

involve



TRUSTEES



WELCOME

Democracy is key to tackling the challenges we face, but it isn't working as it should. If you believe, as we do, that a new type of democracy is needed, and that the UK is on the cusp of making this change - then this could be the role for you.

Over the last 20 years the world has seen the growth of deliberative and participatory democracy – now used from Canada to Copenhagen, from the Philippines to Paris.

During this time, Involve has led the way in the UK in advocating and campaigning for deliberative democracy. We have run hundreds of high-quality processes which demonstrate how participatory democracy works in practice. We have grown the capacity for decision-makers to use these approaches confidently.

It's become clear that the challenges of the 21st century are so complex they need communities, individuals, politics, business and civil society to work together well every day, to solve them. And the UK now has a wealth of evidence that deliberative and participatory work delivers more effective decisions, builds trust, empowers people from all walks of life, builds community cohesion, and tackles polarisation.

We are now at a critical tipping point when it comes to making deliberative and participatory democracy a real, everyday part of government.

In the UK, the Starmer government was elected this year on a promise of improving standards in public life and delivering on public services. However, public faith in politics and democracy is low – an approach which focuses on delivery may not be enough to shore up fragile democracy.

Support for populism in the US and across Europe holds urgent lessons for the UK. Commentators increasingly warn that in many Western democracies, the left adopts a technocratic agenda and doesn't hear the everyday concerns of people. On the other hand, the right offers solutions that appeal to ordinary people, but which don't address systemic problems.

And neither side offers the public a chance to have a say, or to weigh up the tradeoffs in different directions. In the UK, this presents the risk that people will vote in autocrats, who are then able to dismantle democratic institutions and erode human rights.

The tools, mindsets and approaches of participatory and deliberative democracy are not the whole solution - but if they are institutionalised and used consistently, they can be a powerful remedy.

The time is now.

Involve has an important opportunity for strategic impact – embedding institutionalised participation and deliberation at national, devolved and local levels.

In recent years Involve has developed to meet this opportunity. While it was always respected, it has become more influential. We have explicitly grown our advocacy and capacity building skills, and begun to work at grass roots levels as well as with institutional commissioners. We have a new impact framework which draws attention to the mindsets and capacities needed, and shows how our high quality projects create change in institutions and in democratic norms.

Our Board of Trustees has shown visionary leadership and helped the charity step up into a leadership role for the UK. We are looking for two new Trustees, who can strengthen our Board and bring an interest in participatory decision making.

Please join us on the next stage of Involve's journey, and steward a confident, maturing organisation looking to grow its impact significantly. Help us to shift power in practice, foreground the voices of those systemically undervalued, and move the UK to a place where deliberative and participatory approaches are a normal, everyday part of democracy.

Ed Cox, Chair

Sarah Castell, CEO

WHO WE ARE

We're the UK's leading public participation charity. Our mission is to lead the UK in making participation and deliberation an everyday, integral part of democracy, to help meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Our purpose is to change the system to shift power in practice, to create a better democracy with people more involved in setting the agenda of power. And this will help bring about our vision; a vibrant democracy where everyone can shape a society that works for us all.

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

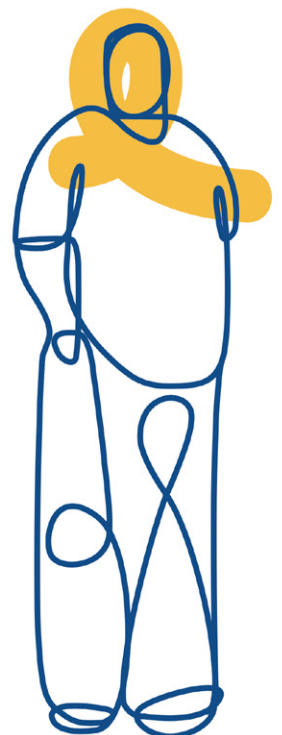
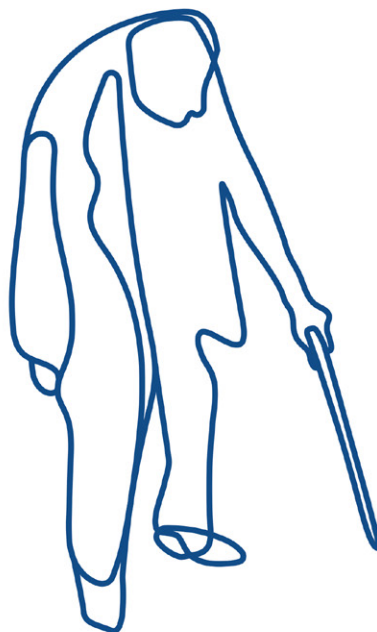
- **Open** - so that people can understand, influence and hold decision-makers to account for the actions and inactions of their governments;
- **Participatory** - so that people have the freedom, support and opportunity to shape their communities and influence the decisions that affect their lives; 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 <https://www.involve.org.uk/about/>

Since 2003 we have been promoting and practising participatory and deliberative decision-making. 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. Take a look at the [Timeline of Involve](#) to follow our work through the last 20 years.

