

# Trustee application pack

*For an informal discussion please contact  
Allyson Davies at  
[IVAR@allysondavies-consultant.com](mailto:IVAR@allysondavies-consultant.com)  
or call 020 7828 3855 or 07968 556 164.*

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P. Coleman - Eden Project Communities

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The photos we use throughout this document show the social change work of the people, charities and communities we collaborate with.

# Letter from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in our work and in becoming a trustee, helping us to strengthen the UK voluntary sector through research, education and training.

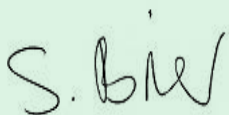
Since 2000, IVAR<sup>1</sup> has been working with charities, foundations and public agencies to strengthen communities across the UK through action research. We seek to understand and champion people and organisations committed to fairness, equity and justice.

We are looking for up to three new trustees to join IVAR's small board. Having a board that reflects the diversity of the communities that we serve is really important to us – so we would like to encourage people from a range of backgrounds and experiences to apply.

In addition to a passion for our work, curiosity and empathy, we are hoping to find: experienced leaders from the voluntary sector or trusts/foundations, with strong networks; people with deep roots in voluntary sector research; and people with experience of a campaigning approach to communications.

If you feel you offer some of these qualities and have some of these direct experiences, then we would love to hear from you. We are running a flexible process – take a look at the pack to find out more about IVAR and, if you are interested, simply send your CV and a covering letter (max two sides A4) explaining why you are applying, how you meet the person specification, and what in particular you would bring to IVAR. Please don't let lack of trustee experience put you off applying – if you feel an affinity to our work, we want to hear from you.

Allyson Davies, a coach, and selection and diversity specialist, is working to support us and she would be delighted to have an early conversation with you about your interest, so please do give her a call on **020 7828 3855** or **07968 55 6164**. Thank you again, we really appreciate your interest in our work, and we hope to hear from you.




*Sam Brier*

Chair of the Institute for Voluntary Action Research

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<sup>1</sup> Institute for Voluntary Action Research



We work with charities, foundations and public agencies to strengthen communities across the UK through action research.



CaVCA

# About IVAR

Our mission is to strengthen the UK voluntary sector through research education and training.

## Our values



### Curious

We listen and learn with an open mind, are problem-focused (not driven by solutions) and we put weight on hearing from a variety of sources.



### Grounded

Our work stems from real problems and can be easily understood and applied. Our research is rigorous, grounded in 20 years' experience and a wider evidence base.



### Human

We bring ourselves to the work – offering encouragement, humour and empathy. We know it's not always easy, and we'll be frank about challenges



### Hopeful

We create spaces for difficult conversations and use our voice and networks to inspire conversations that drive change

## What we do

We work with charities, foundations and public agencies to strengthen communities across the UK through action research. The role we play varies according to the project, partner and need – evaluator, learning partner, critical friend, researcher, facilitator – but we are always guided by our action research principles:

- **Problem-solving:** Our work starts with a practical problem, challenge or opportunity. We work with people to help down what really needs to be addressed.
- **Collaborative:** We are not the experts – we believe that those with direct experience of an issue are key to resolving challenges and opening up opportunities. We work with them to help draw out useful solutions.
- **Practical:** We work hard to generate practical learning. We ask questions, and encourage reflection and debate to help produce outcomes that are meaningful and long-lasting.
- **Useful for all:** No project is standalone – our work provides learning and evidence to help strengthen the voluntary sector.

## What does this look like in practice?

- **Pears foundation #iwill Fund Learning Partner:** We brought together a community of youth volunteer coordinators in health and hospital settings, and supported them to learn from their work in real time.
- **Start somewhere:** We worked in partnership with Centre for Acceleration of Social Technology to research what it takes to make tech work in small charities.
- **Connecting for change:** A three-year evaluation to learn about Help on Your Doorstep's Connecting for Change model, which supports people with all their needs; not just when they're in crisis.
- **Open and trusting grant-making:** We set up and support a network of over 100 funders who are committed to managing grants and relationships in a way that reflects their confidence in and respect for the organisations they fund.

For a more detailed understanding of the kind of work that we do, visit [ivar.org.uk](http://ivar.org.uk)



James O. Jenkins - Help On Your Doorstep



# Our priorities

Our focus over 2020-2025 is to evolve and adapt to maximise our relevance and usefulness. To do this we need to maintain a relentless focus on 'being the best IVAR that we can be'. We have identified four goals to help us achieve this:

1. **Stay healthy and fit for purpose.** We aim to maintain the wellbeing of the organisation by ensuring that our people have the support, resources and systems they need to deliver high quality research and communications.
2. **Work towards greater equity, diversity and inclusion.** We are a white-led organisation that takes equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) extremely seriously. We have made three specific commitments:
  - a. Over the last two years we have appointed staff, associates and trustees from black and minoritised communities; and continue to focus on recruiting people who reflect the communities we work with and support across the UK.
  - b. We have begun to embed EDI into our research selection and design processes. Current work includes research on racial justice grant-making with Funders for Racial Equality Alliance; and an exploration of community-led social justice with organisations led by people from black and minoritised communities.

