



FUTURE BOARD LEADERS

NEW VOICES for IRISH CHARITY BOARDS

2026 BOARD TRAINING & PLACEMENT PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW



- ▶ **Boardmatch Ireland** and **The Leadership Academy** co-developed the **Future Board Leaders Programme** to promote diversity within Irish charity boards by encouraging the engagement of new and underrepresented voices.
- ▶ All programme participants will attend preparation sessions and an accredited training course to support them in their new board role.

PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROGRAMME IS COMPLETELY FREE TO BOTH CANDIDATES AND CHARITIES

If you would like this document in an alternative format for accessibility reasons, please contact Sharon at sharon@wheel.ie or Hannah at hannah@boardmatch.ie.

WHAT IS A CHARITY TRUSTEE?



- ▶ A charity trustee is also known as a board member of a charity.
- ▶ Charity trustees are volunteers who, as a board, are collectively responsible for the oversight of the charity.
- ▶ Charity trustees meet as a board to support the development of the charity and make decisions on how the charity will deliver their services, where they will source their funding and how they will communicate their work to the public.
- ▶ The board guides the governance and strategic direction of the charity.

"CHARITY TRUSTEES ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ULTIMATELY EXERCISE CONTROL OVER, AND ARE LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR, THE CHARITY."

THE CHARITIES REGULATOR

WHY SHOULD YOU APPLY TO BE A CANDIDATE?

No one is born a charity trustee. Everyone has something to offer a charity board. If you're interested in making a difference in your community or contributing to the development of a cause you are passionate about, being a charity trustee is a great way to do this.

- ▶ Make a valuable contribution to the charity sector.
- ▶ Ignite your passion! -- It feels good to volunteer.
- ▶ Strengthen and gain new skills.
- ▶ Share your knowledge and experience.
- ▶ Network and meet new people.
- ▶ Increase your understanding of the boardroom.



"As a young queer woman from rural Ireland, I struggled to have the confidence to believe in myself & recognise the value my voice could bring to the world of governance. However, through taking part in this programme, I have not only received top class governance training, I finally have the confidence to take my sit at the table & have recently joined my first board."

**AMY MCRORY, 2023 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT
BOARD MEMBER, YMCA DUBLIN**

WHO SHOULD APPLY? YOU!



- ▶ Would you like to hear different voices represented across Ireland?
- ▶ Do you want to see positive change in your community and society?
- ▶ Are you a keen volunteer?
- ▶ Would you like to be?
- ▶ Would you like to grow your network?
- ▶ Do you want to get experience?
- ▶ Do you want to learn new skills? Do you want to meet new people?

If you fit even one of these criteria, please apply. **DO NOT DISQUALIFY YOURSELF.**
Apply and let the process decide.

HOW WILL IT WORK?



- ▶ **Boardmatch** will use their extensive network and expertise to identify a number of suitable charities looking to make real change to their organisations through diversifying their boards.
- ▶ **The Leadership Academy** will begin recruiting people interested in joining a Board as a charity trustee.
- ▶ We will accept up 20 people on the programme, who will complete accredited governance training over two in-person sessions, and also be offered an opportunity to meet with a charity for a board role. We will work to find a suitable match for all programme candidates, however we cannot guarantee a board placement for all candidates. Charities will register their interest in meeting paired with a candidate and we will work through this group of charities to find any potential matches.

Even if you are not matched, the programme is designed to grow your confidence and prepare you for any subsequent board role.

HEAR FROM SOME OF OUR CANDIDATES



 “Future Board Leaders spoke to me because of its purpose to diversify Boards and encourage under-represented voices to be included in decision-making spaces. The programme allowed me to meet and connect with liked-minded individuals, learn, grow and be equipped with the skills to contribute meaningfully in my capacity as a Board member.”

CLARE AUSTICK, 2024 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT BOARD MEMBER, AWARE



 “Future board leaders has really changed the way I see the role of a board trustee, and how my life experiences are just as important as a financial or human resources expert when it comes to good governance. My confidence grew through the training and although I didn’t match with a board this time, I had a great support system behind me with the facilitators and fellow trainees.”

