



# culturehive<sup>®</sup>

## Quick guide: effective boards



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“The most effective boards bring together a diverse range of skills and perspectives that can help you achieve your mission and vision.”

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## Board members

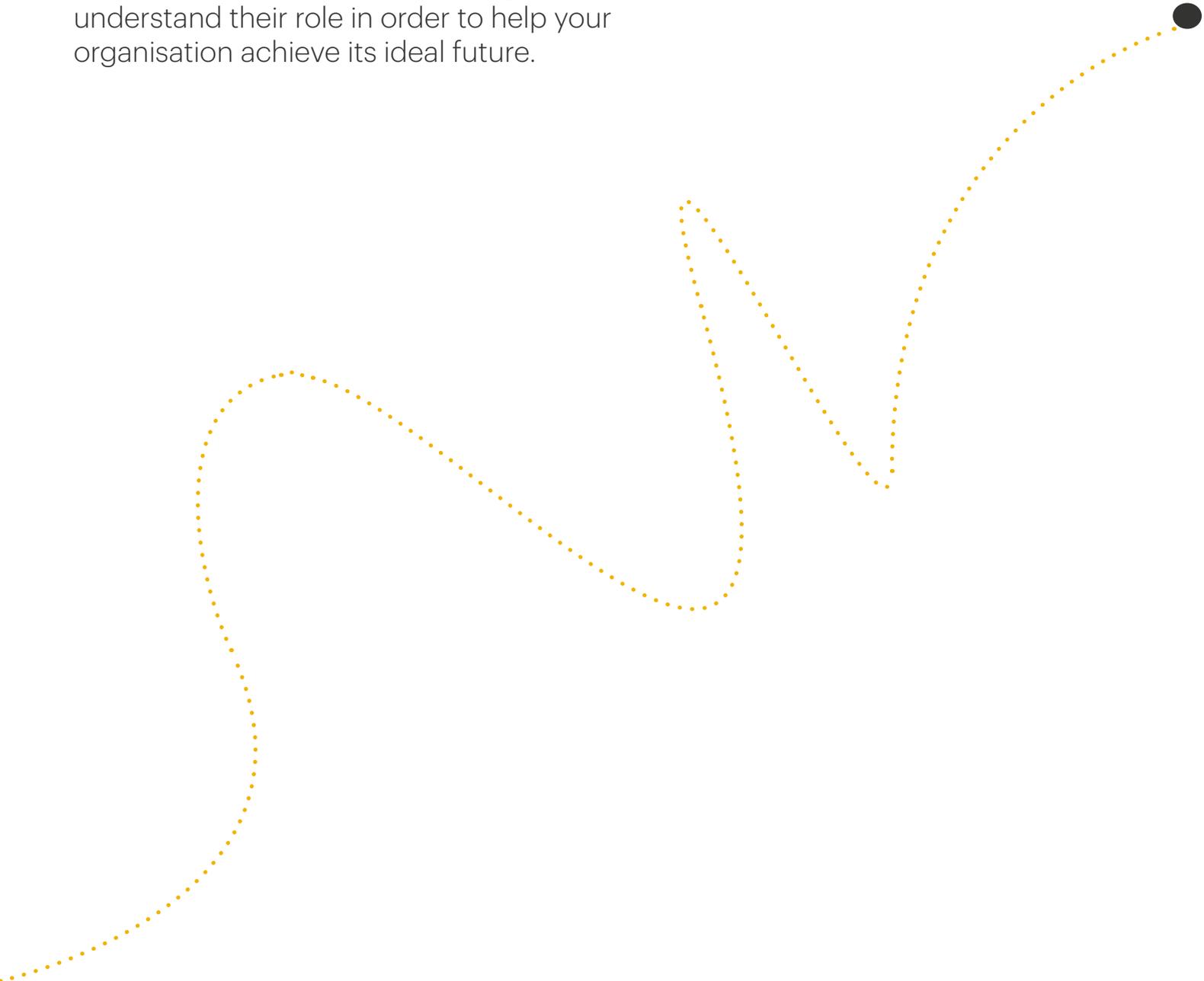
### volunteers lending expertise to drive your organisation forwards

When operating effectively, your board of trustees helps keep your organisation on track. It focuses on your mission and makes sure your organisation is doing what it was set up to do.

Boards oversee the financial and legal health of your organisation and can play a vital role in fundraising.

The most effective boards bring together a diverse range of skills and perspectives that can help you achieve your mission and vision.

Board members need to be engaged and understand their role in order to help your organisation achieve its ideal future.



## Board exercise #1

### what does your organisation need?

- Think about the skills and expertise you need to support your staff team and secure your organisation's future — what are your priorities and what would help you achieve them?
- Think about your target audiences — who are you trying to reach and how could they be represented on your board? Would involving representatives in decision-making help you achieve your vision, mission and audience objectives?

