

# VODG

## Trustee Opportunities





Voluntary Organisations Disability Group

**VODG is a membership body representing organisations within the voluntary sector who work alongside disabled people.**

**Our members' work is focused on enabling disabled people of all ages to live the lives they choose.**

**Our **vision** is for an ambitious, trusted and vibrant voluntary sector that works together to enable disabled people to live the lives they choose.**

**In pursuit of this vision, our **mission** is to support our members to achieve excellence, and to influence those who can improve the environment in which they operate.**

# Foreword from our Chair of Trustees

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee at the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG). It is an exciting time to join the board as we embark on an ambitious strategy aimed at delivering the highest level of service for our members, with a strong and unwavering focus on meeting the needs of disabled people.**

We continue to build on our strong policy and influencing platform and are seeking to further maximise our collective reach and impact, including harnessing the connections and leadership across our membership and with external stakeholders.

We are proud to report exceptional levels of engagement across our membership. In comparison to other membership organisations, we have achieved high rates of retention and participation. This reflects our dedicated efforts to provide valuable and meaningful experiences for our members, fostering strong connections and nurturing a vibrant and supportive community.

With two Trustees leaving their roles earlier in the year and an upcoming vacancy at the end of this financial year, the board took time to reflect on its future composition. We carefully considered the skills and experience needed from Directors and how we can further our equity, diversity and inclusion objectives. We also refreshed the roles and responsibilities of VODG Trustees within our operating environment.

With ambitious plans to further support VODG members, we are particularly seeking experienced and successful leaders committed to disability advocacy and rights. We are especially keen to recruit leaders with significant and clearly demonstrable expertise in the following specific areas.

**Fundraising, grants and philanthropy – ability to share approaches, networks and new revenue for the direct benefit of VODG as we continue to diversify our income.**

**Leading large scale charities – preparedness to unlock, at a CEO level, new membership opportunities in pursuit of our mission as a pan-disability, all age, membership body.**

**C-suite digital and data information – ability to support VODG, as a relatively small organisation, as it charts new opportunities through digital transformation.**



Trustees share our values and beliefs and are committed to the Nolan principles of public life. We also seek to further strengthen the diversity of disabled and/or deaf Trustees on our board and colleagues from minoritised ethnic communities.

VODG has an ambitious agenda aimed at delivering quality services for our members and maximising our impact in the sectors within which our members operate. VODG's membership boasts a wealth of experience and expertise in empowering disabled people and people with long-term conditions to live the lives they choose. While it is undeniable that third sector providers face some significant challenges, it is also clear unity within our community makes us stronger.

I encourage you to join us in supporting VODG and contributing to the growth and resilience of our membership.

**Mel Shad**  
Chair of Trustees

# I About us

**VODG is a national charity that represents leading not-for-profit organisations who provide services to disabled people in ways that promote independence, choice and control.**

**We work on behalf of members to influence the development of policy, build relationships with government and other key agencies, promote best practice and keep members up to date on matters that affect service delivery.**

## **Vision**

Our vision is for an ambitious, trusted and vibrant voluntary sector that works together to enable disabled people to live the lives they choose.

## **Mission**

In pursuit of this vision, our mission is to support our members to achieve excellence and to influence those who can improve the environment in which they operate.

Our overarching aim is to ensure that VODG members, working in partnership with commissioners, people who use services and their families can provide progressive, high quality and sustainable services that uphold rights and meet the requirements of disabled people.

VODG members lead the sector in terms of delivering high quality personalised support, developing new and innovative services and making investments in campaigns, workforce and other activities for social benefit.



## **Values**

Our values guide how we and our members operate – we are:

- **Ambitious** – we have high expectations and strive for our members to achieve excellence.
- **Collaborative** – we work with others to deliver our mission and encourage our members to work together.
- **Proactive** – we use our members' expertise to set the agenda and constantly seek ways in which we can make a difference.
- **Professional** – we work with openness and integrity in everything we do.
- **Thoughtful** – we use evidence and experience to inform judgments and our contribution is always constructive.

## **Beliefs**

Our beliefs are passionately held by all members – we believe:

- Disabled people should have choice and the opportunity to live the lives they choose.
- We should embrace equality and diversity and understand the impact on individuals and communities.
- The unique role of the voluntary sector should be celebrated.
- We should work together, share our successes and plan for a stronger future.
- We should learn from mistakes.
- Public funding should enable sustainable support for disabled people.
- Regulation should be fair, proportionate and focused on quality, safety and improvement.
- Policymaking should be informed by professional expertise and the views of disabled people and those they wish to involve.

