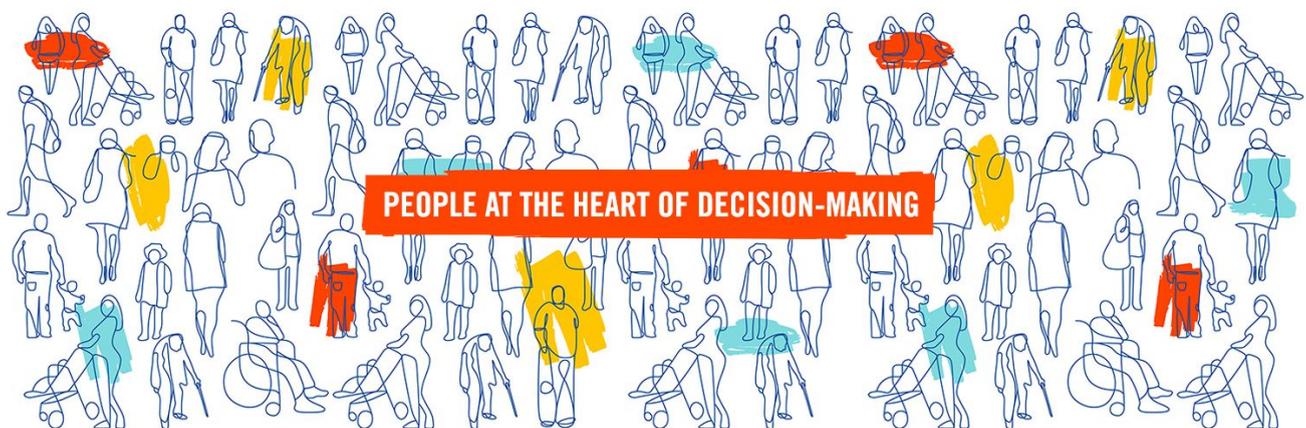




# CHAIR

## Role Description

October 2018



### Practical details

**DEADLINE:**

4 January 2019

**APPOINTMENT LENGTH:**

Three year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms

**TIME COMMITMENT:**

Approximately 12 days-a-year

**REMUNERATION:**

This is an unpaid position, although travel expenses are available.

## 01. Introduction

Democracy isn't working as it should, but it's key to tackling the challenges we face. If, like us, you believe that a new type of democracy is needed - that puts people at the heart of decision-making - then this could be the role for you.

Following some pioneering work over recent years, we are looking for a chair with outstanding leadership skills to help us achieve our mission. This is a voluntary role and a wonderful opportunity for the right person to advance a cause that is vital for all.

We are committed to equal opportunities and we want our board to benefit from the advantages that diversity brings, including different skills, life experiences and backgrounds. We would particularly welcome applications from women and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

We are also seeking two new trustees.

## 02. Who we are

**We're the UK's leading public participation charity, on a mission to put people at the heart of decision-making.**

We're a small but passionate team focused on giving people more power over the decisions that affect their lives. We want to build a stronger democracy that works for everyone – that gives people real power to bring about change in their lives, communities and beyond.

Involve was founded in 2003 “to create a new focus for thinking and action on the links between new forms of public participation and existing democratic institutions”. We've been promoting and practising participatory and deliberative decision-making ever since. We have worked with governments, parliaments, civil society organisations, academics and the public across the UK and internationally to put people at the heart of decision-making.

Involve is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. We have offices in London, Edinburgh and Belfast. See our Charity Commission listing: <http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/...>

We believe that decision-making in the UK needs to be more:

- **Open** - so that people can understand, influence and hold decision-makers to account for the actions and inactions of their governments;
- **Participatory** - so that people have the freedom, support and opportunity to shape their communities and influence the decisions that affect their lives; and,
- **Deliberative** - so that people can exchange and acknowledge different perspectives, understand conflict and find common ground, and build a shared vision for society.

Find out more about us: <https://www.involve.org.uk/about>

## 03. What we do

**We demonstrate how citizens can help solve our biggest challenges.**

Democracy isn't working as it should. Decision-makers are struggling to get things done. The public are frustrated that the system isn't working for them. And everywhere people are feeling divided, distrustful and powerless.

In 2017, we developed a new strategy to demonstrate how things can be different. Our work seeks to create:

1. **New innovations** - to demonstrate better ways of doing democracy;
2. **New institutions** - to put people at the heart of decision-making;
3. **New norms** - to make democracy more open, participatory and deliberative.

We approach this in three ways:

1. **We set the agenda** - by developing a vision of a democracy that puts people at the heart of decision-making;
2. **We build coalitions** - by mobilising and partnering with broad, unexpected and powerful networks of allies; and,
3. **We make it happen** - by developing and supporting world-class participatory and deliberative processes.

