

INFORMATION ON ASCT TRUSTEES



What do ASCT trustees do?

At its simplest, the role of a charity trustee is to:

- Receive assets from donors
- Safeguard them
- Apply them for furthering the purposes of our three projects. or in specific cases according to the wishes of the donor.

In practice, trusteeship is a serious responsibility requiring you to take an active role in the governance of the organisation. Trustees:

- Take the big decisions about the future
- Ensure everything is legal and safe
- Support the Chair
- Ensure the work of the charity is carried out
- Ensure the trustee board is up-to-date and skilled.

Fulfilling the role

Trustees are obliged to:

- Act in the best interests of the charity's beneficiaries
- Act together as a group rather than as individuals
- Set aside their personal interests
- Take legal responsibility for the organisation
- Exercise the duty of care that a prudent person of business would in looking after the affairs of someone for whom they had responsibility.

You will be issued with an ASCT Trustee code of conduct. These will help clarify all roles and expectations of your trusteeship.

Keeping up-to-date

You will also need to keep up-to-date with regulation, charity law and, where appropriate, company law, and best practice recommendations.

Don't worry, though! The ASCT board is not expected to be experts on everything. Appropriate professional advice will be sought when necessary.

Additional Information

The role of an ASCT trustee is voluntary. Except in exceptional circumstances, and where allowed by the charity's constitution, trustees will not be paid or receive any personal gain from their role.

There is no fixed term of office policy for trustees. However, trustees can step down at any period should circumstances dictate.

Liability of ASCT Trustees

If a problem occurs in the charity's work or finances, the ultimate responsibility rests with the trustees. This applies to both legal and financial

aspects of the charity's work, for which they can be held liable. However, if the board has followed the guidelines laid down in the organisation's governing document, made proper informed decisions and taken advice where necessary, they are unlikely to find themselves being held personally liable. If trustees have acted reasonably, generally the law will protect them from the consequences of their honest mistakes.

Who can be an ASCT Trustee?

ASCT trustees can come from all walks of life. However there are some people who are not able to serve as trustees. If you answer 'yes' to any of the following you will not be eligible:

- under 18 years of age
- convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is spent
- an undischarged bankruptcy
- previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the court or Charity Commissioners
- under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986

What are the qualities needed to be an ASCT Trustee?

The most important qualities needed by the trustees are a commitment to the aims of the group and the time to be able to put the work in to achieve these.

The ASCT Board aims for a wide variety of skills to enable it to perform effectively. This includes the 'hard' skills, which you may immediately think of as being important: legal, accounting, business management etc. These skills will be required in order that the board can understand the issues and meet their legal and financial obligations as trustees.

Equally important are the 'soft' skills: encouraging team working, problem solving, facilitating decision making and maintaining good working relationships.

We recognise the board will be stronger if there are members who represent a variety of views.

ASCT is a faith organisation; there is a Christian ethos amongst the current board. New board members do not have to be Christian but do need to be sympathetic to and engage with the aims and ethos of the organisation.

The ASCT Board of Trustees

ASCT's governing documents state there must be a minimum 3 active Trustees in post. A maximum number is not set. Currently ASCT have six Trustees including the Chair, who attends all board meetings, as does the Administrative Officer. The two essential roles on the ASCT Board are the chair, and the treasurer.

Chair

- leads the Trustee Board, ensuring it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the charity
- sets the agenda and chairs committee meetings
- act as a figurehead for the charity, representing it at functions, meetings, events and for publicity purposes
- in conjunction with other trustees, to supervise the staff

Treasurer

- prepares and presents regular financial reports to the committee
- maintains the financial records
- prepares financial records to support applications for funding

A Trustee's role can be very challenging but it can also be extremely interesting and rewarding. Taking on this responsibility can give you the chance to exercise your existing skills and develop new ones.