

# TRUSTEES

## Recruitment Pack



**Plunkett**  
Foundation



SEPTEMBER  
**2021**

[www.plunkett.co.uk](http://www.plunkett.co.uk)

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# 1

## Introduction

**Dear Colleague,**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Plunkett Foundation and in joining the Board. This recruitment pack includes useful information about the organisation, our plans for the future and some of the challenges we face.

The Plunkett Foundation has a great deal of experience over many 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 UK-wide reach, supporting 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 sector. We have a high impact, a strong media profile and punch above our weight.

We are in the closing stages of our ambitious 2018-2022 strategy and 2020 saw good progress with the delivery of our strategic objectives. We launched the Information Hub which is active in making compelling contributions to policy making. It is starting to better capture evidence on the impact of Plunkett's work and, with our partners, the wider impact of rural community businesses.

As you can imagine, last year saw unprecedented levels of demand from existing and new community businesses for support and advice as a result of COVID-19. Aided by a number of generous funders, our team stepped up to this challenge in providing support. We also lobbied hard on behalf of the sector, working with others. This led, for instance, to successful changes to lockdown rules that impacted on our sector, particularly pubs.

I took over the reins as chair in September 2020 after last year's first ever virtual AGM. I found an organisation in excellent shape: with strong finances, delivering great services to community businesses, well managed and projecting a strong and effective voice for our sector.

We have now started the development of the next five year strategy to be launched in 2022, so it is an exciting time to join the organisation and help shape its future.



# 1

## Introduction

We are seeking to appoint up to three new Trustees 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:

- Knowledge and appreciation of community businesses
- Experience of sparsely populated/deep rural areas
- A good understanding of the community business landscape in the devolved nations, in particular Scotland and Wales
- Strong networks and connections within charity/fundraising sector
- Strong commercial and financial skills
- Experience in public affairs, policy and advocacy.

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.

This short [video](#) provides an overview of the opportunity to become a Trustee of Plunkett Foundation and how you can influence the delivery of our new strategy and the overall impact we have on rural communities.

I hope on reading this recruitment pack that you will be inspired by our valuable work. We look forward to receiving your application.

With best wishes

**Stephen Nicol,**  
Chair of Plunkett Foundation



# 2

## About Plunkett Foundation

### ■ OUR VISION

*Resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities*

### ■ OUR MISSION

*To Inspire and empower rural communities to work together to find solutions to their needs through sustainable community enterprise.*

### ■ OUR VALUES

*Inclusive, collaborative, innovative and accountable*

The Plunkett Foundation believes in equal opportunities in all it does, as an employer, an organisation and a partner. We care about people and communities and treat all those with whom we come into contact with respect, honesty and integrity. We value diversity and equality.

### ■ IN A NUTSHELL

The Plunkett Foundation helps rural communities UK-wide to tackle the issues they face, through promoting and supporting community business. These are businesses that are owned and run democratically by members of the community and others, on behalf of the community. They come in many forms, including shops, pubs, woodlands and anything which lends itself to community ownership. In addition to developing and safeguarding valuable assets and services, community businesses address a range of issues including isolation, loneliness, wellbeing, work and training.

Plunkett's role is to advocate and champion the concept of community business to ensure communities throughout the UK are aware of the model and its potential; feel empowered to take action themselves; and operate in a supportive environment. Plunkett provides practical advice, support and training to help communities establish and run successful community businesses with long term survival rates and champions and gives voice to those already doing so.

Plunkett is proud of its roots; it was founded by the great Irish co-operative pioneer, Sir Horace Plunkett, in 1919. Whilst what we do and how we do it has evolved over the years to meet changing circumstances, we remain committed to our main purpose of supporting rural communities to co-operate and thrive through community business and to improve the quality of life for all. Today, it represents the interests of over 700 rural community businesses that it has helped to establish and a further 450 in the process of setting up, as well as those who are just starting on the path.

In 2020 our total turnover was £1.1 million and at the end of 2020 the Foundation held unrestricted reserves of approximately £1.3 million.



# 3

## Our strategy 2018 - 22

### ■ OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The following five strategic objectives will guide our work over the next five years to enable us to achieve our mission.

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's sustainability: Ensuring the long-term survival of our service and that of the wider rural community business movement.

### ■ OUR AMBITIONS

- Provide a high-quality service to assist rural communities to set up and run community businesses.
- Raise the profile of and champion rural community businesses.
- Establish an information and innovation hub to develop and share intelligence and expertise on the rural community business sector.
- Be a high-quality organisation through our people, our governance, our operations and our financial management.

### ■ OUR CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

- Growing the size, impact and UK-wide reach of the rural community business sector.
- Working in partnership and collaboration.
- Using our resources effectively and efficiently.

[A copy of our strategy is available here](#)



# 4

## Finance and Governance

Plunkett Foundation is registered as a charity in England and Wales and in Scotland. It is also registered as a company limited by guarantee. Plunkett Foundation has a dormant trading subsidiary, Plunkett Services, which is registered as a CLG. It is in the process of being dissolved.

The Board meets formally between five and six times a year, one of which takes place over two days. In 2020/2021 meetings have been conducted virtually, however, meetings generally take place either in London or Oxfordshire. The AGM takes place in addition to the formal board meetings, and is normally held in July/September.

The term of office for a Trustee is three years, with a maximum of three terms permitted by our current Articles of Association. The Board has voluntarily agreed to reduce the number of terms to two for key roles including the Chair, Vice Chair(s) and Treasurer in order to manage succession. Vice Chairs and Treasurers may re-stand as a Trustee for a final third term, but the Chair should not re-stand and therefore leaves at the end of their two terms.

Plunkett has an investment portfolio of approximately £1.7 million, managed on our behalf by an independent investment management company. The organisation has turned over approximately £1.2 million per annum in the last three years, and achieved a small surplus. A three-year plan is in place, to target new income generating activities with an overall aim of rebalancing Plunkett's income streams and being able to produce longer term sources of funding.



# 5

## 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.





# 5

## Role Description

- 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](#)



# 5

## Role Description

### PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Commitment to the organisation
- 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.

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: associated expenses paid.



# 6

## 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 note we will not take up references without your prior permission.

Please apply by email to Plunkett's Interim Head of Compliance and Operations [kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk](mailto: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 4 October 2021
- Interviews will take place on (or around) Tuesday 19 October 2021 via Zoom
- Notification of successful applications by Tuesday 26 October 2021
- Subject to their availability there is the potential for successful applicants to attend, as a guest, a Board session on Wednesday 3 November or a Board meeting on Thursday 4 November 2021
- 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 in July/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](mailto:kathryn.morrison@plunkett.co.uk)

