

Apostleship of the Sea (Great Britain)

Chair Role Description

The statutory duties of a trustee

- To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.
- To contribute actively to the board of trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name, mission and values of the organisation.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.

Other duties of a trustee

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 includes:

- Scrutinising board papers before each meeting.
- Leading discussions on areas of expertise relevant to experience.
- Focusing on key strategic issues rather than administration.
- Providing guidance on new initiatives which are relevant to their area of expertise.
- Other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

Additional duties as chair

- Planning the annual cycle of board meetings.
- Setting agendas for board meetings.
- Chairing and facilitating board meetings.
- Giving direction to board policy making.
- Monitoring that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.
- Representing the organisation at functions, meetings and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate.
- Liaising with the national director to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate.
- Leading the process of appraising the performance of the national director.
- Sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels.
- Liaising with the national director to develop the board of trustees.
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision making.
- Facilitating change and addressing conflict within the board and within the organisation.
Liaising with the national director to achieve this.

Chair Person Specification

- Good communicator and listener;
- Confidence to discern the right way forward while encouraging the expression of individual divergent views from within the board;
- A high level of interpersonal skills. A facility for forging and maintaining both collective and one to one relationships;
- Ability to identify and articulate a clear sense of direction both for the board and the organisation;
- Capability of seeing the big picture, and so discern priorities;
- Public presence: authoritative and capable of commanding respect internally and externally;
- Openness – should be accessible to board members;
- Instinctive understanding of the different but complementary roles of executives and non-executives, particularly those of the Chair and national director;
- Practising Catholic with a personal commitment to pursuing their spiritual journey and a strong understanding of the Church, its teaching and structures;
- Commitment to ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue.
- Charity sector knowledge and commitment to its values;
- Relevant board experience, preferably as Chair;
- Courage to take on challenging issues, make difficult decisions, and implement painful remedies.