Trustee Recruitment Protocol

1. Background

The Humane Research Trust CIO (THRT) is governed by a Board of Trustees. To support trustee succession planning, the board has a standing meeting agenda item to consider the following:

- Does the board have enough trustees with the right mix of competences, capabilities, and attributes?
- Do trustees need training or support to help them deliver their roles effectively?
- Does the board require new trustees?

This document sets out the usual process for recruiting new trustees. There may be times where a different process is needed. However, steps 5 and 7 must always be followed.

2. Appointing New Trustees

The eight steps in the recruitment process are set out in Table 1 and outlined below.

1. Trustee vacancies will be advertised on appropriate platforms, which may include some or all of the following:
    - THRT's website
    - THRT's professional-facing social media channels – Bluesky, LinkedIn
    - REACH
    - Stockport Volunteer Hub
    - Trustees Unlimited
    - CharityJob,
    - The websites of relevant professional bodies.

    The advert will include the general trustee role description or a specific role description if the board is looking for particular knowledge, skills or qualifications. The advert will also offer the opportunity for an informal chat with the chair or other trustee of THRT.

    In some cases, individuals may come forward on spec, or be recommended by current trustees, members of staff or other contacts of the charity.
2. In all cases, candidates will be asked to provide a covering letter setting out their interest in becoming a trustee and how their skills and experiences meet the general trustee role description or the role that has been advertised. They will also be asked to provide a copy of their CV and the contact details of two referees.
3 Applicants will be shortlisted based on how their covering letter and CV demonstrate they meet the role description and person specification. Shortlisting will be undertaken by the Trustee Appointments Panel with support from the operations team. The Trustee Appointments Panel will be chaired by the chair or vice-chair of the board and will comprise the chair or acting chair of the sub-committee it is intended the trustee shall join, and at least one other trustee.
4. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview with the Trustee Appointments Panel to select the preferred candidate. The CEO or other staff member may also attend the interview at the panel chair's discretion.

5 Following the interview process, the successful candidate will be notified that they are the preferred candidate and at that time their referees will be approached and eligibility checks will be completed. They will be invited to the next board meeting and the next appropriate sub-committee meeting as an observer. They may be invited to provide a short presentation to introduce themselves to trustees.

6. Following their attendance at a board meeting and sub-committee meeting as an observer, the candidate will be invited to have a follow-up discussion with the chair of trustees to clarify any issues and to confirm they remain interested in taking up the position of trustee. Assuming they are, they will be invited to attend the next full board meeting where their position will be ratified.

7. The Trustee Appointments Panel will put a resolution to appoint the successful candidate to the next full meeting of the board. The candidate will be asked to step out of the meeting for the duration of this agenda item.

   The resolution document will be supported by the candidate's application. The chair of the Trustee Appointment Panel will provide a summary of the key points discussed at interview and the overall conclusion of the panel.

   The outcome of the board's discussion, and whether the resolution was passed, shall be recorded in the minutes of the board meeting. The date of appointment to the board will be the date of the meeting at which the resolution was passed.

8. If not present at the board meeting at which the resolution was passed, the appointed candidate will be notified of the outcome at the earliest opportunity so that the induction programme can begin.

3. Induction

Induction offers an important insight and gateway for new trustees, helping them to understand their role, the organisation's functions, and their legal duties and responsibilities.

Induction ensures and can provide evidence that Trustees have an awareness and understanding of key policies, procedures e.g., equal opportunities, health and safety, and data protection, etc.

In addition, it enables the board to set out its vision and strategy for the charity, to new trustees and staff.

The trustee induction programme includes:

- meetings and introductions to other trustees and employees
- invitations to events, meetings, and presentations
- key documents
- buddying or coaching with other trustees
- ascertaining a trustee's accessibility preferences and requirements (if not already done)

Revision History	**Changes made**	**Review Date**
Version 1: 6 July 2023	N/A	March 2026
Version 2: Sep 2025	Links to recruitment sites added	March 2026
Version 3: May 2026	None	May 2029

Table 1: Stages in the Trustee Recruitment Process

Trustee recruitment process		
Stage	**Task**	**Who**
Stage 1	Trustee role description and person specification advertised widely on appropriate platforms (THRT website, social media, REACH, professional bodies' websites)	CEO
Stage 2	Candidates submit a covering letter, their CV and contact details of two referees.	
Stage 3	Candidates shortlisted and invited to interview	Trustee Appointment Panel, with support from the operations team.
Stage 4	Candidates interviewed	Trustee Appointment Panel
Stage 5	Successful candidate notified of appointment, subject to checks and a board resolution to appoint. Candidate invited to observe next full board and relevant sub-committee meetings. Candidate's referees approached and checks for eligibility undertaken.	Operations team
Stage 6	Following observation at board meeting, candidate invited for informal chat with chair of board to confirm they remain interested in joining the board. Candidate invited to attend next board meeting as trustee.	
Stage 7	Resolution to appoint candidate put to next board meeting, with supporting documentation. If passed, decision recorded in the board meeting minutes.	Board of trustees
Stage 8	Candidate informed (if not present at the board meeting at which the resolution was passed) and onboarding and induction process commenced	Operations team