#### **The skills and experience we need**

e.g. legal, financial, HR, arts, fundraising

#### **Target audience**

e.g. Children under 10 years

#### **Represented by**

e.g. Primary School Teacher

#### **Target audience**

#### **Represented by**

#### **Target audience**

#### **Represented by**

## Board exercise #2

### what skills do you have and what's missing?

- If they haven't already, ask your existing board members to fill out a brief skills audit and chart their collective skills.
- Identify any gaps in skills or perspectives by comparing your board's collective skills with those identified in exercise #1.

#### The skills and experience we have

#### Perspectives we have

#### What's missing?

## Addressing gaps developing the skills you need

If there are significant gaps in the skills and perspectives you require to help drive your vision and mission forwards then it may be time to embark on board recruitment.

However, if your board is already at full capacity, you will need to take a different approach.

Arts Council England's Catalyst building fundraising capacity programmes have shown how investing in board training can increase board skills and engagement. If you have a full and highly engaged board, consider whether investing in board training could help you fill your remaining skills gaps. It could be a great way to reward the time board members commit to your organisation and expand their skills and expertise at the same time.

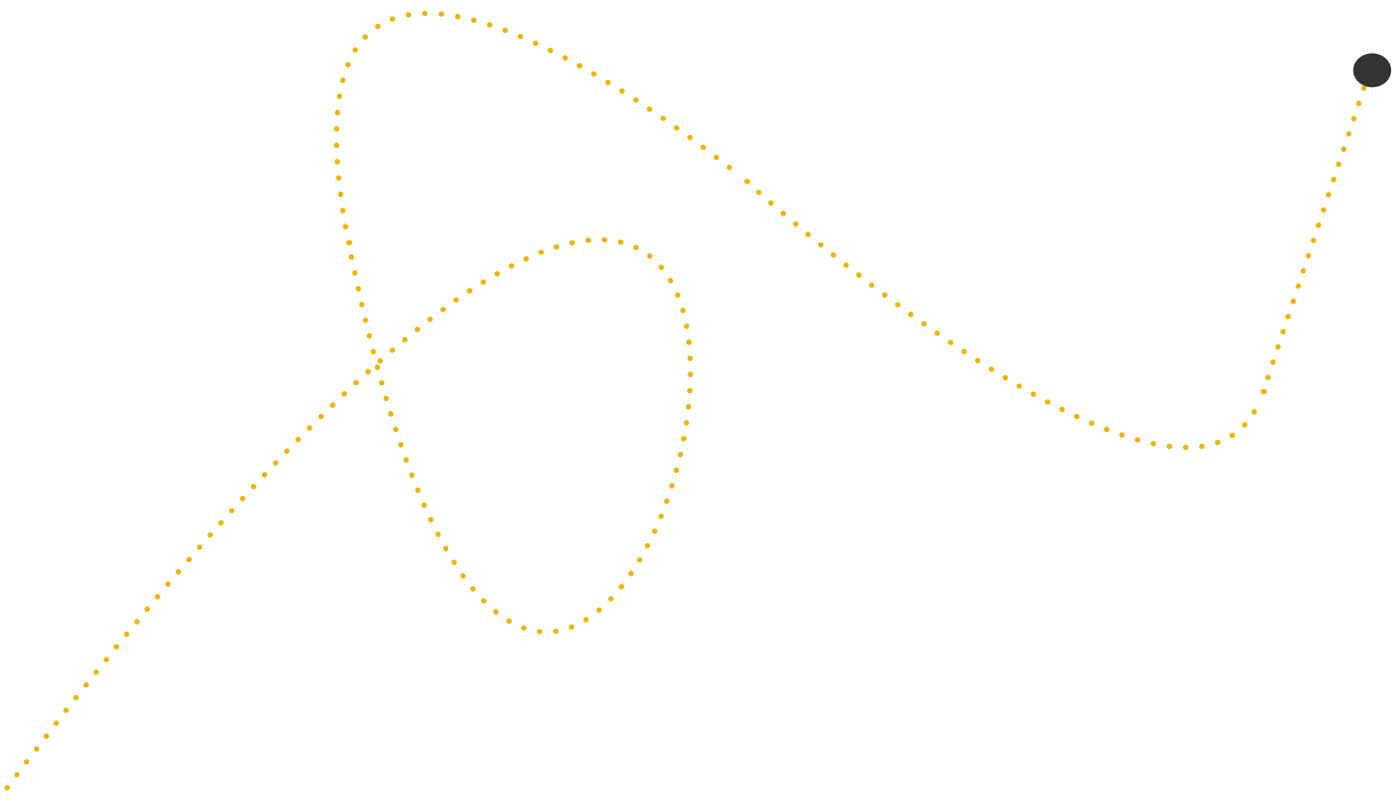
Gov.co.uk also suggests teaming up with another charity to share board expertise. If your governance structure restricts you to 10 board members at a time, you may find it difficult to find all the skills and perspectives you need within 10 people. Chat to other organisations that you work with and see if they have a similar problem. If you both have different skills gaps, building an agreement that allows you to call upon each other's boards for advice could be mutually beneficial.

# Board recruitment

## finding the right people

Board recruitment can feel like a chore. However, approached in the right way, it's an exciting opportunity to gather the expertise you need to drive your organisation forwards.

