

TRUSTEE ROLE DESCRIPTION

FARA transforms the lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and families in Romania, giving them a sense of “family”.

WHO WE ARE

FARA Foundation was started 30 years ago by **Jane Nicholson**, driven by the sight of the appalling images of neglected and starving children in Romania’s state institutions in the wake of the fall of Ceausescu in Romania.

FARA today exists as two partner organisations, FARA Foundation in the UK and Fundatia FARA in Romania. Fundatia FARA is one of the largest and most experienced NGO care providers in Romania, reaching out to the poor, the marginalised and the most discriminated in society. Funding from FARA Foundation enables the development and management of Fundatia FARA’s social support services across Romania for children with disabilities, youth at risk, adults with learning disabilities, and community-based programmes tackling poverty through education for Romania’s poorest families. Since 1991, FARA Foundation has funded care for over 11,000 beneficiaries in Romania.

95% of the funding for Fundatia FARA comes from the success of the 40 leading-edge charity shops across London's high streets. With a dedicated workforce of 300 employees (185 FTE) across these shops, they are seen as vital community hubs, providing employment and a sustainable service for the communities in which they are located.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

FARA Foundation has a Board of up to a maximum of 12 trustees whose core role is a focus on strategy, performance and assurance of sustainability. As guardians of the charity, it is their responsibility to ensure that the charity is well managed and resourced sufficiently so that the charity’s beneficiaries’ best interests are served.

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the charity. It has overall responsibility for the strategic direction and financial stability of the FARA Foundation, ensuring that it delivers its charitable objectives. Operational day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the chief executive, who will work closely with the Board in developing the strategy.

The Board has three sub-committees, Finance and Risk, Trading, and Services, and each of the trustees serves on at least one of the sub-committees in addition to serving on the Board.

THE ROLE OF A TRUSTEE

The Board of Trustees will determine the charity’s mission and objectives and approve corporate policies and plans. A trustee board member has a duty with colleagues to make decisions on the strategic direction of the charity.

In managing and monitoring organisational performance, the trustee board must ensure that operational plans and budgets align with the charity’s purposes, strategic aims and resources.

Trustees must also identify and assess risks and opportunities for the organisation and decide how best to deal with them.

Trustees are expected to be ambassadors for the charity.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Know the contents of and act within the governing document of FARA and abide by the governance, policies and procedures of the organisation, and legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Support the objects and mission of FARA and act as their guardian and champion, using any skills or knowledge to further that mission and seeking expert advice where appropriate.
- Develop and maintain a sound up-to-date knowledge of FARA and its environment. This will include an understanding of how FARA operates, the social, political, and economic environment in which it operates and the nature and extent of its work.
- Approve the annual budget, business plan and accounts and to monitor the charity's performance in relation to its plans, budgets, controls, and decisions.
- Set the risk strategy for the charity and consider and review areas of risk.
- To actively contribute to the work of the Board, making skills, experience and knowledge available to FARA and seeking to do additional work outside trustee meetings, including sitting on sub-committees.
- Respect organisational, board and individual confidentiality while never using confidentiality as an excuse not to disclose matters that should be transparent and open.
- Accept responsibility to ensure that FARA is well run and to raise issues and questions appropriately and sensitively to ensure this is the case.
- Study the agenda and other information sent to me in good time before the meeting and be prepared to debate and vote on agenda items during the meeting. Honour the chair's authority and respect their role as meeting leader.
- Engage and contribute to debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others. Accept a majority board vote on an issue as decisive and final.
- Actively contribute towards improving the governance of the trustee board, and participate in induction, training and development activities for trustees.
- To act in the best interests of the charity at all times and declare any potential conflicts of interest and take appropriate action.
- To comply with the Trustee Code of Conduct.

TRUSTEE PERSON SPECIFICATION

- An enthusiasm, passion and strong commitment to the charity and for supporting its vision, mission and values.
- Evidence of contributing to or working effectively with a Board and an understanding of the responsibilities of a trustee, the charity sector, governance, financial and legal regulations.
- Experience of operating at a strategic level, and or successfully dealing with strategic issues, such as business planning to be able to support thinking, innovation and investment.
- Able to bring specialist knowledge and experience to support the strategic mission and operational activities.
- Able to understand and interpret complex information such as financial accounts, legal agreements or other content to a level to ask pertinent questions and comprehend discussion and answers.
- Demonstrate ability to be a strong team player with excellent interpersonal and communications skills and able to collaborate, support and build relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- Able and willing to give the necessary time and effort to fulfil the responsibilities and duties as a trustee and support the Charity in building external relationships and partnerships.
- Demonstrate a commitment to champion diversity, inclusion and the right to equal opportunity.

TIME COMMITMENT

All trustees must give sufficient time to the charity to carry out their responsibilities effectively. This includes preparing for meetings and being prepared to participate actively in meetings through discussion, appropriate challenge and seeking clarity if necessary. While all may not be able to give time in equal measure, all continue to share individual and co-equal Board responsibility.

The trustee board meets at least three times a year, and there may be additional meetings for specific purposes such as strategic planning or other ad hoc business. These are held face-face in central London.

Each trustee will also serve on at least one Subcommittee, which will each meet in the month before board meetings. They may also have ad-hoc meetings to discuss specific projects. These are held online.

Some additional meetings take place around these, such as the annual meeting of the Remuneration Committee and/or joining discussions on topics with the executive where your skills will add value.

The term of office for trustees will be three years which may be extended at the invitation of the Board.

This is a voluntary unpaid role. Out-of-pocket reasonable expenses will be covered. And all trustees are expected to participate in an official visit to Romania, broadly at least once every two years.

VALUES

All trustees must abide by the values that underpin all activities of FARA Foundation:

- We act with kindness and compassion.
- We respect the human dignity of every person.
- We believe in practical hands-on care.
- We strive to build a just society.
- We responsibly collaborate across all sections of society.
- We strive to be a best-practice organisation.