

# The Essential Guide to...

## Trustee Role Description

### Introduction

Creating a role description for trustees is a great way to make sure you and your trustees have a clear understanding about what their roles and responsibilities are. It can assist both in the recruitment of new trustees as the document provides a clear introduction to the commitments and skills needed, as well as supporting existing trustees in their day-to-day work. It may also be worthwhile creating separate role descriptions for specific positions such as your Chair and Treasurer.

The examples laid out below are suggestions of things you may want to include but are not intended to cover all possible areas., you'll need to think carefully about your organization and what it's particular needs are so that you set out to recruit the right trustees.

---

***(Insert group name here)*** is committed to operating on the basis of good governance, and a crucial part of this is having a robust, capable and visionary Board of Trustees.

### Purpose of Role:

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of ***(Insert group name here)***, leading its development in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

### Responsibilities:

There are a number of responsibilities that trustees/directors must comply with:

1. To ensure that ***(Insert group name here)*** complies with its governing document, charity law, company law, with the requirements of the Charity Commission and Companies House as regulators and any other relevant legislation or regulations
2. To ensure that ***(Insert group name here)*** pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
3. To ensure ***(Insert group name here)*** uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects
4. To contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving strategic direction to ***(Insert group name here)***, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
5. To ensure the effective and efficient administration of ***(Insert group name here)***
6. To ensure the financial stability of ***(Insert group name here)***

7. To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of **(Insert group name here)**'s funds
8. To appoint the chief executive officer and monitor his/her performance
9. To abide by the Equal Opportunities and Disability Policies
10. To act with integrity, avoiding any personal conflicts of interest and acting in the best interest of the charity, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times.
11. Use reasonable care and skill in the work of a trustee, using personal skills and experience as needed to ensure that **(Insert group name here)** is well-run and efficient.
12. To ensure that intangible assets such as organisational knowledge and expertise, intellectual property, the charity's good name and reputation are properly valued, utilised and safeguarded
13. Consider getting external professional advice on all matters where there may be material risk to **(Insert group name here)**, or where the trustees may be in breach of their duties.
14. To represent the organisation at functions and meetings as appropriate

#### **Time Commitments:**

***Use this space to outline how much time your organisation will expect a Trustee to be able to give on a regular basis, ie XX hours weekly or monthly.***

Papers are sent out at least a week beforehand and trustees are expected to have read and understood them before attending meetings.

Other pieces of work or sub-groups are established regularly that may need trustee input. Trustees are also occasionally asked to represent **(Insert group name here)** to the media, at meetings or events and this may require additional time and/or travel.

#### **Travel:**

These meetings are usually held at **[location]**, but trustees are asked to be flexible in travelling to available locations.

#### **Expenses:**

**(Insert group name here)** operates a trustee expenses policy to cover basic expenses and ensure that no trustee is out of pocket for attending **(Insert group name here)** business.

### **Skills & Behaviours**

Trustees are expected to demonstrate the following skills/behaviours:

1. Interest in, and empathy with, the ambitions and values of **(Insert group name here)**
2. A commitment to the organisation and its objectives that adds to public confidence and trust in the organisation
3. The ability to think creatively and strategically with good, independent judgment
4. An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
5. To contribute specific skills, knowledge, experience and contacts to maximise **(Insert group name here)**'s ability to provide high quality and responsive services.
6. To maintain good working relations with the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team, staff and Board of Trustees.
7. To develop, as appropriate, the charity's public profile and foster good relationships with government, statutory, voluntary and private bodies and other external stakeholders
8. To be an active member of the board, and any appropriate sub-committees, working flexibly and co-operatively as part of a team, and to work on own initiative
9. To contribute to, and take part in, training and development opportunities provided for trustees.
10. An understanding of the importance of confidentiality and data protection, and a commitment to the principles of equal opportunities and disability policies.
11. Excellent communication skills, including tact, integrity and diplomacy
12. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a trustee
13. The ability to understand and identify key points in a range of documents including committee reports and accounts.
14. Good level of written and spoken English