



Would you like to serve as a Trustee of Across?

Across is looking for new Trustees who are prepared to work towards the charity's ongoing mission of taking those who suffer from ill health or disability to Lourdes, and on other pilgrimages and holidays, using suitable transport adapted to their needs.

Our goals

We are currently working on the delivery of an ambitious strategic plan, with key objectives of increasing the numbers of groups travelling with Across, developing a robust management structure fit for future growth, and a fund-raising strategy that will change the way the charity's activities are funded, and make our pilgrimage and holiday experiences accessible to a much wider audience.

Is this a journey you would like to join us on? Our ethos is focussed on principles of faith, family and fulfilment, and we are looking for like-minded colleagues who are committed to living these values and giving their time in support of our work. If you share a passion for continuous improvement and want to have a positive impact on others, then we want to put our charity in your hands.

Your commitment

The Board of Trustees meet as a management committee 4 or 5 times a year, usually at a week-end. These week-ends sometimes coincide with other events for the charity, which Trustees are expected to attend and support wherever possible. Meetings mostly take place in England or Scotland, and occasionally in Lourdes, France.

A fair amount of business is conducted by email and telephone between board meetings and it is essential that all Trustees provide consistent commitment and timely contributions throughout the year to ensure that the charity progresses at pace and to agreed timescales.

As well as this, a proportion of the charity's business is carried out through a small number of specialist sub-committees, whose role is to ensure appropriate governance and oversight of key areas of the charity's activities. The committees meet 2 or 3 times a year (where possible these are timed to coincide with board meetings), are led by a Trustee and include members of the Across staff team and supporters and volunteers actively involved in pilgrimage travel.

Trustees are appointed for a 5 year term, and can stand for re-appointment for a further two 5-year terms, subject to approval by the board and the charity's members – re-appointment takes place at the charity's Annual General Meetings each year on a rotational basis.

This is a non-remunerated voluntary role. Across recognises that volunteers give generously of their time in support of our work. The charity has a budget for its governance costs and Trustees may claim their expenses in accordance with Across's Expense Policy (available upon request).

Who you are

Across welcomes applications from Trustees with skills in a range of areas (see specific role specifications below for our current requirements). All Trustees should ideally be practising Catholics or have a strong affinity with the Catholic faith or other Christian traditions. The charity has a strong Scottish heritage, having been born out of extraordinary support and fund-raising amongst a small group of supporters, and therefore applications from Scottish candidates are especially welcome.

Please see each role specification for the details of how to apply. We hope that you might want to join us on this exciting journey.

Overall Purpose of the Trustee Role

Trustees take ultimate responsibility for the work that Across does, and the ways in which it generates and spends its income to achieve its aims. It is a big responsibility, focussing on the strategic direction of the organisation, agreeing plans and budgets, and holding the General Manager to account for the delivery of strategy.

It has a legal dimension too, with trustees legally responsible for ensuring that the organisation operates to standards set by Parliament, the Charity Commission and the Office for the Scottish Charity Regulator. Specifically, the Board is responsible for:

- the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity;
- its financial health;
- the probity of its activities;
- ensuring the organisation's aims, objectives and goals are in accordance with its governing document, and legal and regulatory guidelines.

Statutory Duties of a Trustee

The following is a brief outline of the legal duties charitable trustees must fulfil:

- Duty of trust
- Duty to comply with the charity's governing document
- Duty to act in the best interests of the charity, present and future beneficiaries
- Duty to avoid conflicts of interest
- Duty to safeguard assets
- Duty not to benefit from their position
- Duty of care
- Duty to act personally
- Duty to act collectively
- Duty to keep accounts

Should you wish to investigate further the legal responsibilities of a charity trustee, we would refer you to the websites for the Charity Commission for England and Wales, or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, both of which are excellent sources of information.

Since Across is a company limited by guarantee, trustees (directors) also have specific legal duties under the Companies Act 2006. Information on these can be found at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/46/contents>

Trustee Accountability

As the Board is responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of the charity, it is accountable in varying degrees to a variety of stakeholders, incl Charity Members, beneficiaries, funders, the Charity Commission, Companies House and other regulators.

Furthermore, there is a growing demand within the sector and the wider general public for charities to be open and accountable for their actions and inactions. Trustees need to consider the wider implications of the decisions they make, and to communicate widely the formal reasons behind such decisions or actions. Above all else, trustees must adhere to any legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the charity's activities.

General Trustee Responsibilities

Work with other trustees to ensure that Across continues to grow and thrive by:

- Ensuring that Across has a clear vision, mission and strategy, and is aligning all its resources towards achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of Across and for its corporate practice.

- Ensuring that Across complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Acting as guardians of Across's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application.
- Ensuring that Across's governance is of the highest possible standard.
- Working in partnership with other trustees, the General Manager and other senior staff.
- Ensuring that Across follows best practice and professional standards in its marketing and fundraising.

All trustees should be aware of, and understand, their individual and collective responsibilities, and should not be overly-reliant on one or more individual trustees in any particular aspect of the governance of the charity. For example, a Trustee is expected to be able to read the financial accounts to a level that they can ask questions and comprehend answers of a general nature and to ask if she or he needs support in this area. All trustees are expected to take ownership of their area of responsibility and ensure that all agreed activity is carried out in a timely and appropriate manner.

