



FAQs relating to the role of management committee members

There are a number of topics that come up frequently in queries regarding the role of management committees. We have included answers some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help clarify some common areas of confusion.

Q: What are trustees?

A: Trustees is the name that charity law uses to define the group of people who have ultimate responsibility for an organisation that is a recognised charity. They may also be called the Management Committee, Directors, Executive Committee, etc. Therefore, if you are on the Management Committee of an organisation that is a charity, then you are also a trustee as defined by charity law.

What do trustees do?

A: Trustees take on different roles within the management committee including:

- Supporting the practical every day activities, that help the charity to function. Which include taking on the officer positions of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary as well as other roles relating to assisting with fundraising, and organising events etc supporting the staff with their activities
- Supporting the strategic activities of the charity for example, developing policies, project planning applying for grants etc.

Q: What types of skills is it useful for potential trustees to have

- It is useful to have skills/ experience relating to what the charity does although this is not necessary.
- A willingness to learn and gain new experience and contribute to the overall purpose of the charity
- Experience of working in different sectors with experience that relates
- Patience and tenacity and a desire to work with others to achieve the charity's objectives

As a trustee, you are part of a team and will have the opportunity to apply your unique skills and experience while learning from others. You will also be working closely with a passionate team of people who have different perspectives, which is often one of the most enjoyable and challenging aspects of being a trustee.

Q: Does the Management Committee have the power to do whatever they wish?

A: No. The Management Committee has certain powers that are clearly laid out in the organisation's governing document (e.g. constitution). The Management Committee can only act within these powers.

Q: Can Management Committee members volunteer for the organisation in other capacities?

A: Yes. Management Committee members may take on other roles within the organisation.

If you choose to do this it is important that you can distinguish between the two roles which are as follows:

A management Committee trustee (who is also a volunteer) is involved in making strategic decisions about the charity and is part of the overall management committee team who is responsible for the charity and how it operates.

A Scrapstore volunteer is part of the volunteer team who is managed by the Scrapstore Coordinator who is tasked with overseeing the day to day activities of the Scrapstore.

Q: Can the Management Committee delegate to sub-committees or working groups?

A: The Management Committee can only act within its powers set out in Southampton Scrapstores constitution/ governing document.

The powers include being able to delegate to sub-committees, staff or volunteers. It is important to remember that any decisions made by any committees or groups remain the responsibility of the Management Committee. Therefore, it is essential to have agreed reporting-back procedures and written terms of reference.

Q: Can anyone apply to be a trustee?

A: You must be at least 16 years old to be a trustee of a charity that is a company or a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), or at least 18 to be a trustee of any other sort of charity.

- You must be properly appointed following the procedures and any restrictions in the charity's governing document.
- You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified unless authorised to do so by a waiver from the Commission. The reasons for disqualification are shown in the disqualifying reasons table and include:
 - ⇒ being bankrupt or having an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA)
 - ⇒ having an unspent conviction for certain offences (including any that involve dishonesty or deception)being on the sex offenders' register
 - ⇒ Volunteers from overseas- Individuals who are not UK or European citizens are usually eligible to volunteer in the U.K however there are some circumstance when this

doesn't apply, for more information read <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/recruiting/volunteers-from-overseas>

Q: Can Management Committee members be paid?

A: Management Committee members are volunteers and are not paid a fee for their involvement, except in certain cases they can however be reimbursed for out of pocket necessary expenses which are agreed in advance. For further guidance, refer to Charity Commission guidance on payments to Trustees.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/trustee-expenses-and-payments-cc11>

Q: Can individuals on Management Committee represent the Southampton Scrapstore at other meetings

A: This depends. If the Management Committee member attends another meeting as the representative of the Southampton Scrapstore then this is fine as long as it is clearly indicated.

In all cases, it is essential for Management Committee members to understand that decision-making must always be made in the best interests of the organisation at hand (the one in which you are a Management Committee.

In cases where there is a conflict of interest you must withdraw from the decision (i.e. not vote). This is key to being an effective Management Committee member in whatever capacity you have been elected or appointed.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>