

An introduction to CTN

Charity Trustee Networks (CTN) is the national organisation for trustees and management committee members and is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2008.

Our mission

Our vision is of confident, effective trustees governing voluntary and community sector organisations. We recognise that, whilst holding crucially important positions of trust, trustees do not benefit from the kind of institutional support available to paid staff of organisations.

To this end, we strive to support trustees in their roles with information and resources, and to help them learn and support each other in what is quite an individual role ...

Our mission is:

To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of charities by improving their governance, through:

- *promoting trustee networks*
- *promoting the education of trustees in the principles and practice of trusteeship*

Our strategic priorities

CTN pursues these aims through five strategic priorities:

- To develop networks and strengthen our relationship with and support to them
- To identify and understand trustee needs and build capacity to meet these needs, either directly or indirectly
- To build **trusteenet** membership and services (to provide trustees with an online resource base and community)
- To voice the trustee perspective and promote trustee-friendly policy
- To be a healthy, effective, sustainable organisation

Our structure

CTN is governed by a committed board of eight trustees. Rodney Buse joined the Board in 2005, following an open recruitment process for a new Chair. Further information about Rodney and each of the trustees of CTN can be found on our website www.trusteenet.org.uk by clicking on the "who we are" link.

The staff team is based in an office in central Guildford. There are currently five members of staff – Karen Heenan is the Chief Executive and has been with CTN since 2003. Karen works three days a week. Paige Sinkler, Deputy Chief Executive, also works three days a week. Paige joined CTN last year, as did Claire Farmer our Head of Operations. Dawn Whyndham, Membership and Events Co-ordinator joined the team earlier this year and Sue Howson, Admin Officer has been in post since 2005. Claire, Dawn and Sue all work full time.

CTN receives funding from the Office of the Third Sector, which is based in the Cabinet Office.

Trustee recruitment for CTN

Context

CTN is seeking to appoint three new trustees to its Board, to take the board to full strength as current trustees reach the end of their terms.

In particular, CTN is keen to appoint trustees who may have skills and/or experience in the following areas:

- understanding/experience of trustee networks
- experience of fundraising
- IT/virtual networking
- experience of national infrastructure organisations
- breadth of experience as a trustee or chair in the voluntary and community sector

CTN's Trustees are the Company Directors of Charity Trustee Networks, as well as being "charity trustees" for the purpose of charity law and regulation. They are also statutory members of Charity Trustee Networks - the company limited by guarantee.

CTN's Charitable Objects are:

- (i) To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of charities by improving their governance through:
 - (a) promoting trustee networks
 - (b) promoting the education of trustees in the principles and practice of trusteeship
- (ii) To promote any exclusively charitable purpose

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CTN embraces diversity and seeks to promote the benefits of diversity in all our actions. It is CTN's policy that all no one in the organisation will be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, age, marital status, civil partnership, sexual orientation, colour, race, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin.

Practical details

- CTN's trustees meet every 2 months in central London.
- Meetings are held on Tuesdays, start at 5pm and usually finish around 7pm.
- The dates for Board meetings are agreed a year in advance.
- There are no permanent sub-committees, but from time to time trustees may be asked to play a role on an ad hoc sub-group looking at a particular area.
- A trustees/senior staff away day is usually held each year in early July. This is a full day and takes place in the London area.
- Trustees usually come down to the office in Guildford once or twice a year (depending on work areas they are involved in), but this is very flexible and ad hoc.

Role of Trustees

Main overriding responsibilities of the Trustees

Each trustee shares collective responsibility for the decisions taken by the Board in the exclusive best interests of CTN. Trustees are expected to follow the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership (the Nolan principles)

Collectively the main responsibilities of the Board are to hold CTN “in trust” for current and future beneficiaries by:

- providing collective leadership and direction to CTN in pursuing its charitable objectives
- ensuring that CTN has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction which is understood and embraced by trustees and staff
- ensuring effective monitoring that the charity is performing well, complies with its legal and regulatory obligations and is solvent
- being open, responsive and accountable to stakeholders
- acting as guardians of CTN’s assets, both tangible and intangible
- promoting and protecting CTN's position, values, integrity, image and reputation
- ensuring high standards of governance that command the respect of CTN's stakeholders

In more detail

Trustees should:

1. work in constructive collaboration with other trustees and the Chief Executive
2. determine and review policies, plans, priorities and budgets which support CTN in pursuing its charitable objects and support the vision, mission and strategic direction
3. review the external environment in which CTN operates so that CTN can respond effectively to changes
4. ensure there are appropriate mechanisms in place to measure objectively the progress of CTN in pursuing its charitable objectives and in meeting targets set by the Board
5. appoint the Chief Executive and set his/her terms and conditions
6. establish, monitor and review levels of delegated authority to the Chief Executive and to committees of the Board
7. support and empower the Chief Executive to manage CTN within the delegated authority and monitor his/her performance
8. receive regular reports from the Chief Executive on progress towards meeting agreed strategic and operational priorities
9. hold the management of CTN to account
10. be aware of the statutory and regulatory obligations which fall on CTN and ensure that CTN complies with them

11. ensure the financial stability of CTN, and protect and manage the property of CTN, including its reputation
12. ensure that risk is reviewed regularly and systems are in place to mitigate or minimise risk
13. keep the governance structure under review so that CTN can function effectively and in accordance with best practice
14. identify those with a legitimate interest in the work of CTN and ensure that CTN is open and accountable to them about the work of CTN and its governance
15. safeguard the good name and values of CTN
16. bring any specific skills knowledge or experience which they may have to help the Board reach sound decisions

Each trustee must:

- be committed to CTN, its objectives and its values
- devote sufficient time and effort to fulfilling their role as trustee effectively - to include keeping themselves informed about the activities of CTN and the environment in which it operates, reviewing Board papers, attending Board meetings and progressing any matter which may be delegated to them (either alone or in conjunction with others)
- bring good independent judgment to bear whilst working effectively as part of a team
- uphold and promote collective decisions

NB Trustees are responsible for all aspects of CTN but are not required to micro-manage. Individual trustees are not expected to have technical knowledge on all issues which arise but should have the ability to test and make judgments on papers presented to the Board. The Board should possess or have access to all the skills and knowledge required to promote and protect the interests of CTN. The Board and its trustees are responsible for recognising and dealing with conflicts of interest.

Selection Procedure

To apply for the role of trustee on CTN's board, please send a copy of your curriculum vitae with a supporting covering letter explaining why you want to be involved and what skills and experience you would bring to the board, to:

Rodney Buse
Chair of Trustees
CTN
3-4 Frensham Suite
Friary Court
13-21 High Street
Guildford GU1 3DG

Email: rodney.b@trusteenet.org.uk

The role of trustee is unremunerated, but reasonable out of pocket expenses associated with the role, including travel expenses to and from meetings, will be refunded.