# I How we work

VODG's business is overseen by an elected body of Trustees. Trustees are Directors of VODG for the purposes of company and charity law. The Chief Executive is delegated the daily operations of VODG.

A small leadership team supports the Chief Executive with the senior management of the organisation across a number of areas:

**Membership** – Sustaining a vibrant and inclusive membership community that fosters collaboration and innovation, while providing the latest information and intelligence to deliver high-quality disability services.

**Policy and influencing** – Providing opportunities for members to share their expertise and influence policy, sector guidance and system change by harnessing the power of our collective voice and providing solutions that positively contribute towards our shared vision and mission.

**Developmental projects and programmes** – Making a positive difference to the environment within which our members work through partnerships, projects and sector improvement activities.

**Organisational development, operations and governance** – Ensuring VODG is fit for purpose today and in the future through the effective running of our functions.



## VODG members

- Support over 1 million disabled people
- Employ over 85,000 staff
- Have a combined turnover in excess of £2.8 billion



**“VODG is a network of non-profit providers that offers support services for people with a disability. The organisation is known for its progressive and values-based approach. We have benefited greatly from VODG's support, which includes providing us with much-needed information, policy briefings, and networking events. These resources have helped us become better informed and feel more connected to our colleagues and the sector. We are proud to be a member of VODG, an organisation that does great work!”**

Anna Lunts, Chief Executive at Creative Support

# Becoming a Trustee

The Charity Commission describes the role of Trustee as follows:



**“Trustees have independent control over, and legal responsibility for, a charity’s management and administration. They play a very important role, almost always unpaid, in a sector that contributes significantly to the character and wellbeing of the country.**

**Trusteeship can be rewarding for many reasons – from a sense of making a difference to the charitable cause, to new experiences and relationships. It’s also likely to be demanding of your time, skills, knowledge and abilities.”**

Our Trustees ensure that VODG has a clear strategy, and that its work and goals align with its vision. Another way of describing this is that Trustees are the ‘guardians of purpose’ of the charity, ensuring that all decisions put the needs of the beneficiaries first. They safeguard the charity’s assets – both physical assets and intangible ones, such as its reputation. Their job is to ensure these are used well, and that the charity is run sustainably. We meet four times a year (in-person and online), and you may also join sub-groups.

The VODG Board of Trustees reviews its makeup each time a vacancy arises to ensure that we continue to cover the full range of professional expertise, skills and personal and organisational characteristics.

We have three vacancies, all of which will be ratified at our 2025 annual general meeting. For two vacancies, we are seeking immediate appointments with Trustees co-opted to the board. A third will be a shadow Trustee (i.e., not a formal Director) able to fully take part in board meetings with formal co-option when a board position arises on 6 March 2025.

With ambitious plans to further support VODG members, we are particularly seeking experienced and successful leaders committed to disability advocacy and rights. We are especially keen to recruit leaders with significant and clearly demonstrable expertise in the following specific areas.

**Fundraising, grants and philanthropy – ability to share approaches, networks and new revenue for the direct benefit of VODG as we continue to diversify our income.**

**Leading large scale charities – preparedness to unlock, at a CEO level, new membership opportunities in pursuit of our mission as a pan-disability, all age, membership body.**

**C-suite digital and data information – ability to support VODG, as a relatively small organisation, as it charts new opportunities through digital transformation.**

VODG Trustees are senior leaders within their respective organisations – Chief Executives and Senior Directors. Over the past three years VODG has successfully broadened diversity among the Board and we remain committed to seeking applications from across all parts of our membership, in particular leaders with lived experience of disability/long term health conditions.

We are keen to ensure that the Board is representative of both the different types of member organisations and of the people members support, including services supporting people with neurodiversity, mental health conditions, hidden, physical and sensory disabilities.

We actively encourage applications from those whose individual life experience – including disability, ethnicity, educational attainment, diversity of gender identity, religion and sexual orientation – will enrich perspectives and increase the effectiveness of our work. We particularly want to encourage those who can contribute lived experience of disability and of accessing services, as well as people from minoritised ethnic community backgrounds who are notably underrepresented on charitable boards.

Prospective Trustees should be aware that the charity will need to carry out due diligence to check eligibility before appointment. Further information about the role of a Trustee can be found in *‘The Essential Trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do’*, published by the Charity Commission. We are also asking applicants to have the support of their line manager when applying.



