



Role description

Sound Sense board members are appointed as both charity trustees and company directors. This means that, you may hear or read the words 'trustee', 'director', or simply 'board member' to describe this role. In this document we are using the term 'trustee' for this role to emphasize the significant personal commitment and legal compliance involved in becoming a charity trustee.

Our trustees are legally responsible for the governance of our charity and make sure that we operate in line with any relevant laws, particularly the Charities and Companies Acts. Our trustees ensure that we have a strategy, and that our assets and resources are only used for charitable purposes in line with the governing document, our ['Memorandum & Articles'](#).

Trustees have a collective responsibility – they work together for the best interests of Sound Sense.

Main responsibilities for all trustees

- To understand Sound Sense's aims and objectives as set out in our governing documents and ensure that we operate in accordance with them for the public benefit.
- To set the strategy for the organisation, including the financial strategy, and ensure implementation and progress is monitored.
- To use your skills, knowledge and experience to further our work, putting aside any personal interests, and declaring any conflict of interest if/ when they arise.
- To identify any risks to Sound Sense and ensure they are monitored.
- To identify, recruit and induct new board members.
- To following proper arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of Sound Sense staff.
- To attend and contribute to meetings of the board, and undertake agreed tasks between meetings.
- To uphold any policies and procedures relevant to the trustee role including confidentiality, safeguarding and data protection.
- To uphold and contribute to our approach to inclusion, diversity, equality and access (IDEA).
- To ensure Sound Sense complies with charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.

Full information on the statutory duties of charity trustees is available at: [gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved-cc3a](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved-cc3a)

What does this look like in practice?

Participation in board meetings is the essential, core element of being a Sound Sense trustee. Full board meetings take place for 3 hours, 4 times a year (usually January, April, July and October/November). These meetings are held on Zoom, during our business hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). We agree full board meeting dates for the year ahead following our annual board election.

In 2026, in addition to our regular full board meetings, we held an in-person away day for board members (our first since Covid prompted our move to online meetings). This was such a valuable experience that we intend to repeat this at least every other year. We are yet to set a date for the next away day.

In addition, board members contribute their time and skills to Sound Sense in the following ways. Sound Sense is a small charity and our staff team has limited capacity, so board members are expected to be hands on in their support for delivering our programmes. Not all board members do all of these things, but many do:

- Taking part in working groups that support the General Manager and report to board. We currently have finance and HR groups, and convene others as required.
- Representing Sound Sense at events and reporting back to board and/or the membership via Bulletin Board newsletter.
- Contributing to and curating issues of *Sounding Board* journal.
- Sharing news and opportunities of interest via Bulletin Board.
- Hosting online Gatherings.
- Speaking, facilitating and practical support at our events, including Community Music Now.

Terms of office

Trustees are appointed for a three-year term of office, following which they may stand for re-election for a further three-year term. Full information about election and rotation of board members is available in our [Memorandum & Articles](#).

This is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses are reimbursed. These would include travel expenses for attending meetings but cannot include payments for your time spent on trustee business or for loss of earnings.

Personal skills and qualities

- Commitment to Sound Sense's aims: to promote community music practice and to support the professional development of community music practitioners
- Commitment to promoting inclusion, diversity, equality and access (IDEA).
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship. We can help with training and resources to support you in this role via our membership of NCVO
- Willing and able to devote the necessary time and effort. In particular, to attend and contribute to quarterly board meetings that take place during our business hours of Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.
- Ability to think creatively and strategically, exercise sound, independent judgement and work effectively as a team member.
- Effective communication skills and willingness to participate actively in discussion.
- Commitment to [Nolan's seven principles of public life](#): selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership

Eligibility

Membership status

In order to join the board, you will need to be a Sound Sense member with an individual, student, or organisation membership, and your membership subscription payments must be up to date. An organisation member can nominate a named contact within their organisation to join the board of Sound Sense, however the legal responsibilities of being a charity trustee and company director will lie with that contact as an individual rather than the nominating organisation. Associate members do not have voting rights included in their membership benefits, and therefore can not join the board.

Disqualification criteria and checks

If you are elected to the board, you will be asked to declare that you are not disqualified from being a charity trustee. You can check the disqualification criteria here: gov.uk/guidance/automatic-disqualification-rules-for-charity-trustees-and-charity-senior-positions

Following Charity Commission guidance we will check your name against the following registers:

The Individual Insolvency Register gov.uk/search-bankruptcy-insolvency-register

Companies House register of disqualified directors gov.uk/search-the-register-of-disqualified-company-directors

Charity Commission register of removed trustees apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/trusteeregister/search.aspx

Companies House ID verification

In order for us to register you as a Director at Companies House, you will need to verify your ID (if you haven't already done this for another company) and send us your personal code. The link for verifying your ID is <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/verify-your-identity-for-companies-house>

For more information

Please get in touch with Rebecca Denniff (chair@soundsense.org) or Sound Sense General Manager, Clare Adams (clare.adams@soundsense.org or 07776 420366).

This document was prepared using guidance from the Charity Commission, NCVO, Reach Volunteering and the Association of Chairs. Last updated August 2026.

Sound Sense

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