

Antenatal Results & Choices



Trustees

Candidate Information Pack

April 2024

Welcome from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee at ARC.

As the only national charity helping parents and healthcare professionals through antenatal screening and its consequences, we offer a vital service throughout the UK.

Over the past 40 years, ARC has developed into an expert, currently well-funded, deeply respected charity. This is a pivotal time in the charity's evolution as we look to continue growing and deepening our impact across the health sector. There are still so many more parents who could benefit from our work, and this is a great opportunity for new trustees to join the extended team.

We are looking for future-focused and compassionate people to share leadership responsibilities with fellow trustees and support Jane Fisher and her team to deliver our excellent services.

We are looking for people who share our vision and values. We are open to trustees from all backgrounds and previous board experience is not required. We are looking for people who are excited to join a strong and dedicated specialist team committed to supporting parents and professionals through very challenging and sensitive situations.

As a trustee at ARC, you'll have the satisfaction of joining a dynamic organisation passionate about making a lasting difference to lives. If the opportunity excites you and you believe that you have the skills and experience to add value to our board and make a meaningful difference to parents facing very challenging situations, we would be delighted to receive your application.

Kate Bennett, Chair

About us

In the UK, approximately 700,000 pregnant women are offered some form of screening test every year, such as an ultrasound scan and/or a blood test. As a result, over 20,000 expectant parents will be told that their baby may not be developing as expected. This causes a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty for expectant parents and their families.

ARC offers a unique and important support service which provides impartial information, advice and guidance for parents who are making decisions about antenatal tests and results. We do this throughout their journey—before, during and after tests, particularly when they receive unexpected or difficult news from tests and when they face challenging decisions about the next steps, including whether to continue or end their pregnancy. ARC services are openly and widely available to anyone who needs them.

We provide independent, accurate, unbiased information to help parents the decisions that are right for them. If a parent decides on termination, we offer specialised support through their loss and what can be a complicated grieving process that follows.

For parents who continue with their pregnancy, we offer emotional support through the pregnancy and signpost to organisations with expertise in specific conditions.

We work in close partnership with healthcare professionals across the NHS, providing tailored training and specialist support and work with policymakers so that women and couples receive the highest possible standards of care at the most challenging of times.

Even though I did really trust the hospital, sometimes it's just nice to be able to talk to someone who's not associated.

Mission and vision

Mission

To grow to be a truly UK-wide sustainable organisation

To extend reach to all parents affected by fetal anomalies

To extend reach to all healthcare professionals involved in antenatal testing

To maintain and develop our close collaborative relationship with policymakers and key clinicians in the field of antenatal screening and diagnosis

Vision

We believe that every parent should have access to non-directive information and support through antenatal testing and its consequences

We seek to remain at the forefront of policy development and work in partnership with policymakers and healthcare professionals in order to achieve the best care for parents

We believe that parents must be able to make choices based on their individual circumstances

Looking Ahead

Ongoing contributions from our fantastic supporters and a generous investment from a major donor means that we can be ambitious about the next phase in ARC's development. As a result, we have an expanded team, and are able to subsidise our highly regarded professional training programmes to ensure a wide range of frontline specialists can participate, despite limited NHS resources.

It's an exciting time to join ARC as we seek to develop our services and look to extend our reach.

Additional information about ARC, including our Board and executive team, is available on our [website](#).

Trustee opportunities

Our board of trustees provides leadership and oversight to ensure that we achieve our objectives and deliver on our mission. We have a committed board which currently has five trustees, each with a variety of skills, experience and backgrounds. We are now looking to expand our board and for two or three new trustees to join us.

Whilst responses from our parents survey last year were almost uniformly positive, it is clear that ARC is not as visible or as accessible as we could be to families from more ethnically diverse backgrounds and those living in disadvantaged communities. We are involved in a number of initiatives to ensure that we develop our presence in new areas around the UK to better meet the needs of parents who have not traditionally found their way to ARC support. We are currently partnering with several frontline charities and community groups to learn from the ground up how we might open up our services sensitively and effectively.

We are particularly interested in recruiting new trustees who can help us widen our reach and extend our vital support beyond what we do already via our helpline, publications, parent forums, volunteer network and our newsletter. We are looking to our new trustees to bring a unique insight onto the board. You might come from a communications background or have experience working with underserved communities or have lived experience of the communities we are trying to reach.



Being a trustee - what we can offer you

Firstly, what's a Board?

Almost all constituted organisations have a body overseeing their operations and finances. These boards have overall responsibility for the organisation, guiding the strategy and managing risk. They provide governance to ensure the organisation meets all relevant legal and regulatory requirements. Increasingly boards also address culture and quality of operations. Charity boards are made up of volunteer trustees and are there to advise and steer, but don't do the actual work of running the organisation, which is the responsibility of the executive team led by the Director or Chief Executive.

You can find further information on the role of a trustee [here](#).

