

Trustee Recruitment Policy

1. Statement

Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support (OBS) recognises that an effective board of trustees is essential if the charity is to achieve its objectives.

The board must seek to be representative of the people with whom the charity works and must have available to it all of the knowledge and skills required to run the charity.

Individual trustees must have sufficient knowledge, both of trusteeship in general and of the Charity's activities, to enable them to carry out their role and to represent the Charity at meetings and other events.

This policy sets out how OBS intends to recruit a robust and effective board of trustees.

2. Governing Document & Charity Commission guidance

OBS must have at least 3 trustees and seeks to have between 5 and 9 trustees, dependent on current trustee skills and needs of the charity. Trustee terms are three years in length.

Trustees must not:

- Be under 16 years of age
- Have been disqualified as a company director
- Have any unspent convictions for offences involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud)
- Be an undischarged bankrupt
- Have been removed as a trustee of any charity by the Charity Commission (or a court) because of misconduct or mismanagement
- Be on the sex offenders' register

3. Recruitment/Appointment Panel

When a need has been identified to recruit trustees a recruitment sub-committee (also referred to as a panel) will manage the process. This will include the Chair, at least one other trustee and at least one other person deemed appropriate by the trustees, such as service users, Peer Supporters and Facilitators. The sub-committee will have responsibility for ensuring that the remainder of the recruitment and induction process is carried out.

4. Skills Audit

Whenever a trustee departs, a skills audit of the board will be done. Efforts at recruiting a replacement will take account of the skills audit and of the skills being lost by the departure. Consideration must also be given to any specific roles or duties that the individual leaving the board was undertaking.

5. Recruitment

Once the ideal skill/experience profile has been identified a recruitment plan will be formulated. This will identify the most appropriate sources from which applicants might be found. Preference should be given to advertisement in the media, volunteer bureau, and direct approaches to professional bodies and to other voluntary organisations over approaches to personal contacts as the intention is to promote diversity and to avoid conflicts of interest. A role description and recruitment pack will be created.

OBS seeks to ensure diversity in its board of trustees and consideration will be given to ways in which groups that are under-represented on the board might be reached and encouraged to apply. However, at the point of selection the board will not discriminate on any protected special characteristics.

People enquiring about becoming trustees will be sent appropriate documentation about the charity, introductory material about trusteeship and will be asked to complete an application form. Arrangements will be made to assist any potential applicant with specific needs in relation to completion of the form or access to the supporting materials.

6. Interview, Selection & Appointment

Applicants who appear suitable will be invited to attend a trustee meeting as an observer and will receive further information regarding the role of being a trustee. In the event of there being a large number of applicants those most closely matching the skills required will be short listed and approached at this stage in preference to less suitable applicants however, consideration will be given to appointing more than one suitable applicant. As a minimum, and if not sent earlier in the process, applicants will be provided with: a copy of the latest Annual Report and accounts of the charity; Charity Commission Publication CC3- 'Responsibilities of Charity Trustees'; a copy of the charity's governing document; a copy of the minutes of the last three board meetings (edited to conform with the principles of data protection if necessary); a trustee 'role description'; relevant policies including a copy of this policy.

The applicant will then be interviewed by the recruiting panel and efforts will be made to answer any questions that they may have. The applicant will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest and will be required to provide two references which will be taken up prior to the next board meeting. The applicant will be required to sign a declaration that they are not disqualified from being a trustee as per section 72 (1) of The Charities Act 1993. The requirement to attend trustee induction sessions will be described. It is the responsibility of the trustees on the recruiting panel to ensure that references are obtained and all other relevant checks are completed.

The applicant will be asked whether or not they wish to be appointed and will be given the opportunity to attend a further meeting as an observer should they wish to do so.

The observations and recommendations of the panel will be put to the following board meeting and a vote taken in accordance with the procedure for appointing co-opted trustees detailed in the governing document.

7. Induction

As outlined in the OBS Constitution, new charity trustees will be given a copy of the current version of the constitution and a copy of the CIO's latest Trustees' Annual Report and statement of accounts.

New trustees will be also given an induction pack comprising information about the charity and all policies. They will be asked to complete an induction checklist, including looking at the OBS website and Drive, attending at least two drop-in sessions and one other OBS activity and meeting facilitators. New trustees will be allocated a board mentor and expected to have at least two meetings with their mentor in the first 4 months of their appointment.

8. Retaining and developing the board

Funds are available for cost effective trustee training where necessary. All trustees have access to member-only resources from NCVO and OCVA.