TRUSTEE BOARD MEMBERS
DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION
About NCVO

At NCVO, we think that charities and volunteering are our country’s biggest assets. We know that the British people have a proud tradition of helping others, giving time and money, sharing skills and assets. Every day we see good ideas too, new ways to solve problems and new models of social enterprise and social action. That’s because we work alongside the people and organisations who want to benefit others. We work with them to make a bigger difference. And we would like you to work with us to help all people everywhere to make that difference.

We champion the work of charities and volunteers, community groups and social enterprises, and provide them with the support they need to make a bigger difference. We’ve been doing this for 100 years, and we combine our experience with a thirst for impact and innovation. Our network of over 14,500 members are a force for change, and that starts with our board of trustees.

In our experience, good governance is a crucial ingredient to effective, impactful organisations. This includes a positive attitude to diversity and inclusion. We think that boards whose trustees have different backgrounds and experience are more likely to encourage debate and to make better decisions. We want our own board to model this thinking. With your help, we want NCVO to make a bigger difference.

NCVO’s trustee board

NCVO is governed by a board of trustees, which comprises:

- the chair
- the treasurer
- up to seven elected trustees
- three appointed trustees.

The trustee board appoints a vice chair from among the trustees.

The Charities Act 2011 defines charity trustees as those responsible under the charity’s governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. The role of the trustee board is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them to the charitable purposes of NCVO. The trustee board must always act in the best interests of NCVO, exercising the same standard of duty of care that a prudent person would apply if looking after the affairs of someone for whom they have responsibility. The trustee board must act as a group and not as individuals.
In addition to being a registered charity, NCVO is a company limited by guarantee, and NCVO’s trustees are registered as directors at Companies House.

**Duties of a trustee board member**

NCVO takes good governance seriously. The statutory duties of a trustee board member are to:

- ensure that NCVO complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- ensure that NCVO pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- ensure NCVO applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects. For example, it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be
- contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction to NCVO, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- safeguard the good name and values of NCVO
- ensure the financial stability of NCVO.

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 leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

This is a voluntary role and trustees receive no remuneration. Trustees are entitled to claim expenses in line with NCVO’s expense policy for attendance at board meetings and other NCVO events necessary for the fulfilment the trustee’s duties.

**Minimum time commitment**

We would normally expect trustees to commit at least five days each year for board meetings, with additional time for reading papers and other communications. Other events, such as our annual conference and AGM, will increase this commitment.

We hold board meetings four times a year. Three board meetings are held at our office in London, during office hours. A fourth, longer board meeting includes the board’s annual away day and is allotted to strategic planning. This is a residential event and includes an overnight stay. New trustees will receive a full induction and should expect to allocate half a day in London for this.
Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings.

- Papers are distributed one week in advance of meetings.
- Trustees may be asked to join one of three board committees, each of which meets twice a year, for approximately two hours, during normal office hours, in London.
- Trustees are invited to the annual general meeting (AGM) of NCVO, which takes place during the day in November.
- Trustees are encouraged to attend one of the Member Assembly meetings each year.
Person specification

Each trustee must have:

- a commitment to the mission of NCVO
- a willingness to meet the minimum time requirement
- integrity
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- a willingness to speak their mind
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of NCVO.

The board of trustees collectively needs skills and experience in the following areas.

- Financial management, income generation and enterprise
- Public policy and public affairs
- National and local voluntary sector
- Understanding the different needs of small, medium and large voluntary organisations
- National and local government and statutory bodies
- Delivering digital products and services
- Human resource management
- Volunteering leadership and management
- Evaluation and impact reporting