Becoming a trustee is an interesting and compelling way to engage with the charitable sector. It is a role that will give back as much as you put in, and often much more. Though often challenging, a Board role will reward you with a wealth of personal and professional skills which are valuable for both work and personal life, while empowering you with a sense of contribution in the pursuit of a wider purpose.

Contributing to a great cause

Being a trustee is a powerful way to contribute to a community or to a cause you care about. As a board member at ARC, you will play an integral part in good governance, not only ensuring the organisation remains viable and sustainable but also adhering closely to its mission and ethos, satisfying its stakeholders and working in the interests of its beneficiaries.

Strategic experience

Strategic experience can be hard to come by. It can often take decades to find yourself in a role which requires strategic oversight. A trustee role is a fantastic way of getting a head start on this, at once giving you the opportunity to develop and hone your critical thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills as well as developing vital strategic sensibilities and team-working skills. The strategic experience which can be gained through a board role can

have an immediate and powerful impact upon your career, opening doors to new responsibilities and more senior job prospects.

Equally for those who have already had some strategic responsibilities, a board role provides an opportunity to use those skills in a different context.

Continued personal development

Joining a board offers personal development, not least because it allows you to adapt and apply everything you have learnt to date into a new context. Through a board role you can gain a clearer idea of your own professional strengths and weaknesses whilst simultaneously learning new skills. Understanding how to adapt your professional knowledge to useful and impactful ends is a good reminder of your own versatility, giving you confidence in your existing abilities whilst challenging you to push the boundaries of your expertise.

Teamworking

As a member of our board, you are part of a team and will have the opportunity to apply your unique skills and experience while learning from others. Working closely with a passionate team of people who have different perspectives is often one of the most enjoyable aspects of the role. You will use your ability to collaborate effectively with others and challenge constructively the ideas of fellow trustees and the Director or Chief Executive. This is essential to ensure the board's strategic decisions are scrutinised and tested before being implemented.

Negotiating, empathising, listening, good humour and clearly communicating ideas and concerns are huge factors in this process and help to set the tone and culture of our board meetings.

Trustee role & person specification

Key Information

- Location:** Meetings are in person and are held in London on Saturdays four times a year.
- Remuneration:** This is a voluntary role but reasonable travel and role-related expenses will be paid.
- Time Commitment:** 4 board meetings a year, plus time to prepare, read papers and get to know the organisation. The time commitment will vary but is generally 0.5 to 1 day a month in total.

The term of appointment is four years, with the possibility of renewal for another four-year term.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Collectively oversee the strategic direction of ARC and work towards the achievement of our vision and mission
- Ensure that ARC complies with legal, regulatory, and fiduciary responsibilities, in accordance with the terms of its constitution
- Identify potential development opportunities for ARC, and leverage relationships to facilitate this
- Protect the reputation and resources of ARC through ongoing identification, monitoring and management of risks
- Advocate for the ARC's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Encourage teamwork among board members and create a strong, profitable and fulfilling working relationship with trustees and the Director
- Appoint and give support to the Director of the charity
- Act in the best interests of the charity at all times and to the benefit of present and future beneficiaries
- Make a positive contribution to the charity's governance, in accordance with the Trustee Handbook

In addition to the above, 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 guidance on new initiatives
- Other issues in which you have special expertise.



Who we are looking for

We are looking for people with skills in community engagement to help us grow ARC's presence and profile in disadvantaged communities. We want to be more visible to families from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds and we are looking for trustees who can help us expand our reach into these communities.

You may come from a communications background with experience working underserved communities, or perhaps you have lived experience of the communities we are trying to reach. We are looking to our new trustees to bring a unique insight onto the board.

ARC deals with a sensitive and complex area of family life and candidates will need to be comfortable with the areas in which we work.

All Board members should bring:

- A genuine interest and belief in ARC's vision and purpose and a commitment to reproductive choice
- A general understanding of finance and risk
- The ability to analyse written and numerical reports presented to the board
- The ability to take a broad view of issues, challenges and opportunities facing ARC
- The ability to work effectively in a team with other board members and the Director
- A high degree of probity and integrity

Statement on diversity

ARC is committed to diversity and to equality of opportunity for employment, career and personal development. We believe that people from different backgrounds bring perspectives and skills that create fresh ideas, thinking and approaches which make the way work is undertaken more effective and efficient. We know that the more inclusive we are, the better our work will be. We are committed to continuous improvement in this space. Our new trustees will help inform this journey.

Candidates do not require previous experience as a board member, but all candidates should have an understanding of the non-executive role. All new board members will be offered a full induction as part of the onboarding process.

How to apply

[Eastside People](#) is supporting the [ARC](#) in recruiting for these roles. [Click here](#) to apply by submitting your CV and cover letter. Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV, and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why are you interested in a trustee role and why at ARC?
- How can you contribute to ARC as a trustee?

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Bernice at bernice@eastsidepeople.org to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability, and potential. Please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustment so that we can make the application process work for you.

The closing date for applications is **Monday, 3rd June**. The week after that, online shortlisting interviews will take place. Face-to-face interviews with the recruitment panel at ARC will take place in mid-June.



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