- Remind yourself of your governing document's rules on recruiting trustees
- Focus on the gaps in skills and perspectives that you've identified and consider where you might find people with appropriate experience and expertise
- As well as focusing on skills and experience, make sure applicants are interested in your work and willing to give time to help run the organisation
- Use your own channels such as your website and social media to promote opportunities
- Talk to volunteers and partners and encourage them to spread the word or to apply if they have the skills and experience you're looking for
- Use volunteer recruitment websites such as [do-it.org](https://do-it.org) or [reachskills.org.uk](https://reachskills.org.uk) to reach beyond your own networks
- Be conscious of barriers that might stop people from applying or being engaged and make sure prospective trustees are eligible — take a look at the advice from [gov.uk](https://gov.uk)



## Role descriptions

### managing expectations

Developing role descriptions, like you would routinely do for paid jobs, is a great way to ensure that board members know what is expected of them from the outset.

- Summarise the role you expect them to play in a few short bullet points
- Include any specific skills or qualities you require, like you would in a person specification
- Outline the frequency of meetings and any sub-committees you would like the individual to join
- Clarify your expectations around board involvement in fundraising and any other core areas
- Take a look at example role descriptions on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website



## Useful links

where to look for further information

### General information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trustee-board-people-and-skills>

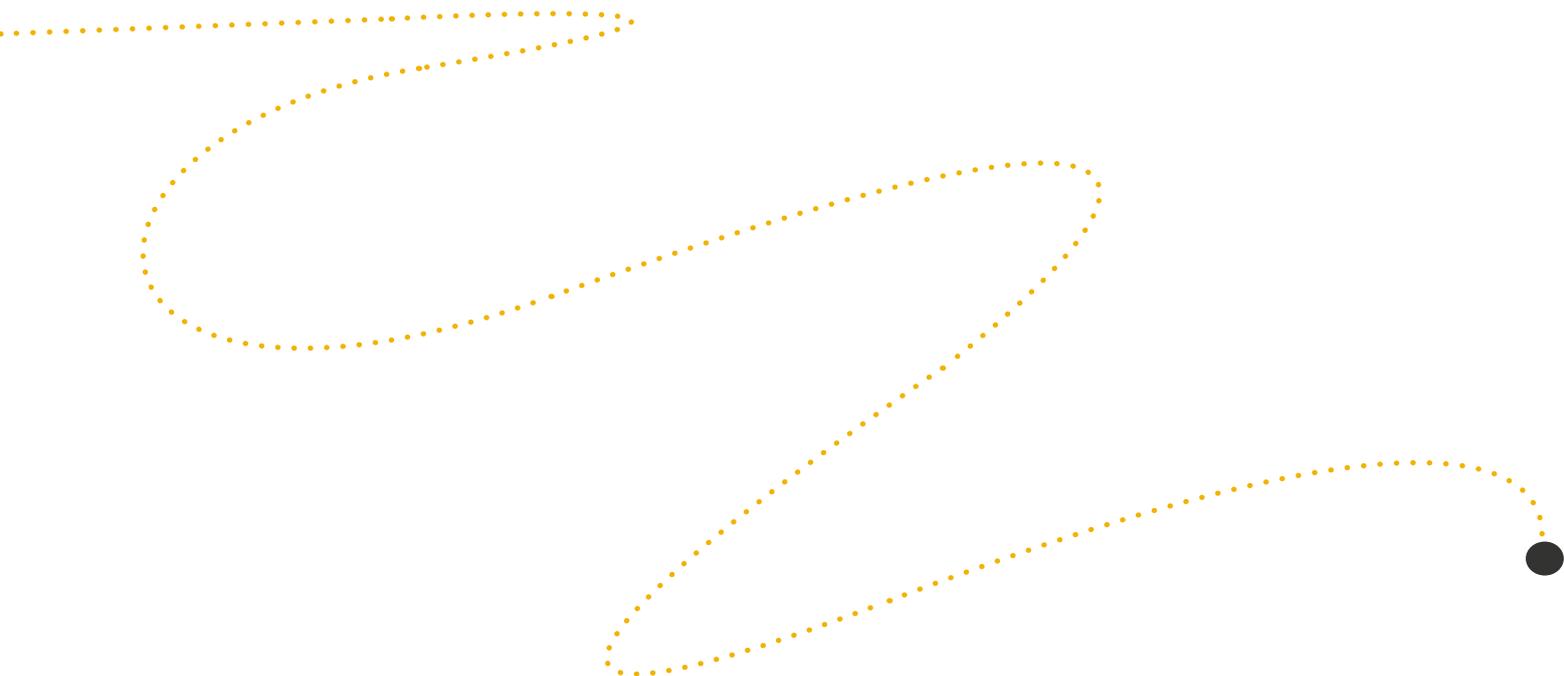
<http://www.smallcharities.org.uk/trustee-recruitment-guidance/>

### Trustee/volunteer recruitment:

<http://trusteesweek.org/find/>

<https://reachskills.org.uk/>

<https://do-it.org/channels/trustee-finder>





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