LOUISE KAVANAGH, 2024 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT



 “The Future Board Leaders was a great opportunity to be more informed of the charity sector, how to run a successful board and to join a network with others on the same journey.”

**PIERRE YIMBOG, 2024 PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT
BOARD MEMBER, IDEA (IRISH DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION)**



WHY SHOULD YOUR CHARITY TAKE PART?

"Future Board Leaders helped us to diversify our board, specifically regarding youth and race diversity, so that these voices can be represented on our board."

DOMINIC LAYDEN, CEO, AWARE



In order for Irish charity boards to be fully representative of their communities and stakeholders, **boards should embrace an open board recruitment process**, welcoming a wide range of prospective candidates.



The **Future Board Leaders Programme** will introduce you to a new candidate that you may have not connected with elsewhere. This candidate will be capable, interested in your organisation, and have received governance training.

ALL PARTICIPATING CHARITIES MUST FOLLOW A SUPPORTED INDUCTION PROCESS FOR THEIR NEW CHARITY TRUSTEE.

ALL PARTICIPATING CHARITIES MUST PROVIDE AN EXISITNG TRUSTEE TO MENTOR THEIR NEW TRUSTEE FOR THEIR FIRST YEAR.

HEAR FROM SOME OF OUR CHARITY PARTICIPANTS

"Our organisation is always working to bring in more diversity, and it's crucial that our board reflects the diverse makeup of society and our members. We wanted to add a new board member who represents Irish society, and the Future Board Leaders programme was a perfect fit.

The process was straightforward and quick. The initial webinar explained the program and expectations clearly, and the required forms were easy to complete. We received high-quality candidate options promptly, enabling us to move through our selection process rapidly. Our new board member has enhanced the diversity of our board, bringing fresh perspectives and questions. They have already actively participated in one of our sub-committees. We're not just teaching our new board members about our organisation; we're also learning from them.

The Future Board Leaders program was highly effective in helping us achieve the diversity goals for our board. The programme's ability to connect us with quality candidates we might have missed, coupled with the leadership training provided to the candidates, has been immensely beneficial. We highly recommend the program because it not only helps boards find diverse candidates in a targeted way but also provides the necessary training that supports candidates joining a board which in turn boosts board confidence."

**ASHLEY SANDS, CHAIRPERSON
INCLUSION IRELAND**

 **Inclusion Ireland**
The National Association for People
with an Intellectual Disability.

""As part of a Board Review initiative, Archways was looking at diversity on our Board and identified that the Future Board Leaders Programme would assist us with this. From the moment we expressed our interest, we found the entire process to be very smooth and efficient with training already provided to our new Board member, after we had identified a suitable candidate."

**HUGH DOOCAN, CEO
ARCHWAYS** 
Changing behaviour at home and at school



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PROGRAMME TIMELINE CANDIDATES

1

ATTEND CANDIDATE WEBINAR

2

COMPLETE
CANDIDATE
APPLICATION

3

PROGRAMME OFFERS

4

TRAINING

5

Provisional Match
Offers
& Meetings with
Charities

6

CONFIRM YOUR MATCH
&
OPTIONAL NETWORKING

7

BOARD INDUCTION

THE PROGRAMME SO FAR



3 intakes



65 people trained in Governance



52 new Charity Trustees



READY TO APPLY?



Don't rule yourself out! If you have an interest in participating in this programme, apply below to find out more.

Follow the below links to complete your expression of interest in the programme. You will then be contacted about next steps.

**CANDIDATE
APPLICATION**

**CHARITY
APPLICATION**



The Leadership Academy is powered by The Wheel, Ireland's national association of community and voluntary organisations, charities, and social enterprises.

A space for leaders from across the nonprofit sector at all stages in their leadership journey, we bring people together to learn from and inspire each other.

We provide opportunities to discuss key leadership challenges, as well as cutting-edge development opportunities, networking, training, information, and support.

leadersacademy.ie



Boardmatch Ireland is a registered charity that works to upskill charity and not-for-profit boards by connecting enthusiastic and skilled volunteers with organisations that have board vacancies.

We believe that skills are transferrable across sectors and that board volunteering is an opportunity to not only give back to a cause you are passionate about, but also learn new skills and grow your networks.

It's a win-win for both the individual and the charity!

boardmatch.ie