

TRUSTEE Q&A

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Why did you choose to take on a voluntary trusteeship?

Growing up I was part of various not-for-profit organisations, from marching bands to community clubs, giving me first-hand experience of the amazing work these groups do and the impact they have. I decided to take on a voluntary trusteeship as I wanted to give back, and support an organisation that was making a difference.

I was looking to join a not-for-profit that supported the community and linked to my interest in music.

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What have you learnt by being on a board?

Since joining the board of Sing Ireland in October 2019 I have furthered my understanding of the not-for-profit / charity sector, board governance, and also experienced the high level of professionalism present in this sector. I have enjoyed learning about Sing Ireland and the work they do. Singing is more than just the 'act of singing' – it promotes inclusivity, well-being, and has a positive impact on mental health – all of which has never been more important in current times. I am proud to be a part, albeit in a small way, in helping the organisation achieve its ambitious vision and promoting singing across the island of Ireland.

How has COVID-19 impacted how your board works? How has your board adapted in 2020?

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a very challenging time for all. The obvious initial impact to the board was we could no longer meet face to face so all board meetings were moved to virtual. The hardest part for me, as a trustee, was being part of the decision to cancel key programmes Sing Ireland had planned for 2020. In the beginning we had very little insight into how long the restrictions would last, as a board we had to weigh up our members safety with the value and importance of our programmes. A challenging time but one that showed the strength of the organisation and its adaptability.

What advice would you give to someone considering joining a charity board?

I think it is important to do your research – understand what is involved in joining a board. I would recommend joining one of the 'Boardmatch Information Sessions' which are held throughout the year. These sessions provide good insight into the role of the trustee, and provide an opportunity to hear about other trustees' experiences.

Be clear why you want to join a board. I think it helps if you feel a connection with the organisation, and are passionate about it or have first-hand experience of the impact the not-for-profit makes – not essential, but I think it gives you a better understanding and added purpose.