



Chair of Trustees - role description

January 2024



Could you help an exciting new charity by being its first chair of trustees?

Workwhile is a successful and innovative initiative, supporting businesses to create more good work and to ensure everyone can access it. We're seeking our first chair of trustees, who will work in partnership with the director as the initiative becomes a new independent charity. It's a unique opportunity to use your skills to help Workwhile thrive and grow, ensuring the charity is able to maximise its impact.

Workwhile is currently incubated and hosted by IPPR (the Institute for Public Policy Research). It began life as the London Progression Collaboration project, which launched in 2020 to support the creation of new apprenticeship opportunities for low-paid Londoners. Apprenticeship creation remains at the heart of our work, alongside a portfolio of projects including our *DevelopMentor* line management training and the East Bank shared apprenticeship programme.

We exist because whilst talent is everywhere, opportunities to access good work are not. We believe in the power of good work to transform lives, communities and the economy. Yet entrenched inequalities, limited support and few opportunities to upskill restrict people to low-paid, low-quality work that does not allow them to progress.

Our mission is to unlock the power of good work and progression, breaking down barriers for young, disadvantaged and marginalised people. By working with employers, we want to create an equitable world of work where everyone has access to meaningful, lasting employment.

The next step in Workwhile's development is to move out of IPPR's incubation, and become an independent charity. In doing so, we follow previous initiatives incubated by the Institute, including Think Ahead, The Difference and Frontline.

As we move towards independence, we are recruiting our first board of trustees, in readiness to meet the Charity Commission's requirements and to ensure effective governance.

We are seeking a chair who is committed to creating an equitable world of work, and can bring a range of relevant experience and expertise. We are particularly keen that our trustees reflect the diverse businesses with whom we work and the workers who benefit from our work, and have lived experience of the issues we address. Our ideal chair will also model our values as they work with us: caring collaboration, joy, expertise, innovation, proactivity and determination.

Please see the accompanying recruitment pack for more about Workwhile.





Chair of trustees

- Remuneration: The role of chair is unpaid, although reasonable expenses may be claimed (including travel and childcare).
- Location: Trustee meetings will be held in London, with the option to attend remotely.
- Time commitment: Quarterly board meetings, and regular meetings with the director. We also expect that the chair will represent Workwhile externally on occasion, e.g. at events and meetings with key stakeholders.

Job description

As our first chair, you will work initially with Workwhile's director and with IPPR to support our journey to becoming an independent charity, including providing inclusive leadership to build and nurture the new board of trustees to fulfil its responsibilities.

When Workwhile is fully operational as an independent charity, you will hold the director and wider Workwhile team to account for delivering the organisation's mission and vision, to achieve agreed objectives. You will provide support for the director, and will act as an external ambassador for Workwhile.

Technical responsibilities

You will lead the board of trustees to discharge its technical responsibilities, including:

- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document and provides public benefit.
- Ensuring that the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects.

How you'll support us

Strategic leadership

- Provide leadership to Workwhile and its board, maximising our impact
- Build and nurture the board, ensuring that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for effective governance
- Ensure that the board operates within its statutory and mandatory requirements, and provides a clear strategic direction
- Ensure that the board regularly reviews major risks and opportunities
- Ensure that the board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the organisation, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability

Governance



- Ensure that governance arrangements are working effectively, including via terms of reference, schemes of delegation etc.
- Work with the director to ensure that the board incorporates the right skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern Workwhile effectively
- Work with the director to ensure that the board represents the stakeholders for and with whom Workwhile operates
- Develop the knowledge and capability of the board
- Appraise the performance of the board on an annual basis

Efficiency and effectiveness

- Chair meetings of the board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process
- Ensure that Trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of Workwhile
- Foster equity and inclusivity within the board's ways of working, ensuring that constructive relationships exist with and between trustees
- Work closely with the director to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees, including agreeing agendas and ensuring the timely circulation of papers

External relations and fundraising

- Draw on any relevant personal networks to support Workwhile's fundraising and influencing activities
- Act as an ambassador for Workwhile, our work and the wider cause
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate
- Represent the charity at external meetings and events when appropriate

Relationship with the director and wider team

- Establish and build a strong, effective and a constructive working relationship with the Director, ensuring s/he is held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives and is supported to do so
- Ensure regular contact with the director and develop and maintain an open and supportive relationship
- Liaise with the director to maintain an overview of the organisation's affairs, providing support as necessary
- Conduct an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the director in consultation with other trustees
- Ensure that the director has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support



Person specification

Equity is at the heart of Workwhile's mission and vision – and we're committed to ensuring our governance reflects that too.

Whilst we anticipate that our new chair will need to bring some experience of charity leadership and governance to give us the support we need at this crucial point in our journey, we're also keen to hear from people with other experience to bring to the role. We especially welcome applications from people from disadvantaged and marginalised groups who are under-represented in governance roles.

Please don't be put off applying if you don't feel you can tick off every point on the list below. If you're committed to our work and have the skills and time to make a difference, we'd love to hear from you.

Personal qualities

- Demonstrate a strong and visible commitment to Workwhile's mission and values
- Exhibit strong relationship-building and networking abilities, and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively
- Ability to foster and promote an inclusive and collaborative environment
- Willing to commit time to conduct the role well

Experience, knowledge and skills

- Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation
- Good understanding of charity governance issues, with experience of charity governance and of working with or as part of a Board of Trustees
- Significant experience of effectively chairing meetings and events
- Strong leadership skills and the ability to motivate diverse teams
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues
- Experience of external representation, speaking on behalf of an organisation and managing stakeholder relationships
- Whilst not essential, experience of building a small charity or other organisation in its early stages would be highly beneficial

How to apply

Please send the following to info@workwhile.org.uk by 9am on Monday 19th February:

- a) a CV highlighting relevant skills and experience – maximum 2 pages, and
- b) a short covering letter explaining why you're interested in becoming one of Workwhile's first trustees – maximum 1 page

If you would like to be considered for both chair and trustee roles, please indicate this in your application; there is no need to submit two applications.

If you have any questions, or to arrange a discussion with Workwhile's director Anna or a member of the team where possible, please email info@workwhile.org.uk.