Key Across Trustee Duties

- To agree the vision, mission and strategy for Across
- To ensure that the operational plan and budget will implement the agreed strategic direction.
- To monitor progress against the key measures from the operational plan and budget.
- To agree and monitor wider, smart outcome measures to track the progress of the charity towards its strategic goals.
- To hold the General Manager accountable for the achievement of the organisation's goals, and to provide the General Manager with regular, constructive feedback on leadership, management and overall achievement.
- Through a recruitment committee, to appoint the General Manager, to set their terms and conditions and to ensure that the organisation and the appointee invests in ongoing professional development, and considers succession planning for the General Manager.
- Where agreed by the board, to provide appropriate professional support to the management team in areas where the trustee has particular experience or skills.
- To agree and monitor the implementation and review of Across's policies and ensure that they underpin the achievement of the strategic and operational plans.
- To ensure that Across's organisational values are upheld in the delivery of its objectives.
- To ensure that Across has satisfactory financial control systems and procedures, and to review the level of risk annually.
- To safeguard Across's reputation, and other intangible assets.
- To promote and develop the charity in order for it to grow and maintain its public benefit.
- With the Chair, to review regularly the board's performance and your own performance as a trustee.

Main Tasks to enable effective fulfilment of your role

- To work as a team member and support the work of the Board.
- To participate in any annual strategic planning or review workshop.
- To attend board meetings, having read relevant papers, and be prepared to make a contribution.
- To respond promptly when at all possible to email and telephone communication from the Chair, General Manager, Treasurer or other trustee.
- To support the staff when requested, sharing expertise, as a member of a working group or in other appropriate ways.
- To be prepared to act as a spokesperson for Across when asked by the Chair or General Manager, and to work within an agreed brief.
- To attend events as an ambassador for Across, to network, promote the work of the organisation and provide thanks and recognition to supporters and donors.
- To assist with fundraising by speaking, networking and otherwise seeking donations in conjunction with staff and volunteers as appropriate.

Role specification – Legal Trustee

Across is looking for an experienced professional with a legal background, to serve as a Trustee and hold the role of Company Secretary for the charity. You will have a real interest and empathy with our purpose, values and ethos, be able to add tangible value with the gravitas to influence and lead. You must be willing to promote openness and accountability, always holding the charity's best interests to heart. Experience in strategy, organisational development and steering organisations through a process of change and growth is highly desirable.

Person specification

- A solicitor or barrister with a current practising certificate, qualified in England and Wales or Scotland, with relevant experience. Knowledge or understanding of French and European law desirable.
- Able to operate at senior management/strategic level, with time to commit consistently throughout the year.
- Access to a network of relevant professional contacts to source advice and support where required, and in so doing spread the word of the work of Across.
- Superlative communication skills, able to represent the charity both with professionalism and passion, and prepared to act as an ambassador for Across at all times.
- Recent experience of travel as part of an Across group to Lourdes on pilgrimage is desirable.

Key responsibilities

- Taking a lead role on the Board for legal and compliance matters.
- To provide the Board of Trustees, management team and members of staff with guidance for legal matters with the charity, where appropriate to experience, and to liaise with external advisors if required, ensuring that the charity is kept up to date and informed of any changes and updates to its legal obligations.
- Setting, shaping and delivering key objectives from the charity's strategic plans, alongside fellow Board members and the management team.
- To be a member of the Board's Risk Management Committee and contribute to the achievement of the Committee's objectives.
- To liaise with overseas legal advisors on matters of French and European law which may impact on the charity's activities.
- Liaise with members of staff to ensure the timely filing of annual returns and other documents with regulators and the maintenance of the statutory books.
- Prepare papers in relation to the AGM and any other general meetings.
- Record minutes of occasional reserved business meetings.
- Review policies annually including anti-bribery, whistleblowing, scheme of governance, management and delegation.
- Where appropriate to experience, the provision of ad hoc legal advice including in relation to commercial agreements, property law, travel and charity law.
- Carry out checks on proposed new trustees to ensure they meet eligibility requirements.
- Liaise with members of staff to ensure that new trustees receive adequate induction information.
- Monitor terms of office for trustees and committee advisor members.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Application Process

Applications are requested in writing via email, and should include a CV which details your relevant experience in accordance with the above specification and requirements.

Applicants are also invited to provide brief answers to the following questions:

1. At a time when charities are facing a significant amount of public scrutiny either due to well-publicised mismanagement of charity funds or scandals relating to allegations of abuse by celebrities exploiting the charity sector, what do you think Across can do to demonstrate systems of good governance?
2. Across's activities cover a significant number of legal requirements. If appointed to the role, which areas do you think would require focus, and how would you ensure that you keep up to date with developments that might impact on Across?
3. From what you have read about Across, how would you further propose to achieve the goals of growth and development, whilst protecting our ethos and core values?

Please include a cover letter with your application and send to Marianne Wanstall, Chair of Trustees, at marianne@across.org.uk. All applications will be treated in confidence.

Please communicate your interest as early as possible, and submit your application no later than November 26th 2017.

Selection

The Board will review applications and select candidates for interview based on those who best fit the criteria outlined above. Interviews will be conducted during December 2017 wherever possible. All applications will receive a response. The first Board meeting for the successful applicant will be in March 3rd/4th 2018.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a Fit & Proper Persons Test. The details of this test include the following (a) an enhanced DBS check (b) An insolvency and bankruptcy check (c) check on the register of removed trustees (d) check on Companies House for disqualified directors.

Induction

Induction will be provided to the new Trustee as required and will include a session at the head office in Beckton, East London, to be arranged shortly following appointment. A comprehensive induction pack will also be provided with useful background and policy.

Questions

If you have any queries regarding the specification, requirements, the commitment or any of the accompanying information ahead of submitting your application, please feel free to contact Marianne Wanstall on the above email address in the first instance.

Many thanks for your interest in this position.

Best wishes,

Marianne Wanstall

Across Chair of Trustees