



Trustees—Model trustee job description and person specification

Trustee of [insert name of organisation]

Trustee job description

The duties of a trustee are:

- to ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, organisation law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- to ensure that the organisation pursues its objectives as defined in its governing document
- to ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives, ie the organisation must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objectives, 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, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- to safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- to represent the company at functions and meetings as appropriate
- to declare any conflict of interest while carrying out the duties of a trustee
- to be collectively responsible for the actions of the organisation and other trustees
- to ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation
- to abide by the equal opportunities policy
- to ensure the financial stability of the organisation
- to protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds
- to make sure the organisation is properly insured against all reasonable liabilities
- to appoint and support the employees and monitor their performance
- in addition to the above statutory duties of all trustees, each trustee should use any specific knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, and providing advice and guidance requested by the board on new initiatives, or other issues relevant to the area of, the organisation's work in which the trustee has special expertise
- to attend meetings, and to read papers in advance of meetings
- to attend sub-committee meetings as appropriate
- to participate in other tasks as arise from time to time, such as interviewing new staff, helping with fundraising
- to keep informed about the activities of the organisation and wider issues which affect its work

Trustee person specification

Each trustee must have:

- integrity
- a commitment to the organisation and its objectives
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- willingness to speak their mind
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team



The board of trustees will need skills and experience in the following areas:

- setting targets, monitoring and evaluating performance and programmes in commercial and non-profit organisations
- financial management
- the type of work being done by the organisation
- legal matters
- fundraising
- recruitment and personnel management, including a knowledge of employment legislation
- public relations
- marketing
- computers and information technology
- campaigning
- education and learning



Form of declaration of commitment and qualification for trusteeship

I [insert trustee's name] am committed to achieving the objectives of [insert name of organisation]

I understand the responsibilities and liabilities I am taking on in becoming a trustee of [insert name of organisation] and agree to devote the necessary time and effort to my trusteeship.

I am not disqualified from acting as a trustee under section 72 of the Charities Act 1993.

Signed:

Date:

Section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 disqualifies people who:

- have been convicted of any offence involving dishonesty or deception;
- have been adjudged bankrupt or sequestration of their estate has been awarded and (in either case) they have not been discharged;
- have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, their creditors and have not been discharged in respect of it;
- have been removed from the office of organisation trustee or trustee for a organisation by an order made by the Commissioners or by the High Court, on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the organisation for which they were responsible or to which they were privy, or which they by their conduct contributed to or facilitated;
- have been removed, under Section 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 (powers of Court of Session to deal with management of charities), from being concerned in the management or control of any body;
- are subject to a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2)(b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order).



The role of the honorary officers

The 'honorary officers' comprise a Chair, Vice-chair, Company Secretary/Secretary and Treasurer. The roles of Chair and Treasurer are particularly important. The honorary officers are usually elected by the members of the board of trustees. Unless the board has explicitly delegated decision-making powers to the honorary officers, they should act in an advisory capacity and take care to report their activities to the full board to prevent the other trustees feeling excluded by, the inner group. The governing document may give the honorary officers specific roles, functions and responsibilities.

The Chair

The role of the Chair extends well beyond drawing up the agenda and chairing the meetings of the board of trustees. The Chair has to take a leadership role in ensuring that the board of trustees fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation. S/he must also work closely with the employees to support them in achieving the aims of the organisation, and act as the channel of communication between trustees and staff.

The Chair may act as a figurehead of the organisation and represent it at functions, meetings and in the press and broadcasting media. Other tasks include authorising action to be taken between meetings of the full board, signing cheques and legal documents.

Job description for a Chair

The role of the Chair is to lead the board of trustees, ensuring that it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation. The Chair's role is also to work in partnership with the employees, helping her or him achieve the aims of the organisation; and to optimise the relationship between the board of Trustees and the staff.