Involve is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. We have physical offices in London and Belfast.

Our Charity Commission listing can be viewed [here](#).



WHAT WE DO

We demonstrate how citizens can help solve our biggest challenges.

Our work is focused in three areas:

- **Advocacy and communications** – Making the case for participation and deliberation as core and expected parts of democracy, and ensuring that people in positions of power and influence understand and support their use;
- **Capacity building and standards** – Building the capacity of public servants and practitioners, and developing the body of evidence, principles and standards that support good participatory and deliberative practice; and,
- **Innovation and practice** – Encouraging frequent use of participatory and deliberative processes, and ensuring continuous learning and innovation to improve democracy.

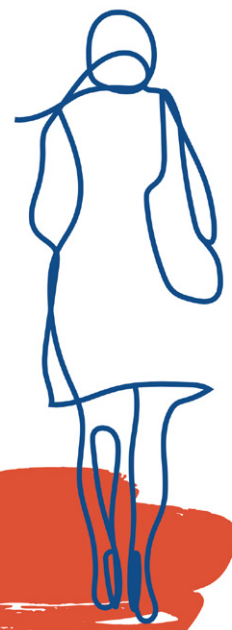
Each year, we work with around 2,000 members of the public to engage in over 70,000 hours of work to tackle the big challenges communities face. In recent years, we led [Climate Assembly UK](#), the [Citizens Jury on Assisted Dying in Jersey](#), [Scotland's Climate Assembly](#), the [Sciencewise UKRI Programme](#), and set up the [UK Democracy Network](#), amongst other landmark public engagement and democratic renewal projects. We are just beginning a new programme of work, the [School for Everyday Democracy](#).

As part of this work, Involve has trained and supported thousands of people in how to build a more participatory society.

Find out more: www.involve.org.uk/our-work/ and recent annual reports [2021/22](#) and [2022/23](#)

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;
- Independence – because we are committed to the integrity and impartiality of participatory and deliberative processes;
- Purpose – because participation must have an impact. We reject tokenistic or ineffectual engagement; and,
- Quality – because effective participation requires time, attention and commitment.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Role title Trustee

Accountable to Chair

ROLE PURPOSE

Acting together, the Trustees govern Involve, safeguarding its assets and applying them as efficiently and effectively as possible to further its objectives.

THE STATUTORY DUTIES OF A TRUSTEE

- Ensure that the organisation complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- Ensure that the organisation uses its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects: it must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities may be.
- Contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the organisation.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- Protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor their performance.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

PART ONE

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL

- Interest in charity governance, including an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- A track record of leadership within an organisation of comparable complexity, or prior Board experience, or relevant subject matter expertise

DESIRABLE

- Interest in or experience in fundraising, including for example innovations in philanthropy / new models of philanthropic practice, corporate fundraising, events fundraising, grants and trusts fundraising;
- Interest in or experience in different emergent governance theory and practice (for example feminist leadership, holocracy);
- Interest or experience in progressive HR (practically applying anti-oppressive ideas to workplaces, balancing innovation and development with the needs of the organisation);
- Culture development and change management;
- Understanding accounts and scrutiny of financial information;
- Experience and networks in politics and advocacy, across any area of the political spectrum;
- Campaigning and / or organising or other grass roots work;
- Understanding of the landscape around deliberative and participatory democracy, and appreciating the different ways of creating impact Involve can have, within government and beyond;
- Some experience of doing their own personal work on their own relation to rank, power and privilege, and some familiarity with the work of applying key concepts in their leadership.

PART TWO

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- An ability to contribute towards an open and collaborative team environment;
- 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;
- Strong interpersonal and relationship building abilities and comfortable in an ambassadorial role.

PART THREE

LEADERSHIP STYLE AND BEHAVIOURS

- A commitment to Involve and to our vision, mission and values;
- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort, which may include serving on one subcommittee.
- Commitment to, and experience of, elevating the voices of systemically undervalued and marginalised groups in relation to power.

We are committed to equal opportunities and we want our board to benefit from the advantages to our culture and work that a diverse board brings, such as those arising from different skills, life experiences and backgrounds. We would particularly welcome people who bring lived experience of systemic power and privilege dynamics. These might be (but not restricted to) class, age, race and ethnicity, religion, gender and sexuality, physical disability, neurodiversity.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

TERM OF APPOINTMENT AND REMUNERATION

Trustees are appointed for a three-year term and can be re-appointed for one additional term.

This appointment is offered on a voluntary basis, though any travel expenses will be reimbursed in line with Involve's policies.

TIME COMMITMENT AND LOCATION

The role requires approximately 8-10 days per year.

Meetings are typically held in London. This includes:

- 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.

HOW TO APPLY

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/involve-trustees/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is Friday 24th January 2025

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Closing date: Friday 24th January 2025

Final Panel interviews: To be confirmed but likely to be late February or early March 2025