



We Are Family

Trustee Role Description

Overall role

- Direct WAF towards achieving its charitable objects and strategy.
- Ensure that WAF is properly governed and operates effectively.

Responsibilities

[Items 1 – 3 are primarily collective responsibilities of all Board members; item 4 summarises individual trustee responsibilities.]

1 Strategy and planning

- 1.1 Formulate and regularly review WAF's strategic plans.
- 1.2 Review and approve annual budgets and operating plans.

2 Governance

- 2.1 Ensure WAF operates in accordance with its constitution, and all legal and regulatory requirements.
- 2.2 Formulate and review policies and procedures for WAF's work, including a risk management framework, and ensure that WAF operates in accordance with these.
- 2.3 Ensure the long-term financial viability of WAF.

3 Organisational

- 3.1 Ensure that the appropriate human, financial and other resources are in place to support WAF in meeting its plans.
- 3.2 When appropriate and as resources allow, appoint, support and monitor staff.

- 3.3 Support and monitor officers and volunteers in their work for WAF and in implementing agreed plans.
- 3.4 Regularly review WAF's activities and performance.
- 3.5 Review the performance of the Board and take steps to improve its performance where necessary.
- 4 Individual obligations
 - 4.1 Join at least one Board committee.
 - 4.2 Act as the trustee lead on a specific area of focus (eg safeguarding or privacy).
 - 4.3 Actively participate in Board meetings, committee meetings and other working groups, contributing specific skills and experiences.
 - 4.4 Promote the good name and reputation of WAF, acting as an ambassador for it whenever possible, and upholding its values at all times.
 - 4.5 Comply with all rules and codes of conduct applicable to charity trustees, and to WAF trustees in particular.

Trustee Person Specification

Skills and experience sought

- 1 The following skills/experience, preferably at a **senior level**, are **sought** amongst new trustees¹. Senior level will be broadly indicated by having worked professionally or at senior management level in business, the public sector or the third sector:
 - Experience of and willingness to chair a small charity
 - Experience of fundraising
 - Professional experience of working with or in the adoption sector
 - Experience of governance
 - Experience of IT networks, digital development and/or social media
- 2 It would be desirable for at least one new trustee to have experience of adoption as a single parent, to support the Board's understanding of the needs of this particular part of the WAF community.

¹ One current vacancy to be filled. Three trustees (one of whom is the current chair) will be retiring in March 2020. WAF hopes to appoint up to three additional trustees in advance of these retirements to support a smooth transition period. The normal operating number of trustees is twelve.

- 3 One of the great strengths of We Are Family is that it is volunteer and member led, and that it represents a diverse community across London. We are specifically looking for trustees from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds to ensure that the board can benefit from this diversity of experience.
- 4 All applicants must be able to demonstrate a commitment to the values and mission of WAF.
- 5 Applicants should ideally be able to demonstrate the following:
 - Some skill or experience in strategic planning, setting targets, and monitoring and evaluating performance.
 - Good organisational and communication (oral and written) skills.
- 6 Applicants must satisfy statutory requirements to be a charity trustee.

Commitment expectations

- 7 WAF's Board of Trustees currently holds its meetings in London. Attendance at meetings in person is expected although participation remotely is possible when necessary.
- 8 Board meetings are generally held six times a year (every other month) with each meeting typically being on a Monday evening from 7.30 to 9.30 pm. In addition there are usually two strategy and training sessions each year, typically being on a Saturday between about 10 am and 4 pm.
- 9 Each committee usually meets during the month before each Board meeting. The committees are Services; Finance & Resources; and Strategy. Committee meetings are usually held by video conference.
- 10 In addition to being involved in Board and Committee meetings, trustees should expect to spend at least ten hours each month on trustee related work.
- 11 The normal term of appointment for a trustee is three years. The board may decide on a shorter period (one or two years) on appointment, to help ensure that approximately one third of board members will retire from office each year. All trustees are eligible to seek reappointment for one further term of office.

