

TRUSTEES

Recruitment Pack



Plunkett
Foundation



APRIL
2022

www.plunkett.co.uk

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Letter of Introduction from the Chair

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Plunkett Foundation.

I trust that you will find this recruitment pack informative about our organisation and our future plans, so that you can reach an informed decision as to whether you are the right person to join us at the current time.

Plunkett Foundation is a unique organisation, as the only national body with a sole purpose of supporting rural community businesses throughout the UK. We have a great deal of experience over 100 years of supporting rural communities to address the various issues, challenges and opportunities they face in setting up and running community businesses. We are a relatively small organisation, but we have a national brand and reputation, with infrastructure that delivers a UK-wide reach. Our work supports a range of community businesses at various stages in their life cycle. We work in partnership with several major funders, government bodies and the rural voluntary and community sectors. We have a high impact, a strong media profile and punch above our weight.

This is an exciting year for Plunkett, we will be launching a new five year strategy at our September AGM. The ensuing challenge will of course be achieving the ambitious objectives against an uncertain environment for public policy, the economy and continued pressures on rural communities. The new strategy will have a particular focus on: extending the community business model more widely in rural areas; deepening the impact of community businesses; and really developing the sense of a movement across community businesses.

The last few years have seen good progress in implementing our previous strategy. This includes consolidating Plunkett's sound financial credentials, providing a confident position to develop from as we face future uncertainties around the future funding environment. Our policy advocacy and lobbying work on behalf of community business has gained significant traction as has our national media profile, securing a growing position of influence. Our community business service has risen to the challenge of Covid-19 and the increased need for support and guidance for new and existing community businesses.

The interest in the community business model continues to grow. During 2021 we saw the 400th community shop and the 140th community pub open.

We are now seeking to appoint up to three new Trustees as part of agreed succession plans in order to strengthen the Board. Following a review of our current skills mix and expertise, we are especially interested in applications from candidates who have one or more of the following attributes:

- Working knowledge of the grant funding environment relevant to Plunkett and its operations
- A commercial background and/or entrepreneurial skills relevant to Plunkett's ambition to further develop corporate partnerships and expand our membership packages.

We are also looking to ensure the Board reflects the interests of our members and has a diverse range of views and experiences, including from all parts of the UK. But our main concern is to attract new Trustees who share our ambition and enthusiasm for thriving rural communities, who are committed to helping Plunkett to deliver its ambitions, and who can support us in developing new ways of meeting the needs of rural communities through community businesses.

I hope on reading this recruitment pack that you will be inspired by our valuable work.

With best wishes

Stephen Nicol,
Chair of Plunkett Foundation

About Plunkett Foundation

Plunkett Foundation is a charity operating across the UK with over 100 years' experience supporting people in rural areas to set up and run community owned businesses. These are genuinely owned and run democratically by members of their local community for the benefit of the local community. Today we represent over 800 such community businesses across the length and breadth of the UK, from shops and pubs through to woodlands, farms and fisheries.

Through our support for community businesses, we aim to support resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities. We help realise the potential for community businesses to:

- Provide a wider range of services and amenities that communities value and need
- Stimulate the local economy through localised supply chains
- Boost opportunities for employment, training and volunteering
- Offset climate change through commitment to zero carbon values and initiatives
- Harness digital technologies to enhance business performance
- Promote diversity and inclusion by creating a safe and welcoming space for all.

In practical terms, Plunkett raises awareness of the community business model UK-wide and provides business support and training to help these businesses start-up and go on to thrive. As a membership organisation, we also seek to represent the interests of rural community businesses through research, policy and public affairs.



Our 5 Year Strategy

A copy of our current strategy which runs from 2018-2022 is available here. We are in the advanced stages of developing a new five year strategy which will be an evolution of the current strategy and launched in September this year.

Our Vision is for resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities throughout the UK. Our current **Strategic Objectives** are:

1. Growing the sector: Helping more rural communities to succeed in opening community businesses and ensuring those already trading have the support they need to thrive.
2. Extending our relevance and reach: Ensuring the community business model and the support available are relevant and accessible to communities in all parts of the UK.
3. Increasing social impact: Helping prospective and existing community businesses to focus on the social impact they will have on all those living and working in their communities.
4. Creating an enabling environment: Advocating rural community business throughout the UK and championing their cause to create a supportive policy, funding, and advisory landscape for them to operate within.
5. Improving Plunkett sustainability: Ensuring the long-term survival of our service and that of the wider rural community business movement.

Whilst our strategic objectives will be refreshed for the new five year period, our **Core Activities** will be largely as they are now:

1. Delivering a high quality community business service, helping new community businesses to set up and existing ones to thrive
2. Embedding membership at the heart of all we do, and ensuring our members feel aligned to a wider 'movement'
3. Delivering a service of information and research, policy and advocacy, and communications and awareness raising
4. Ensuring the effective and efficient operations of the Charity through sound financial management, good governance and regulatory compliance.

A copy of our strategy is available here



Governance and Finance

Plunkett Foundation is registered as a charity in England and Wales and in Scotland and is registered as a company limited by guarantee.

The Board meets formally up to five times a year, one of which takes place over two days over our Away Day. The AGM takes place in addition to the formal board meetings, and is normally held in July or September. We currently operate two subcommittees – ‘Audit and Risk’ and ‘Governance and Nominations’ – and occasionally create time limited working groups. Typically, formal board meetings take place either in London or Oxfordshire and meetings of the subcommittees and working groups meet virtually.