**VODG’s annual accounts:** [https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/4038655?p\\_p\\_auth=LBbuXPhr](https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/4038655?p_p_auth=LBbuXPhr)



**VODG’s articles of association:** <https://www.vodg.org.uk/asset/229AACDD%2DC70A%2D4A4A%2DBCCC5D0299F886EE/>



**VODG’s terms and conditions:** <https://www.vodg.org.uk/asset/A274F042%2DE459%2D4989%2DB6429F8A69439889/>

# | Becoming a Trustee

## Time commitment

Trustees are expected to attend four Board meetings and may take up opportunities to join additional committees. Outside of governance commitments Trustees will also attend VODG events relevant to their professional role (e.g. professional networks, webinars, etc.). Similarly as members, Trustees will engage with VODG communications, including our Weekly Brief, and support calls to action with our policy work.

Considering preparation time for meetings, the regular time commitment is not onerous and amounts to seven days per calendar year.

## Trustee meetings for 2025

Location	Date
London	Thursday 6 March 2025
Online	Tuesday 13 May 2025
London	Thursday 18 September 2025
AGM	November 2025 (TBC)
Online	Wednesday 3 December 2025



# I Trustee role description

VODG is a pan-disability membership body for organisations within the third sector who share values and beliefs in providing the very best services for disabled people.

Trustees ensure that VODG has a clear strategy, and that its work and goals are in line with its vision. They safeguard the charity's assets – both physical assets and intangible ones, such as its reputation. Trustees make sure these assets are used well, and that the charity is run sustainably. We meet between four and five times a year (in addition to VODG meetings and events) and Trustees may also be invited to join sub-groups.

VODG draws its Trustees from organisations within its membership. VODG Trustees are senior leaders within their respective organisations – Chief Executives and senior Directors. The term of a Trustee is currently three years, and Trustees are eligible to stand for a second term and a third when having taken on additional duties such as of Chair.

Every effort is made to ensure the Board of Trustees is reflective of our commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion, paying attention to individual characteristics and our collective demographic. In addition, we seek representation across the membership, including beneficiaries, services, size and geography.

Specific requirements will also be sought from individual Trustees to ensure that the Board has the right capability and capacity needed to govern, lead and deliver VODG's purposes effectively. We therefore seek a breadth of skills and experience.

Trustees govern the organisation and are not appointed to represent their own organisation or as a proxy for the wider membership. Board members act as Directors of the charity for the purposes of company law and Trustees for charity law purposes. Above all Trustees are committed to the purpose of VODG, are loyal to the organisation and should always work in its best interests.

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the management of the organisation, driving its strategic development and, together with the Board, securing the future success of the organisation. The Chief Executive and the leadership team report to the board on matters of strategic relevance.

The Chief Executive and Leadership Team lead and manage relationships including with our members, corporate partners and wider policy and parliamentary stakeholders.

## The role of a VODG Trustee

The Charity Commission sets out the essential role of Trustees including what is required and Trustees' responsibilities to VODG.

At VODG, the role of a Trustee encompasses the following:

- Ensuring VODG pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its articles of association, by developing and agreeing strategy.
- Ensuring the organisation complies with its governing articles, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects for the public benefit.
- Ensuring VODG defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguarding the good name and values of VODG.
- Ensuring effective and efficient administration, including appropriate policies and procedures.
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation.
- Managing the proper investment of funds.
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the Chief Executive and in turn oversight of the leadership team and staff.
- Taking part in board development, reviews and individual appraisals.
- A nominated Trustee will lead the appraisal of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Reporting to the board, and as appropriate the Chief Executive, on any meetings or matters attended to as a Trustee.
- Supporting VODG with business and membership intelligence relevant to VODG's success.
- Keeping up to date with VODG matters by regularly engaging with VODG's membership and policy communications in addition to the review of board governance documents.
- Actively promote membership and its work externally.

In addition to the above and 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 examining issues of special interest, leading discussions, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the Trustee has expertise.

# Trustee role description

## Working methods

Our working methods comply with the requirements in our articles of association. In addition:

- Trustees meet quarterly and may meet more frequently as required.
- Meetings length is approximately three hours (often shorter when online), with any strategy sessions lasting up to one day.
- Meetings take place in person and online, and usually alternate according to business requirements.
- Trustees are appointed as individuals and cannot deputise.
- Any use of 'Chair's Action' should be ratified at the subsequent board meeting or via written confirmations.
- Any external meetings Trustees hold on VODG business should involve the executive, save for extenuating circumstances, in the knowledge of, and with feedback to, the full board.