Our recent projects have included:

- **The Citizens' Assembly on Social Care** - the first deliberative process commissioned by UK Parliament;
- **The Citizens' Assembly for Northern Ireland** - the first citizens' assembly to take place in Northern Ireland;
- **MH:2K** - a youth-led approach that has engaged over 3,000 young people in tackling mental ill-health.

Find out more about our work: [www.involve.org.uk/our-work/](http://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/)

### Our values

- **Collaboration** – because change comes when broad coalitions of people work towards a common vision.
- **Equality** – because everyone in society has an equal right to be listened to and participate in decisions that affect their lives. No one should be held back by societal divisions or prejudice.
- **Purpose** – because participation must have an impact. We reject tokenistic or ineffectual engagement.

## 04. The role

**Our chair plays a vital role for Involve as we pursue our mission to put people at the heart of decision-making.**

The chair provides inclusive leadership to the board of trustees, ensures that each trustee fulfils their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity, and holds the staff team to account for delivery of the charity's vision and mission. In addition, the chair works closely with the staff team; supports and, where appropriate, challenges the director; and ensures that the board functions as a unit. They act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with members of the staff team.

## 05. Role specification

The chair of trustees has the following responsibilities:

### Strategic leadership

Providing leadership to the charity and its board, ensuring that we have maximum impact towards our vision and mission, including:

- Ensuring that trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity;
- Ensuring that the board operates within its charitable objectives, and provides a clear strategic direction for the charity;
- Ensuring that the board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities, and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks;
- Ensuring that the board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the charity, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability.

### Governance

Ensuring that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the charity, including:

- Developing the knowledge and capability of the board of trustees;
- Addressing and resolving any conflicts within the board;
- Appraising the performance of the trustees and the board on an annual basis;
- Ensuring that the board of trustees is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern the charity effectively, and which also reflects the wider population;
- Working within any policies adopted by the charity.

## External relations

Acting as an ambassador for the charity and its vision, including:

- Maintaining close relationships with key members of the government and with key influencers;
- Acting as a spokesperson for the organisation, when appropriate;
- Representing the charity at external functions, meetings and events.

## Efficiency and effectiveness

Chairing meetings of the board of trustees effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process, including:

- Ensuring that trustees are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the charity and that the board takes collective ownership;
- Fostering constructive relationships with and between the trustees;
- Working closely with the director to give direction to board policy-making and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees;
- Monitoring to ensure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

## Relationship with the director and the wider management team

Establishing a strong working relationship with the director, ensuring they are held to account for achieving agreed strategic objectives, including:

- Ensuring regular contact with the director and maintaining an open and supportive relationship within which each can speak openly about concerns, worries and challenges, whilst respecting the boundaries which exist between the two roles;
- Liaising with the director to maintain an overview of the charity's affairs, providing support as necessary;
- Conducting an annual appraisal and remuneration review for the director;
- Ensuring that the director has the opportunity for professional development and has appropriate external professional support.

# 06. Person specification

## Essential

Our chair of trustees will need to demonstrate the following criteria:

- A commitment to Involve and to our vision, mission and values;
- An ability to foster and promote an open and collaborative team environment;
- Significant experience of chairing meetings and events;
- Tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively;
- Good, independent judgement and preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board of trustees;

- Experience of charity governance, including an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship;
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort and be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis;
- Strong interpersonal and relationship building abilities and comfortable in an ambassadorial role.

## Desirable

We welcome applications from those who have some, but not all, of the desirable criteria:

- Good networks with politicians and key influencers;
- Experience of fundraising;
- Knowledge of communications and press;
- Understanding of participatory and deliberative democracy;
- Expertise in financial management and a broad understanding of small charity finances.

## 07. Terms of appointment

### Appointment length

The chair (and board members) will serve a three-year term and can be re-appointed for one additional term.

### Time commitment

The role requires approximately 12 days-a-year, including:

- Attending quarterly board meetings (3 hours) at our offices in Bethnal Green, London;
- Attendance at an annual away day;
- Participation in board sub-committees, as required;
- Reading board papers and other preparation for meetings;
- Other ad hoc support as required.

This is an unpaid position, although travel expenses are available.

## 08. How to apply

To apply, please send a short statement and CV addressing the person specification to [jobs@involve.org.uk](mailto:jobs@involve.org.uk) by 4 January 2019.

We intend to interview prospective candidates on 24/25 January 2019.

For further information, please contact Tim Hughes, director: [tim@involve.org.uk](mailto:tim@involve.org.uk)