Trustee | Vision Aid Overseas | London/Gatwick

The role of the Board is to oversee the overall direction and activities of the charity, including its policies and procedures, to ensure that they are consistently in accordance with the charitable purposes defined in the objects clause in its Constitution. The Board sets and monitors the strategic direction of the charity, although the implementation of strategy is achieved through the executive team. The Board must always act in the best interests of VAO, taking decisions as a group and not as individuals.

1. Terms of service

For VAO the Trustees are Members who have been elected to serve on the Board. VAO’s constitution allows for up to 12 Trustees, who can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms of three years. VAO is a company limited by guarantee and the Trustees are its legal directors. The Trustee role is voluntary but out of pocket expenses are paid.

Trustees are appointed by the Vision Aid Overseas Board of Trustees annually at the Board meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

The time commitment in being a trustee involves attendance at 5-6 Board meetings per year, one of which will be an all-day strategy session. Otherwise Board meetings are usually half a day in the afternoon of a weekday. Papers are circulated for reading in advance.

In addition to this, it is expected that trustees attend the AGM held on a weekend and occasional Members’ Forums, which are usually arranged on the same day as a Board meeting in the evening. There may be other ad hoc meetings or phone conferences to discuss specific topics. Trustees will be expected to commit time to receive a proper induction and will be offered the opportunity to volunteer for overseas assignments.

2. Main tasks

Charity Trustees have and must accept ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity and ensuring it is solvent, well-run and delivering the charitable outcomes for the benefit of the public for which it has been set up.

3. Responsibilities
• Ensure that VAO complies with its governing document (i.e. its Constitution and Byelaws), charity law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
• Ensure that VAO pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
• Ensure VAO applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.
• Contribute actively to the Board’s role in the formulation and review of strategy, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
• Safeguard the good name and values of VAO and maintain good relations with its Members.
• Ensure that all policies are implemented, monitored and reports are acted upon, (including the policies on Harassment and Misconduct, Recruitment of ex-offenders, Child Protection and Anti-Bribery).
• Strive for VAO to reflect the full diversity of society in all its activities.
• Ensure the financial stability of VAO.
• Protect and manage the property of VAO and ensure the proper investment of its funds.
• Appoint and support the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his/her performance.

In addition to the above statutory responsibilities, each Trustee should attend Board meetings and use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, evaluation or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise; and then always upholding the decisions taken by Board. Trustees are also expected to support VAO’s fundraising initiatives.

**Person Specification**

Each Trustee must have:
• A commitment to the mission and value base of VAO.
• A commitment to the key policies of VAO – on Harassment and Misconduct, Recruitment of ex-offenders, Child Protection and Anti-Bribery.
• A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
• Integrity.
• Strategic vision.
• Good, independent judgement.
• An ability to think creatively.
• A willingness to speak his/her mind.
• An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship (training/information will be offered in this area).
• An ability to contribute effectively to the workings of the VAO Board and any sub-committees or working groups.