## Person specification

### General

- Trustees must be committed to VODG's purpose and have joined the board because they want to help us deliver that purpose most effectively for public benefit. Trustees must share and uphold VODG's values and beliefs.
- Trustees must be committed to good governance and want to contribute to VODG's plans for continued improvement.
- Trustees must be able to commit to full attendance of board meetings, sub-committees and key VODG membership events.

### Experience

- Successful experience of operating within a board of a charitable, public sector or commercial organisation.
- Demonstrable experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives.
- A proven track record of sound judgement, strategic thinking and effective decision making.
- Proven experience of building relationships and sustaining effective partnerships.
- A history of impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.
- A track record of commitment to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion.



## Knowledge, skills and understanding

- Proven experience of working at a senior level with a VODG membership organisation.
- Commitment to the organisation and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Good, independent judgement and strategic vision.
- Able to analyse and understand complex issues and make systematic and rational judgments based on relevant information.
- Preparedness to consider the range of perspectives and explore alternative outcomes, respecting alternative views and the value of compromise in board discussions.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of Trusteeship and of the respective roles of the Chair, Trustees and Chief Executive.
- Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.
- Willingness to give and receive helpful feedback.

# Trustee role description

## Personal qualities

- **Respectful** – you will respect and encourage diversity of opinion within discussions and approach discourse with fellow Trustees, staff and members in a respectful manner.
- **Ambitious** – you will always want to secure the best outcomes for yourself, for VODG and disabled people.
- **Collaborative** – you will get the best from others and form meaningful partnerships.
- **Proactive** – you will think laterally, plan ahead, be 'ahead of the curve' and always focus on solutions.
- **Professional** – you will be politically sensitive and represent yourself, VODG and its members in the best light at all times.
- **Thoughtful** – you will take time when it is appropriate, stay well informed and use evidence to make a case.

Specific requirements will also be sought from individual Trustees to ensure that the Board has the right capability and capacity needed to govern, lead and deliver VODG's purposes effectively, and in embracing equity, diversity and inclusion.

## Eligibility

Trustees must be the Chief Executive, Senior Director, Chair or Trustees at a VODG membership organisation.

Company and charity law disqualifies anyone who:

- Has an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception.
- Is an undischarged bankrupt or has a current composition or arrangement including an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) with creditors.
- Is disqualified from being a company Director.
- Has previously been removed as a Trustee by either the Charity Commission or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement.
- Is under 16 years of age.
- Has unspent convictions for a wider range of offences including terrorism and money laundering, being on the Sex Offenders Register or disobeying a direction of the Charity Commission.

## Remuneration

The role of Trustee is not accompanied by any financial remuneration.



# Making an application

We want to make the process of applying for this role as straightforward as possible. Please email us if you require this information to be provided in another format ([jobs@vodg.org.uk](mailto:jobs@vodg.org.uk)).

We ask that applications consist of:

1. A supporting statement, no more than two pages in length, which addresses and provides evidence against the Person Specification. This provides you with the opportunity to explain your motivation for applying, as well as highlighting how your experience and achievements fit with the requirements of the role. Please pay special attention to clearly demonstrating your expertise in the specific areas we are recruiting to as set out in the Chair's foreword.
2. A comprehensive CV. (Unfortunately we are unable to consider CVs without the supporting statement.)
3. Your completed Diversity Monitoring Form. The information you provide in this form will not be shown to the selection panel and will play no part in the assessment of your application.
4. A note of any reasonable adjustments should you be selected for interview.

## Selection timetable

All application documentation should be emailed no later than noon on 27 November to [jobs@vodg.org.uk](mailto:jobs@vodg.org.uk). Unfortunately, we are unable to accept late applications.

Receipt of applications	Noon, 27 November 2024
Shortlisting panel	2 December 2024
Interview invitations issued	By 5 December 2024
Interviews (online via Teams)	10 January 2025



If you have any questions about the role or the process, or would like an informal conversation with VODG Chair, Mel Shad, ahead of making an application, then please also make contact via [jobs@vodg.org.uk](mailto:jobs@vodg.org.uk) in the first instance.





**Voluntary Organisations Disability Group**

6th Floor, 2 London Wall Place,  
London, EC2Y 5AU

T 0330 043 1273

E [info@vodg.org.uk](mailto:info@vodg.org.uk)

[vodg.org.uk](http://vodg.org.uk)

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