if new trustees need to be elected at the next AGM, make sure that you start the process well in advance.
- **Research:** Check what procedures and materials your organisation already has in place for recruiting trustees. Take a look at some of the resources available to groups on trustee recruitment.
- **Planning:** decide between you who will be responsible for doing which tasks. Agree a simple plan and timeframe.

### Check Your Governing Documents

- This is the rulebook for how your organisation is governed and is sometimes also referred to as a constitution, trust deed or memorandum and articles of association.
- It may set out requirements such as the maximum or minimum number of trustees you can have on your board, how and when they can be appointed - ie by election or nomination and the procedures for doing this.

### Be Aware Of Who Can & Can't Be A Trustee

- If you are a registered charity, there are certain people who can't act as trustees for example, someone who is an undischarged bankrupt or anyone under 18 years old.
- For more information on who is eligible see The Charity Commission Guide 'Finding New Trustees - What Charities Need To know' p12



### Carry Out A Mini Skills Audit

- Recruiting new trustees can be a great opportunity to introduce fresh skills, experience and perspectives to your organisation. Work out what skills, knowledge and experience you already have between you, where there might be gaps and what you would like to bring into your organisation to make it more effective. For example, do you need campaigning skills to help you make your voice as an organisation better heard?
- If your organisation is beginning to grow, would someone with management experience be useful? To help you assess which skills and qualities you already have as a board and what you might want to bring in, take a look at NCVO's 'Trustee Recruitment Tool kit' and draw up your own simple 'Skills + Experience Table' p14

### Write A Role Description - It's Worth Taking Time To Do This!

When recruiting for any new role, it's helpful to take the time to think about and clearly define what it will involve so that any potential applicants are clear right from the start what will be expected of them and they can be sure that they have the relevant skills and experience. It will also make it much easier for you to spot the right person when they apply.

**Role Description:** work together to decide on the key things - the tasks and responsibilities - your trustee will need to do in their role. NOTE: there are certain legal responsibilities that need to be included - for an example see NCVO's 'Trustee Recruitment Tool Kit' p24. Think about any skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities you are looking for in a trustee

**Be Realistic:** whilst it's important to identify the key skills and experience that your organisation needs, it's also important that the person you describe might actually exist! Unless there are very specific skills you need, try to avoid creating enormous lists of formal qualifications. Try to identify other experience and qualities such as personal experience, commitment and willingness to learn new skills.

### Publicise The Opportunity

Word of mouth is a simple and often effective way of finding new trustees for your organisation but it can also be quite restrictive. You want to reach a much wider pool of talent and enable your board to reflect the diversity of the community you are working in.

You could use these resources to recruit trustees:

- Havering Volunteer Centre - Register with HVC and they can advertise your roles
- NCVO Trustee Bank –For NCVO members only.



### Top Tip

Keep an eye out for Team London Skill Up and Trustee Training - Some training courses are free to attend



## Sample Trustee Role Description

### **The statutory duties of a trustee**

- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- To ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects: the charity must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are
- To contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation
- To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds

### **If the charity employs staff, to appoint the chief executive officer and monitor his/her performance**

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve:

- Scrutinising board papers
- Leading discussions
- Focusing on key issues
- Providing guidance on new initiatives

### **Trustee person specification**

- Commitment to the organisation
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team