

# Young trustees guide: Developing the next generation of charity leaders

By Leon Ward, Charity & Governance Advisor

Last year, I teamed up with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) to compile **Young trustees guide: Developing the next generation of charity leaders**. I am absolutely thrilled to announce its publication. It covers a whole range of potential solutions to the 'problems' that both I and other young trustees have identified (and in many cases, personally experienced). We wrote this to help build confidence for those who are thinking of recruiting young trustees, or opening up their governance models for wider participation, and for young people who are already active in the sector but who haven't as yet considered trusteeship.

First and foremost, trustees are volunteers and all voluntary opportunities should be available to anybody who thinks they can add value and fulfil the role requirements. We hope this guide will stimulate both thought and debate. And this isn't just about appointing young trustees. It is about nurturing and harnessing the talent of future givers, philanthropists, thought leaders, chief executives and charity staff. And it is also about developing incumbent volunteers and opening the sector up to outside talent.

Ultimately, however, this is about helping to safeguard the future of the charity sector, and about holding to account a sector that so often talks about diversity, but fails to 'walk the talk'. So, we have collected and featured examples of those who responded to our calls for submissions last year. It is not a definitive guide and I encourage any organisations that are thinking of recruiting young trustees to use this as a 'starter for ten'. Take the bits of what you like and invent your own models; test and try new ways of doing things; look to other sectors and abroad for other examples; and please share your story.

We are giving you this guide for free, and all we ask in return is that you champion young trustees, share your story around being a young trustee or working with young trustees, and keep on the toes of those organisations who haven't considered the option. We urge ALL organisations, irrespective of service user group, to consider young trustees as they begin contemplating any board recruitment. And further, because we are talking about governance, this guide can be used beyond the charity sector and has the potential to be used across the commercial and public sectors too, each of whom have their own governance models. It can also be used to promote 'doing things differently' in its widest interpretation, and encouraging as wide a group as possible to consider trusteeship. Again, I urge any of you who use this guide to let us know of any progress you make.

Finally, I'd like to place on record my thanks to CAF for supporting this work, to the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and the Northern Irish Charity Commission for their forewords and critically, to all those young trustees who sent us their stories.

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