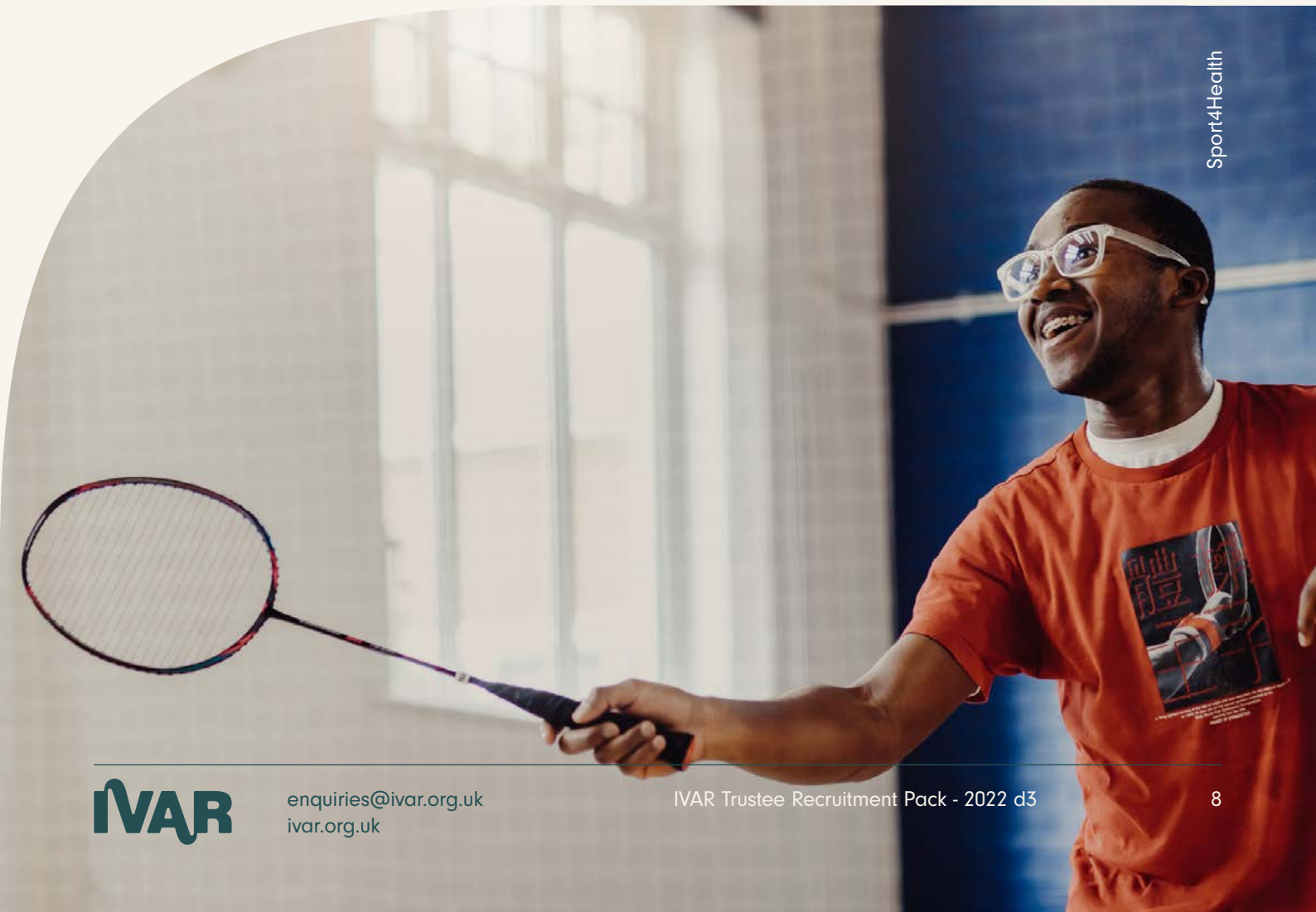
- c. We are extending our network of partners to create opportunities for more diverse groups to participate in IVAR projects, as well as find and use IVAR resources.

You can read more about our approach to EDI [here](#).

- 3. Increase the use of our work by our core audiences – charities, foundations and public agencies.** This is about sharing learning from our work in a way that is useful and usable. We take an experimental approach – trying new things and continuously learning and developing.
- 4. Lead a movement of change in UK grant-making.** In February 2021, we called for funders to sign up to eight commitments for [open and trusting grant-making](#) – things like don't waste time, accept risk and enable flexibility. Over 100 funders have joined our community, who we support through ongoing research and facilitated peer learning. Our ambition is for funders to manage grants and relationships in a way that reflects their confidence in and respect for the organisations they fund; and we're currently developing a way for charities to hold funders to account for this.

