



# GOVERNANCE FACTSHEET – THE BASICS

## Developing your trustees skills

- **Identifying skills**
- **Developing skills**

Use this page to learn about how you can develop trustees skills.

An effective board of trustees should be able to draw on a diverse range of skills, knowledge, qualities and experience to help it fulfil its roles. These might include:

- 'hard' skills such as legal or financial knowledge, and knowledge of principles and processes in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- 'soft' skills such as team working or negotiation
- knowledge of the community or services the organisation provides
- personal lived experience of the cause

Trustees also have a responsibility to act collectively to fulfil their duties.

## Identifying skills

A trustee board can identify the skills, knowledge, qualities and experience each trustee brings by carrying out a 'skills audit'.

A skills audit is a systematic way of collecting information about the attributes of each trustee and avoids making assumptions about why a trustee has joined the board and what they can offer.

This can help identify gaps for future trustee board recruitment.

Skills audits can also help trustees identify gaps in their own knowledge and can help the board plan future learning and training opportunities for trustees and identify when professional advice is going to be needed.

## Trustee skills audit

A skills audit is a useful way of identifying what trustees bring, and the gaps in skills and knowledge on your board. It can be useful when you're looking to recruit new trustees.

[Read more](#) - **NCVO membership required**

## Developing skills

Each trustee will have different support and development needs and will want to meet those needs in different ways. Support, development and training can involve:

- Workshops, conferences or training courses on different aspects of a trustees' role.
- Training, briefings or update sessions at board meetings or at an away day.
- Reading books and online guidance.
- Meeting with trustees from other charities – for example, by joining a trustee network
- Arranging for new trustees to be mentored by existing trustees
- Developing knowledge in EDI to actively demonstrate a culture of inclusion.

Skills audit or appraisals can help trustees identify their support needs.

Learn more about adopting an inclusive culture and set of practices by reading our [guidance on equity diversity and inclusion at board level](#).