



ACO Trustee Recruitment Pack 2022



INTRODUCTION

The Association of Charitable Organisations was founded in 1946 – celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2021 - and is the national UK umbrella body for charities that provide financial and wellbeing support to individuals and families in need.

With a diverse membership of over one hundred benevolent and grant-making charities, we encourage collaboration and best practice in the charity sector through the sharing of knowledge and resources to meet shared challenges.

ACO members have continued to benefit from our commitment to the sector – through campaigning, resource sharing and ensuring that our colleagues have a common platform to come together and leverage the collective expertise of our extensive network of charities.

Whilst we retain a small secretariat (Chief Executive, Marketing & Communications Manager & Bookkeeper) we have been able to maintain and - in fact - widen our service delivery over the last year by leveraging the benefits of virtual engagement with our members.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we are now looking to extend our existing Board of Trustees, bringing in additional skillsets and expertise in order to support and guide the charity through the next exciting chapter in its development.

CURRENT CONTEXT

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the charity sector, particularly amongst benevolent and grant-making charities, which has affected not only the capacity of the sector to deliver vital services, but for many charities their continuing financial viability.

In spite of this, ACO has been able to adapt – embracing digitalisation– to arguably provide greater engagement with our members over the last two years and continue to provide value to ACO members in five key strands:



Knowledge sharing

Through a broad virtual event programme, we look to address specific issues/themes common to the sector. During 2021-22 these have included:

- Increasing diversity & inclusion in the sector
- The cost of living crisis
- Effective Governance during the pandemic
- Staff resilience & wellbeing
- Building greater awareness
- The relationship between occupational charities and their connected professional bodies

At the same time, we have looked to broaden our range of regular special interest group meetings to now include:

- CEO Forum
- Marcomms
- Income Generation & Fundraising
- International beneficiaries
- "Under fives" (small charities)
- Impact & Evaluation

Digital Solutions

We are currently working on two major technology projects that will potentially deliver significant benefits to the grant-making sector:

- Development and launch of an online grants portal in conjunction with Lightning Social Ventures (a tech-for-good start-up)
- Implementation of a project for grant-makers to individuals to publish grants data to the 360Giving platform

Building peer-to-peer relations

Providing a platform through the events programme to bring professionals together throughout the sector to network, building connections and identifying collaborative opportunities.



Campaigning and lobbying

We are about to launch our 2022 campaign in response to the cost of living crisis “Support During the Squeeze” which is targeting key referral agencies to ensure that the financial and well-being support resources from benevolents/grant-makers is understood by organisations working with service users/clients in need.

In addition, we continue to sit on the Civil Society Group comprising national umbrella bodies in the charity sector, including NCVO, ACEVO, NACVA, which has lobbied on behalf of the sector to press for continued Government support during Covid-19 through the #NeverMoreNeeded campaign.

Providing Support & Assistance

One of our fundamental roles remains as a hub of information and support to member charities, acting as a signpost to key resources, ensuring continuing engagement between charities and promoting member activity, campaigns, and fundraising initiatives.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

We will be looking to develop and launch our new Strategy during the course of 2022, in the short term our operational priorities remain:

Extending membership – building our reach in targeted segments such as Trade Unions, Healthcare, Public Sector and Sports Body charities;

Financial sustainability – maintaining our current cost base, maximising membership retention, and exploring additional income streams;

Service delivery – continuing to deliver a diverse event programme and potentially re-integrating physical events if viable;

Campaigning/lobbying – providing an effective voice for the sector and raising our profile particularly amongst key referral agencies/organisations.



TRUSTEE OPPORTUNITIES

The current ACO Board comprises:

Chair: D'Arcy Myers	Chair, Smallwood Trust and Director, consultdarcy
Kris Barnett	Chief Executive, ICE Benevolent Fund
Julie Green	Chief Executive of R L Glasspool Charity Trust
Jodie Gill	Engagement and Communications Director, CABA
John Brown	John Brown PR
Caroline Aldred	Former Manager, CIMA Benevolent Fund
Liam Evans	Senior Media Officer, Action for Children
Juliet Smithson	Head of Operations, LionHeart

Although we are looking to recruit Trustees with a broad background in the charity sector, we are particularly interested in speaking to candidates with skillsets/experience in the following key areas:

- Financial Management;
- Human Resources;
- Fundraising;

Commitment

The Trustee positions are unremunerated (although reasonable expenses incurred will be reimbursed e.g. travel). The Board will typically meet four times per year with an additional strategy away day. These meetings are currently virtual (via zoom) but we will review the viability of potentially reverting (some) of these meetings back to a face-face format, usually in London, later in the year.



PRIMARY DUTIES OF AN ACO TRUSTEE

The duties of a Trustee Board Member are to:

- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to ACO, setting overall policy, defining goals, and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Ensure that ACO complies with its governing document (i.e. its Memorandum and Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Support the reputation and values of ACO
- To monitor and safeguard the financial stability of ACO.
- Appoint and support the Chief Executive Officer and monitor their 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 leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation, or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise.

TRUSTEE SPECIFICATION

Each Trustee must demonstrate:

- A commitment to the mission of ACO
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- 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 ACO
- A specific understanding of the challenges/issues specific to the Benevolent/Grant Making sector (desirable)

The Board of Trustees periodically conducts a skills audit to ensure ACO board has an appropriate range of skills on the board.



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We wish to increase the diversity of our Board and welcome applications from all sections of the community, particularly with respect to representation from black and minority ethnic groups. We are also open to applicants seeking their first Trustee role as well as experienced Trustees who have the required expertise.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, please forward a supporting statement and a copy of your CV to Donal Watkin (Chief Executive) donal@aco.uk.net

Closing date for applications is 13th May 2022.

A panel will then review applications and invite shortlisted candidates to interview.