

# DSC Trustee Recruitment Information Pack 2019

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## Introduction

Thank you for requesting this information pack, we are so happy that you are interested in applying to become one of our trustees here at the Directory of Social Change.

To help you make your decision about whether you want to proceed, here is a little more information about us as a charity and about what we are looking for! We have tried to outline everything that you may need to know but please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any other questions.

## Background

The Directory of Social Change is a leading national charity that believes that society is made better by people coming together in service of their fellow citizens, communities and causes through voluntary groups and charities. We serve these organisations by giving them the tools they need to get the job done, primarily through campaigning, training and publications. We are the largest supplier of information and training to the voluntary sector and our work supports tens of thousands of organisations every year achieve their aims. We are outspoken and often say what others are too scared to.

Our vision is of an independent voluntary sector at the heart of social change and we think of ourselves as an agent connecting givers, influencers and service deliverers.

## What are we looking for?

DSC understand the positive contribution a board of trustees from differing backgrounds and experiences bring to an organisation. We want people who care about our sector, understand and commit to DSC's role in supporting it and are able to work with a dynamic and effective leadership team to deliver our objectives.

We are currently looking to recruit three new trustees to our board.

We are seeking to improve, amongst other things, the visible diversity of the board to ensure that DSC's board more accurately reflects the make-up of the people that we serve.

Trustees are required to attend a minimum of four meetings annually with one away-day. They are also expected to contribute to working groups on an ad hoc basis; take a lead on issues facing the charity and support DSC at key events such as the Social Change Awards. Active engagement with the charity will add up to the equivalent of around 10 days p.a. – in and out of working hours.

For those applicants who may be new or less experienced, we will offer the opportunity to have a 'trustee buddy' to ensure that you get the time, support and develop your new skills.

## Trustee Role Description

### Introduction:

We are really excited that you are interested in this role and want to let you know what we are looking for.

Our Trustee board wants to make sure there are a range of opinions when we make decisions about our work and are keen to find new trustees with differing perspectives and experience. We are open-minded to skilled, enthusiastic, useful people whatever their background.

### Criteria

You need to fill one or more of these criteria;

1. Experience of working, volunteering or using the services of small charities
2. Experience of leadership in any sector, with strong financial acumen and a commercial mindset
3. Experience of delivering digital innovation

### Key Responsibilities

- To ensure that DSC has a clear vision, strategic objectives and plans to achieve them
- To ensure that DSC performs according to its strategic objectives
- To ensure that DSC complies with all legal and statutory requirements
- To ensure that DSC governance complies with best practice and sets an example for others
- To ensure that DSC policies and procedures reflect best practice and set an example for others

### Skills and understanding

- An understanding of the issues facing the voluntary sector, especially small charities
- A commitment to campaigning on behalf of the sector

### Personal characteristics

- The ability to work strategically to set the direction and manage the directors without getting unnecessarily stuck on small details
- The ability to communicate clearly and take an active role in discussions, challenging sensitively and constructively and maintain a level head in difficult situations
- Focus and enthusiasm to deliver on DSC's vision and mission.

## Trustees Code of Practice

This code sets out the relevant standards and commitments expected of Trustees of The Directory of Social Change.

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure consistent application of the values and ethos of DSC by all Trustees.

### The Code

#### General

- 1 Trustees must act with probity, due prudence and should take and consider professional advice on anything in which the trustees do not have expertise themselves.
- 2 Except where legally authorised, trustees must not gain financial or other material benefit for themselves their families or their friends from DSC.
- 3 A trustee must not place him/herself under any financial or other obligation to outside individual organisations that might influence him/her in the performance of his/her official duties.
- 4 Trustees must conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of DSC or its staff individually or collectively and must not take part in any activity which is in conflict with the objects or which might damage the reputation of DSC.
- 5 Trustees must take joint responsibility for decisions taken including those determined by a nominated sub-committee or working group.
- 6 Trustees who are part of a nominated sub-committee or working group must take all reasonable steps to ensure that other Trustees are kept fully up-to-date with information upon which decisions may be taken.
- 7 Trustees should act fairly and in accordance with best practice principles in making decisions affecting the appointment, recruitment, professional development, appraisal, remuneration/reimbursement of expenditure and discipline of trustees and other volunteers.

#### Responsibilities

- 8 Trustees must, with the help of the Chief Executive and the Leadership Team, formulate and review regularly DSC's vision, strategic objectives and plans.

- 9 Trustees must ensure, with professional advice where appropriate, that DSC complies with all regulatory and statutory requirements and must exercise overall control over DSC's financial affairs.
- 10 Trustees must be familiar with, and regularly review, the rules and constitution of DSC.
- 11 Trustees must annually review DSC's performance against its vision and objectives.

### **Trustee Meetings**

- 12 Trustees must attend all meetings regularly. If attendance is proving problematic a trustee can request a leave of absence or a sabbatical.
- 13 Trustees should bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions and should ensure that all decisions made are in DSC's best interests and in service of its charitable objects and beneficiaries.
- 14 Trustees must aim to foresee and avoid any conflict of interest. Where one arises, the trustee must declare it and absent him/herself from the meeting.
- 15 Confidential information or material (relating to customers, staff, commercial business, etc.) provided to or discussed at a trustee meeting must remain confidential, within the confines of the meeting and be managed according to relevant legislation.
- 16 Trustees should be as open as possible about the decisions they take, giving reasons where appropriate and restricting information only when wider interests require it.
- 17 Trustees have a responsibility to develop and ensure the maintenance of a properly constituted, balanced and competent Board, including clear procedures for selection, training, retirement and, if necessary, removal of trustees and to ensure arrangements are followed for recruiting the Chair and members of sub-committees.
- 18 Papers submitted to the Board are to be kept secure and confidential.

### **Board Responsibilities to Staff**

- 19 Trustees must ensure there is a clear understanding of the scope of authority delegated to the Chief Executive.
- 20 Policies and strategies agreed by the Board should be clear and explicit and come from the Board as a whole.

- 21 Trustees should act fairly and in accordance with best practice principles in making decisions affecting the appointment, recruitment, professional development, appraisal, remuneration and discipline of the Chief Executive and other staff.
- 22 Trustees must understand and accept the difference in roles between the Board, The Chief Executive and Senior Managers of DSC.
- 23 Trustees should ensure that they do not act to undermine the Chief Executive or Senior Managers Team by word or action. If a trustee has concerns about the performance of a member of DSC staff, including the Chief Executive, this should be taken up with the Chair.
- 24 If a Trustee has a concern about financial irregularities within DSC this should be addressed to the Chair who will act upon the information appropriately and in accordance with agreed procedures.

**DSC will:**

- Provide the trustees with timely and relevant information in order to allow the Board to govern well.
- Provide the Board with the appropriate advice to make effective decisions and when necessary ensuring that external professional advisors are available as and when needed.
- Work in partnership with the Board to ensure that it fulfils all its statutory and legal responsibilities.
- Invest time, money and other resources in order to help support and further develop good governance.
- Provide the Board with the necessary administrative and other support that they will need to govern well.
- Reimburse Trustees out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the course of their duties as trustees.

## Timetable

Application deadline: Monday 9 December 2019

Interviews: will be held early in January 2020

New Trustee inductions w/c 17 February 2020

## How to apply

Applying to be a Trustee at the Directory of Social Change is simple. Please complete the three-page application form and send it across to Bronwen [bedwards@dsc.org.uk](mailto:bedwards@dsc.org.uk) before the deadline. The form can be found here on our website.

We have tried to streamline the application process as much as possible but please do let us know if there is anything we can do to make the application more accessible.