

Capacity building through people resource: Trustees

There are four key groups of stakeholders who can help a charity to build capacity:

1. Trustees.
2. Other volunteers.
3. Seconded staff:
 - a. Via corporate partnerships.
 - b. Via other partner organisations (universities etc).
4. Paid and freelance staff.

This resource sheet is focussed on **Trustees**.

Trustee positions are usually voluntary, so do not require financial input from the charity aside from expenses. In return for their time and expertise your charity can provide dedicated individuals with an opportunity to contribute time and energy towards charitable causes they are passionate about.

Strong and experienced trustee boards allow charities the opportunity to strategically develop business planning, connect with new stakeholder groups, deeply dive into operational issues, and can even help create new fundraising opportunities and revenue streams through their connections, influence, and access to resources.

The Charity Commission recommends that charities should aim for a minimum of five, and up to a maximum of 12 unconnected trustees with a range of skills (<https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en>).

It is important for charities to have enough trustees for effective charity governance, whilst keeping the board small enough to make it easy to arrange meetings and allow for effective discussion and decision making.

The **Advice Skills Academy** publish a Charity Trustee **Competency Matrix** which offers a useful guidance framework <https://adviceskillsacademy.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Trustee-competency-matrix.pdf>

Reach Volunteering provides a Trustee **Skills Matrix** to help charities ensure that they have a good mix of skills from their Board of Trustees and identify potential gaps and weaknesses. <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/trustee-recruitment-cycle/reflect/how-complete-skills-audit>

Advertising for Trustees

Free resources

- Do-it/Small Charities Coalition: <https://do-it.org/channels/trusteefinder> (free)
- CharityJob: <https://www.charityjob.co.uk> (free for voluntary roles)
- The Big Give: <https://secure.thebiggive.org.uk/trustees> (free)
- Women on Boards: <https://www.womenonboards.net/en-GB/Home> (free)

Fee-based resources

- The Guardian Jobs: <https://jobs.theguardian.com> (charge)
- Third Sector: <https://jobs.thirdsector.co.uk> (charge)
- Civil Society: <https://www.civilsociety.co.uk/post-a-jb.html> (charge)

- NCVO Trustee Bank: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/practical-support/information/governance/trustee-recruitment> (free to NCVO members, charge for enhanced service)

Further Reading

UK Government Guidance – The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do (CC3)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

Charity Commission Guidance including '5-minute guides' for charity trustees
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-commission-guidance>

The Essential Trustee guide
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866947/CC3_feb20.pdf

NCVO's Good Trustee Guide
https://www.ncvo.org.uk/images/documents/practical_support/publications/accessible-guides/The%20Good%20Trustee%20Guide%20easy%20read%20-%20How%20trustees%20look%20after%20the%20charity.pdf