

Becoming a Trustee

Why become a Trustee?

Genesis is a local charity that is managed by a Board of Trustees who are all volunteers. The Board consists of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary as well as up to eight other members. As a Board we are responsible for developing the charity's strategy, overseeing its direction, assisting the Director in everyday management issues and providing a decision making forum to enable the project to meet its aims and objectives. We are proud to work in an inclusive manner, involving all staff members, volunteers and service users when appropriate.

Trustees are usually inspired by the mission statement of the project and the non judgemental approach to assisting women. Some Trustees are motivated because they are involved in some way with the issues surrounding the sex industry. Others are from entirely different occupations and backgrounds, yet bring their skills to work towards the common mission.

Being a Trustee is not a one way trade off. You will learn many new skills regarding the management issues and procedures of a charity, designing and implementing business plans, dealing with real life personnel issues and recruiting staff and developing services as the project grows and adapts to the needs of the service users. Involvement in the subgroups enables you to develop some specific skills relating to finance, personnel or policy development. Equally if you already have these specialist skills you will be able to help improve the way the charity works and see real changes and benefits.

What does being a Trustee mean?

As a Trustee you will represent the organisation, what it stands for and take on the responsibility of a Trustee. This is to accept, in conjunction with the other trustees, the ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity, ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and delivering the charitable outcomes for which it is set up.

Many charity trustees are concerned about personal liability for losses to the charity's assets. From the 1st October, 2007, however, Genesis will be incorporated as Genesis Leeds Limited, and where this is the case it is the company that is primarily responsible for liabilities, not the individual charity trustees. Charity trustees, nonetheless, may still be liable where they have caused loss to the charity by misconduct or mismanagement.

How many hours a month will it take up?

- You should have 6-10 hours a month to offer the Trustee body and join a sub-group (Finance, Personnel or Policy) to tackle ongoing and specific pieces of work.
- You will be required to attend two meetings every month. One will be the Trustee's meeting and the other will be the subgroup of which you are a member. Meetings are held on Wednesdays.
- In addition, you will be required to read documents in preparation for each meeting.
- From time to time you will have the opportunity to get involved with specific pieces of work, alongside staff, service users and other Trustees.

How are Trustees recruited?

The organisation has a systematic, open and equal opportunities process for appointing a Trustee. In considering an appointment, the Trustees look at the existing mixture of skills and decide which skills and characteristics would best complement the team and make sure that the potential Trustee

- understands the aims and objectives, values and beliefs, and code of conduct of the organisation
- respects confidentiality
- subscribes to a non-judgemental and non-discriminatory way of working and believes in equal opportunities for all
- understands the key responsibilities of a Trustee and the Trustee body and
- is willing to represent the organisation if and when the need arises.

Procedure for the Recruitment of a Trustee

The recruitment procedure for a Trustee is as follows:

The prospective Trustee

- has a face to face meeting with an existing Trustee to ascertain whether both parties think the appointment would be mutually beneficial
- is given an information pack containing the Annual Report, the Trustees' booklet and key policy documents
- is invited if both parties are satisfied to the next 3 meetings of the Trustees as an observer. This is to allow the potential Trustee to gain more insight into the requirements of a Trustee and into the workings of Genesis. It also allows present Trustees to get to know the potential Trustee further and ascertain their suitability for the role.
- has a meeting with the Chair after 3 months to review whether the role is suitable.

Are you interested? The next steps are to arrange a meeting by contacting a member of the Board:

- Teela Sanders, Chair, can be contacted on t.l.m.sanders@leeds.ac.uk or through the Genesis office: 0113 243 0036
- Kate Brown, Vice Chair, can be contacted thorough the Genesis office: 0113 243 0036