The responsibilities of the Chair will include:

- providing leadership for the board of trustees in their role of setting the strategy and policy of the organisation
- planning the annual cycle of board meetings
- setting agendas for board meetings
- chairing board meetings
- monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- presenting the organisation at functions and meetings, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- liaising with the employees to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and providing support as appropriate
- leading the process of appraising the performance of the employees
- sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels.

Person specification for a Chair

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Chair should also possess the following:

- leadership
- experience of committee work, tact and diplomacy
- good 'people' skills
- impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.



The vice-chair

The Vice-chair acts for the Chair when the Chair is not available and undertakes assignments at the request of the Chair.

The Company Secretary/Secretary

The role of the Company Secretary is confined to taking minutes of meetings from which all staff are excluded, being available for the Chair to consult between meetings, and undertaking other duties delegated to the honorary officers or at the request of the Chair.

Job description for a Company Secretary/ Secretary

The role of the Company Secretary is to support the Chair by ensuring the smooth functioning of the board. The responsibilities of the Company Secretary include either doing the following tasks, or delegating them to a member of staff and ensuring that they have been carried out:

- making all the arrangements for meetings (booking the room, arranging for equipment and refreshments, organising facilities for those with special needs, etc.)
- preparing agendas in consultation with the chair and chief executive officer, and circulating them and any supporting papers in good time
- receiving agenda items from other trustees/staff
- checking that a quorum is present
- minuting the meetings and circulating the draft minutes to all trustees
- ensuring that the minutes are signed by the chair once they have been approved
- checking that trustees and staff have carried out actions agreed at a previous meeting
- circulating the agendas and minutes of the annual general meeting and any special or extraordinary general meetings
- sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Person specification for a Company Secretary/Secretary

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Company Secretary should also possess the following:

- organisational ability knowledge or experience of business and committee procedures
- minute-taking experience, if this is not being delegated to staff.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer takes the lead in overseeing the financial affairs of the organisation, ensuring its financial viability, and seeing that proper financial records and procedures are maintained. The Treasurer will assist other trustees to perform their financial duties, by interpreting and explaining accounting requirements, ensuring that the board receives reports containing the information trustees need in an 'easy to understand' format, and helping trustees guide any other professional advisers they have appointed.

Job description for a Treasurer

The overall role of a Treasurer is to maintain an overview of a organisation's affairs, ensuring its financial viability and ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

The tasks of a Treasurer will include:

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Phone: 020 7226 4862 **Fax:** 020 7359 7442

Email: information@ivac.org.uk **Website:** www.ivac.org.uk



- preparing and presenting financial reports to the board on a monthly basis, including projected cash-flow
- keeping the board aware of its financial responsibilities
- ensuring that the organisation's accounts are prepared in a suitable format
- ensuring that the accounts and financial systems are audited as required by law
- liaising with the auditors/independent examiners.

The responsibilities of the Treasurer will include:

- preparing and presenting budgets, accounts and financial statements
- being assured that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs
- ensuring that the organisation has an appropriate reserves policy
- the preparation and presentation of financial reports to the board, ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place
- liaising with paid staff and volunteers about financial matters
- advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plan
- ensuring that the organisation has an appropriate investment policy
- monitoring the organisation's investment activity and ensuring its consistency with the organisation's policies and legal responsibilities
- ensuring that there is no conflict between any investments held and the aims and objectives of the organisation ensuring that the accounts are prepared in the form prescribed by the Home Office regulations, included in the annual report and submitted to the relevant statutory bodies, e.g. the London Borough Grants Scheme,
- ensuring that the accounts are audited in the manner prescribed by the Home Office regulations, and any recommendations of the auditors implemented
- keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities
- contributing to the fundraising strategy of the organisation
- making a formal presentation of the accounts at the annual general meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way
- sitting on appraisal, recruitment and disciplinary panels as required.

Person specification for a Treasurer

In addition to the qualities needed by all trustees, the Treasurer should also possess the following:

- financial experience and business planning skills
- some experience of organisation finance and fundraising
- the skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences
- a preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board
- a willingness to be available to give financial advice and answer enquiries from any staff or volunteers on an ad hoc basis.