



About Being a Trustee at Impact Initiatives

Being a trustee is a great way to

- support a cause you believe in
- develop new skills,
- enhance your CV
- work with a wide range of people,
- gain work experience
- Give yourself a new challenge

The most important qualities needed in a trustee are a commitment to the aims of the organisation, a willingness to discuss ideas and options and to help make decisions in the best interests of the charity.

No one person has the skills, knowledge or wisdom to do this alone and at Impact we believe we are stronger when we have a diverse board of trustees so collectively they bring and represent a range of views and hold a mix of skills. This ensures discussion and decisions on all aspects of the charities work are fully informed by different points of view and based on different people's experience perspective.

To ensure all Impact trustees have an equal voice on the board and we provide individually tailored induction, training and support to ensure each trustee has all the information they need to be confident in their role.

The role of our trustees

The role of a trustee carries significant responsibilities and this may feel daunting. However, Impact is a long standing charity with structures and policies in place to ensure we meet all legal requirements and we can easily check these at any time. We also have a strong management team and long standing trustees who support those newer in the role.

Trustees have legal responsibility for the overall direction and decision making in the organisation. Their main job is to have oversight of what's going on and ensure the work of the charity is carried out as required by the Charity Commission and Companies House and that we carry out our business according to our constitution (The document which sets out our principles and reason to exist)

Trustees delegate the day-to-day management of the organisation to the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team who report to the Board

The number and roles of trustees required on a Board vary dependent on the size and nature of the charity, Impact can operate with between 4 and 18 trustees but usually has 10 – 12 at any one time

Expectations

Trustees are required as a minimum to commit to reading reports prior to attending quarterly Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting (AGM), however occasionally further meetings are called to discuss urgent matters which we encourage all trustees to attend.

The role of trustee is not permanent. Impact Trustees serve for a period of four years, at the end of which they may stand for re-election. (They may resign prior to the end of the initial four years)

Being a trustee is a form of volunteering. Our trustees are not paid and may not receive any personal financial gain from their role. However, they should also not be out of pocket for the work they do and can receive payment to cover any expenses.

Who can be a Trustee?

Most people can become trustees, but a few are not eligible. These are:

- Anyone under 18
- Anyone convicted of deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is spent
- Someone who is an undischarged bankrupt
- Anyone who is disqualified as a company director
- Anyone who has previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the court or the Charity Commissioners

We particularly welcome service users, ex-service users or their family members or carers who can bring personal experience of the work of the organisation.

Trustee responsibilities

Key responsibilities of trustees are:

Vision and Leadership

Having a shared vision of what the organisation is about, its mission and values. And ensuring the current business plan is correct for the direction of the organisation's activities.

Accountability

Being answerable to service users, funders, partners and the wider public.

Managing Finances

Monitoring spending, minimising financial risks and ensuring that the organisation has the funding and resources needed to carry out its activities.

Legal Responsibilities

Keeping to the law and making sure that the governing document is followed. Trustees must always act in the best interests of the organisation and avoid conflicts of interest.

Managing Itself

Making sure that the board functions effectively, that meetings are well run and that all members are involved.

Promoting the Organisation

Enhancing and protecting the reputation of the organisation and being a good ambassador for Impact Initiatives.

Trustee Liabilities

Trustees have a duty of care for individuals, whether staff, volunteers or service users – as well as for the whole organisation. This means taking all reasonable steps to avoid causing injury or harm that could reasonably have been prevented.

Provided that they have duly carried out their duties as above the trustees do not have personal financial responsibility for contracts and debts incurred. They are not normally individually liable for negligence. This is because Impact initiatives is a company limited by guarantee as well as a registered charity and so a legal entity in its own right. Agreements and contracts are taken out in the name of the company (Impact Initiatives) rather than the name of individual trustees

More information can be found on the charity commission website in document CC3A:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved#contents>