## Our people

Our research approach is made possible by our flexible team of twelve core staff, eight trustees and a network of 15 highly experienced associates and advisors, [all of whom](#) have worked in and around the voluntary sector as volunteers, paid staff, leaders, trustees, teachers and researchers. Our team understands and cares about the distinctiveness and independence of voluntary sector organisations.



Sport4Health



# Being a trustee at IVAR

We are encouraging a wide range of people to come forward: your background, life and work experiences, approach and values are just as important to us as your knowledge or experience of the UK voluntary sector. What follows should give you an idea of the kinds of responsibilities you can expect to carry, alongside your fellow trustees and with the support of the staff team.

## Main purpose of the role

As a member of the Board of Trustees you will be responsible for setting IVAR's strategic goals, priorities and direction. You will use your knowledge, skills and experience to ensure IVAR stays true to its charitable objects; represents the interests of all its stakeholders; and to act as an advocate for the organisation.

With the support of the staff team and professional advisers, trustees at IVAR are expected to:

- Set and maintain the strategy and values.
- Ensure IVAR complies at all times with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Maintain proper financial control and ensure IVAR applies its resources exclusively in pursuit of its charitable objects, as defined in the governing documents.
- Support the operational management of the charity.

You may wish to review the [statutory duties of a trustee](#). In addition to these, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives or other issues in which you have particular expertise. Trustees are also actively encouraged to become involved in specific projects outside of board meetings, drawing on their own networks and experience to help support staff in their work.

## Person Specification

The Board is looking to appoint up to three trustees and will be seeking a blend of skills, expertise and life experiences that complement its current make-up.

We hope that each of the new trustees will have:

- Affinity with IVAR's charitable objects and current priorities, including the role and contribution of research
- Emotional intelligence, by which we mean the ability to show empathy for different perspectives, experiences and contributions
- Exceptional listening skills
- An appetite to speak your mind, within a culture where this is supported and encouraged

While we welcome applications from all, based on a recent audit of our current Board we are particularly hoping to find people with:

- Experience in a leadership role of a charity, social enterprise or trust/foundation
- Strong networks in the voluntary sector
- Deep roots in voluntary sector research
- Expertise in campaigning – to inform how we communicate about our work

**If you feel that we are describing you in any of the above, then we'd love to hear from you.**



# Key Details

We are looking for up to three new trustees to join [our Board](#).

<b>Term:</b>	Trustees serve an initial three-year term and are eligible for re-appointment for an additional consecutive term of three years. In exceptional circumstances or when particular skills are an ongoing requirement, this may be longer.
<b>Remuneration:</b>	The role of trustee is unremunerated, although reasonable out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed.
<b>Meetings:</b>	Quarterly in February, May, July and November; plus involvement in annual strategy discussion, attendance at bi-annual social events, and ad hoc availability as sounding board for staff. Trustees are expected to attend at least three meetings a year.
<b>Location:</b>	At IVAR's office at The Foundry, Vauxhall, SE11 5RR (near Vauxhall and Oval stations), with the option to join remotely via Zoom.

## Application process

<b>Closing date:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> May
<b>Screening Interviews:</b>	31 May – 8 June
<b>Panel Interviews:</b>	23 and 27 June
<b>First meeting:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> July

Thank you for your interest in joining IVAR's Board of Trustees. If you would like an initial, informal conversation about being a trustee at IVAR, please contact Allyson Davies, who is working with us to appoint new trustees, at [IVAR@allysondavies-consultant.com](mailto:IVAR@allysondavies-consultant.com) or call 020 7828 3855 or 07968 556 164.

To express an interest in becoming a trustee, send your CV and a covering letter (as an attachment, max two sides A4) explaining why you are applying, how you meet the person specification, and what in particular you would bring to IVAR. The covering letter should be addressed to Sam Brier, IVAR's Chair. Please also complete the Equal Opportunities Form downloaded from <http://www.allysondavies-consultant.com/job-board/>.

**We value, welcome and respect all the differences that make us who we are, including: age, cultural background, disability and mental health, ethnicity and race, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, and social background.**

## Data Protection Note

Any personal data you provide (e.g. addresses, telephone numbers, employment history) will be used for recruitment purposes only, and only shared with individuals involved in the recruitment. Data will be stored securely: electronically (on IVAR's cloud-based IT system) and in hard copy.

Data related to unsuccessful applicants will be deleted six months after the end of the recruitment period. If your application is successful and you take up the role, the information will be used in the administration of your work with us.

If you have any questions about the processing of your data, then please contact IVAR's Data Protection Lead [diana@ivar.org.uk](mailto:diana@ivar.org.uk)