

TRUSTEE BOARD MEMBERS

DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION



Background

Salary: Unpaid. Expenses incurred while travelling to meetings

Hours: Five meetings a year including the AGM

Location: FFT, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG

FFT works to tackle the racism, discrimination and exclusion which persists against all Gypsies, Roma and Travellers at individual, societal and structural levels. We focus on 3 main pillars of activity to achieve this, which are casework, campaigning, and capacity building. Our casework helps Gypsies and Travellers to overcome a wide range of problems and issues, some of which present serious and immediate crises in their lives.

We advocate on behalf of clients and act as a bridge between the community and the mainstream services, enabling people to access into services that they would not otherwise receive. Capacity building involves working with mainstream services to help them to develop their services to make them more accessible for these communities. We use the wealth of data, insights and knowledge gained from our grass-roots casework to inform our social policy work at national level, so as to make lasting benefits for Gypsies and Travellers.

1. Who are the charity's trustees

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity trustees as those responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. This is the case regardless of the terminology used to describe the role. For FFT the charity trustees are the board of directors known as the trustee board. The trustee board comprises:

- the chair
- the treasurer
- up to seven elected trustees

The trustee board appoints a vice chair from among the trustees.

2. The role of the board of trustees

At its simplest, the role of the trustee board is to receive assets from donors, safeguard them and apply them to the charitable purposes of FFT. The trustee board must always act in the best interests of FFT, exercising the same standard of duty of care that a prudent person would apply if looking after the affairs of someone for whom they have responsibility. The trustee board must act as a group and not as individuals.

3. Duties of a trustee board member

The duties of a trustee board member are to:

- ensure that FFT complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- ensure that FFT pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- ensure FFT applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects. For example, it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be
- contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction to FFT, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- safeguard the good name and values of FFT
- ensure the financial stability of FFT.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

4. Minimum time commitment

Trustees are expected to attend an induction session at FFT prior to their first board meeting.

Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings. Board meetings are held five times a year on Saturdays. One meeting each year is allotted to strategic planning and is a full day event. The other four meetings last approximately three and half hours and are usually at FFT's offices in Brighton.

- Papers are distributed one week in advance of meetings.
- Trustees are invited to the annual general meeting (AGM) of FFT, which takes place after the September Board meeting.
- Trustees can claim out of pocket expenses incurred in travelling to meetings.

5. Person specification

Each trustee must have:

- a commitment to the mission of FFT
- a willingness to meet the minimum time requirement
- integrity
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- a willingness to speak their mind
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of FFT.

The board of trustees collectively needs skills and experience in the following areas:

- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, either as lived experience or in a professional role
- financial management, income generation and enterprise
- public policy and public affairs
- national and local voluntary sector
- national and local government and statutory bodies
- digital strategy
- human resource management
- funding/foundations
- social investment and impact

6. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Representation

Half of our Trustees are from the different travelling communities, as are over half of our staff and volunteer team. Several of our team have lived experience on the roadside. We aim to maintain or increase our broad Gypsy, Roma and Traveller representation over time and to promote the development of all Travellers within our organisation. We are currently under-represented by Irish Travellers on our trustee board.

To inquire, please email director@gypsy-traveller.org with a little about yourself and your interest. You may attach a CV but this is not essential.