The current term of office for a Trustee is three years, with a maximum of three terms permitted by our current Articles of Association. The total length of service is being considered as part of a review of our Articles. Currently, some key board roles are limited to two terms only.

Plunkett has an average annual turnover in the region of £1.2m. Our current strategy has successfully initiated a diversification of our income streams to include community fundraising, corporate partnerships, and development of earned income through training, membership and consultancy. This reduces our dependency of grants and project income, but we still intend for grants and projects to represent an important element of our income generation throughout the next strategy period.

Plunkett has reserves of approximately £1.3m, which is above our reserves policy. We are currently exploring plans to apply excess reserves to delivering on agreed strategy, including the creation of an accessible loan fund for the benefit of our Members. The bulk of our reserves, plus an element of income that we have in advance is invested and managed on our behalf by an independent investment management company.



Role Description

■ STATUTORY DUTIES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the Foundation, developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing documents, legal and regulatory requirements. The Board has adopted the current Charity Commission Code of Governance and this guides its activities.

The Board has a number of legal and regulatory responsibilities. Briefly, these include:

- Ensuring the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Complying with the charity's governing document and the law
- Acting in the charity's best interests
- Managing the charity's resources responsibly
- Acting with reasonable care and skill
- Ensuring the charity is accountable to its stakeholders, including the Charity Commission, Plunkett members, funders and other beneficiaries.

■ AS A TRUSTEE

You would be expected to:

- Support and espouse the Plunkett ethos.
- Be committed to the well-being of the organisation and its stakeholders.
- Promote the organisation externally, where possible and as appropriate.
- Abide by the Governance Code and all relevant legislation and regulations.
- Understand and undertake the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Be able and willing to devote the necessary time and effort, including attending board meetings, AGM, etc.
- Work as part of a team in a constructive, collective and collaborative manner.
- Bring your skills/attributes to bear in support of the Chair and other Trustees, senior management and the organisation.
- Exercise independent judgement.



- Support senior management at strategic and overarching level.
- Be willing to be open and challenge other board members and (senior) management in a constructive way.
- Be willing to be challenged.
- Be open to others' ideas.
- Display conduct that is fitting to the role and shows respect to others.
- Meet agreed performance standards. Trustees would be expected to step down if they consistently failed to meet those standards
- Attend board meetings. Missing more than 3 meetings without good reason in any one year will lead to automatic dismissal.
- Report any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- Demonstrate the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

■ HOW YOU WILL BE SUPPORTED IN THE ROLE

A full induction process will be conducted upon your appointment, including one to one meetings with fellow Trustees, the Chair, and the senior management team. Training will be provided as necessary.

We are open to applications from people without previous board experience and support would be provided to first time Trustees including; training on charity governance, coaching, mentoring and buddying up with more experienced board members.

To learn more about becoming a Trustee [click here](#)



■ PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Good understanding of the community business model and the impact they have
- Genuine passion and belief in the work of Plunkett Foundation
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Ability to think strategically
- Good, independent judgement
- Ability to think creatively
- Willingness to speak their mind
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- Lived experiences consistent with Plunkett's vision, mission and values.

Following a review of our current skills mix and expertise, we are especially seeking applications from candidates who have one of more of the following:

- Working knowledge of the grant funding environment relevant to Plunkett and its operations
- A commercial background and/or entrepreneurial skills relevant to Plunkett's ambition to further
- develop corporate partnerships and expand our membership packages.

The Plunkett Foundation adopts a positive approach to diversity and inclusion. Following a recent board effectiveness review, we have identified weaknesses in terms of gender and racial diversity on the Board. As such we welcome applications that address that imbalance.

The role is unremunerated, but associated expenses are paid.



APPLICATION PROCESS

■ HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in becoming a Trustee of Plunkett Foundation, please send a copy of your CV, together with a short letter of interest outlining:

- Why you fulfil the person specification of the Plunkett Foundation
- The nature of your experience in the community business or wider community sector
- The nature of or experience and understanding of the needs, issues and opportunities of rural communities
- What you think your major contributions to the Plunkett Foundation would be
- A declaration that you are not disqualified from becoming a Trustee
- A list of any Directorships or Trusteeships that you currently hold.
- Full contact details (name, job title, organisation, phone and email) for two referees.

Please apply by email to Plunkett's Interim Head of Compliance and Operations kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk with the title "Trustee Application – Confidential" in the email header.

Your application will be acknowledged and treated with strictest confidence. Plunkett Foundation recognises that your privacy is important, and we take our responsibility for the safety of personal data seriously. Should you require a copy of our privacy policy please contact Kathryn Morrison.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to discuss their application with the Chair of the Trustees, nominated Trustee Panel and the Chief Executive.

■ RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

- Deadline for applications: **9am Monday 30 May 2022**
- Interviews will take place on (or around) Thursday 16 June 2022
- Notification of successful applications by Monday 20 June 2022
- Subject to their availability there is the potential for successful applicants to attend, as a guest, a Board session on Wednesday 29 June 2022
- Successful applicants would remain as co-opted trustees until the next AGM
- Subject to the agreement of the Board, successful applicants would be put forward for formal election at the AGM on 14 September 2022

■ QUERIES

If you wish to arrange an informal discussion with James Alcock, Chief Executive, about this role or if you have any queries please contact kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk

