

VODG

Trustee Opportunities





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 of the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG).

I have taken on the role of Chair at an exciting but challenging time for our sector. The ethos and values of VODG, and the principle of always putting disabled people first, have never been more needed. VODG matters because our members across the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sectors share and uphold those beliefs and bring a wealth of experience in supporting disabled people and people with long-term conditions to live the lives they choose.

I have always been impressed by VODG's reach and its convening power. It creates the space for VCFSE leaders to think together, collaborate and carry what they learn into the very best services and support, and into national policy and guidance. Our members' engagement is exceptionally strong, and that shared commitment is one of our greatest assets. Our members face real pressures, and unity within our community makes us stronger.

We are now looking for three new Trustees to help lead VODG through its next chapter. Trustee appointments are governance roles, made in the best interests of VODG as a whole rather than to represent particular organisations or interests. At the same time, the experience Trustees bring from leading their own organisations enriches the board's thinking, and we want the board to reflect the full breadth of our membership.

As part of this recruitment, we are particularly keen to strengthen expertise in several areas. This includes the largest providers in our sector, and we are keen that at least one new Trustee leads an organisation with a turnover of £100 million or more. True to our pan-disability mission, we would also welcome leaders of organisations dedicated to supporting people with sensory impairments. Experience in housing, and services for children and young people would also add valuable perspectives as we continue to develop our work in these areas.

These are the areas where we are especially keen to strengthen the board, and we welcome applications from any leader who shares our values and could make a real contribution. Having previously served as VODG's Vice-Chair, I know how important the role is. Appointing to the vacant position will be a separate process, open to both existing and new Trustees, which the board will take forward in due course once the new Trustees are in post and we have undertaken supportive development activities together.



We want a board that reflects the people and communities our members support. We particularly encourage applications from disabled and/or Deaf leaders, people from minoritised ethnic communities, and others who are currently under-represented at board level. We are committed to an inclusive and fair recruitment process and will consider every application on its merits, while also considering the overall skills, experience and balance of the board.

VODG consistently attracts a strong pool of members wishing to serve as Trustees, which speaks to the strength of our membership. With only three places available, we expect a competitive field and will not be able to appoint everyone who applies, however well qualified. To be fair to all applicants, we will keep to the published timescales and interview dates, and we will not be able to accept late applications. We hope that anyone who puts themselves forward will see it as the start of a conversation rather than the end of one. There are many ways to shape VODG's work and influence, including through our networks, forums and wider member activities, and we would be delighted to see every applicant involved, whatever the outcome.

Above all, we are seeking people who are committed to disability rights, inclusion and the values that underpin VODG's work. We are looking for Trustees who will bring curiosity, integrity, strategic insight and a commitment to collective leadership, while upholding the Nolan Principles of Public Life. If that sounds like you, we would be delighted to hear from you.

John Heritage
Chair of Trustees

I About us

VODG is a national charity that represents leading voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations who provide services to disabled people, families and carers 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 for an ambitious, trusted and vibrant VCFSE 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 community that fosters collaboration and innovation, supported by timely insight, intelligence and shared learning. This enables high-quality practice, continuous improvement and stronger outcomes for the people our members support.

Policy and influencing – Ensuring members have the right opportunities to share their expertise, shape policy and sector guidance and drive system change. By harnessing the power of our collective voice, we work together and with a wide range of stakeholders, to develop and amplify solutions that advance our shared vision and contribute meaningfully to positive change.

Strategic and Developmental Projects and Programmes – Special initiatives that enable VODG and our members to share expertise and insight to inform guidance, system improvements and academic research, as well as activities to enable members to work together on priority topics and activities.

Governance, Operations, and Organisational Development – Underpinning all our work is a strong focus on the governance of our charity, well run operations and the ongoing organisational development of VODG to ensure the charity is well-led and well-run.



VODG members

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



"I absolutely loved my time as a Trustee of VODG – I learned a lot and got to spend time with colleagues in similar roles while also supporting our sector. I'd encourage people to apply, whether you've been a Trustee before or if this would be your first Trustee role. You've got nothing to lose and lots to gain!"

James Watson-O'Neill, Chief Executive at Sense

I 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 2026 annual general meeting.

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.

True to our pan-disability mission, we would welcome leaders of organisations dedicated to supporting people with sensory impairments.

We would particularly welcome applications from leaders of larger member organisations, including those with a turnover of £100 million or above.

Housing, and children and young people, are important priorities for VODG, and experience here would help us deepen our work in these areas.

These groupings may overlap, and do not necessarily equate to one seat each. Over the past five years, VODG has successfully broadened the diversity of its Board and remains committed to ensuring that the Board reflects the breadth of our membership and the communities our members support.

We warmly welcome applications from leaders across all parts of our membership, particularly disabled leaders, leaders with lived experience of disability and/or long-term health conditions, and leaders from groups that remain under-represented in governance and leadership roles. We recognise that diversity of experience, background and perspective strengthens decision making and enables us to better serve our members and the wider sector.

We are keen to ensure that the Board is representative of the diversity within our membership, including different types and sizes of member organisations, the people members support, and the geographical areas in which members operate. In considering appointments, we will seek an appropriate balance of representation across services supporting people with neurodiversity, mental health conditions, hidden, physical and sensory disabilities, while also considering geographical spread across our membership.

We actively encourage applications from those whose individual life experience, including disability, ethnicity, educational attainment, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic background, will enrich perspectives.

We anticipate that there may be more strong candidates than available Trustee vacancies. Appointments will therefore be made with reference to the overall balance of skills, experience, diversity and representation required by the Board at that time, including consideration of geographical spread and organisational characteristics across the membership.

Prospective Trustees should note that the role is a governance role, with responsibilities focused on the strategic oversight and stewardship of the charity. While Trustees contribute to the overall direction and success of VODG, Board membership is not intended as a route to shape specific policy positions or membership propositions. VODG offers a range of other opportunities for members to contribute their expertise, influence

Becoming a Trustee

policy development, participate in networks and help shape the organisation's future work.

The charity will carry out appropriate due diligence checks to confirm 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.

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. CEO breakfasts, 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 2026 (dates tbc)

Location	Date
London	February 2027
Online	May 2027
London	September 2027
AGM event, London	November 2027
Online	December 2027



VODG's annual accounts: 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/>



I Trustee role description

Voluntary Organisations Disability Group (VODG) is a pan-disability membership body for organisations across the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sectors 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. 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. We expect Trustees to support VODG.

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 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.
- 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.

I Trustee role description

Working methods

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

- Trustees meet quarterly and may 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 time.
- **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 in order 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 a senior leader 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).

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.
[Diversity Monitoring Form](#)
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 30 October to jobs@vodg.org.uk. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept late applications. Interview dates are fixed. Unsuccessful candidates who are interviewed will receive prompt, personal feedback.

- Applications open w/c 5 October 2026;
- Receipt of applications by noon, 30 October 2026;
- Shortlisting panel 11 November 2026
- Interviews (online via Teams) 24 November;
- Offers and feedback w/c 7 December;
- Announcement mid-December;
- Induction January 2027;
- First board meeting February 2027



If you have any questions about the role or the process, or would like an informal conversation with VODG Chair, John Heritage, ahead of making an application, then please also make contact via jobs@vodg.org.uk in the first instance.





Voluntary Organisations Disability Group

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