Diversity in Recruitment

An Inclusive Hiring Guide for the Charity Sector

CharityJob

It's been well over two years since we asked our candidates and recruiters what they thought about the state of diversity in the charity sector—two years that too often saw failures in diversity making headlines nationwide. And that got us talking.
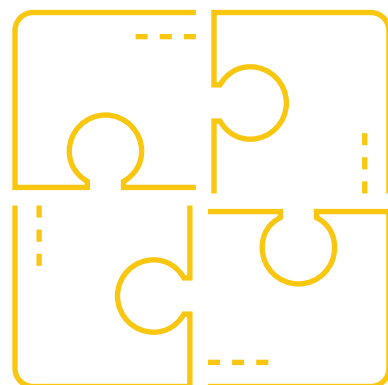
Then talking got us planning. Planning turned to analysing, and suddenly we had a glaring and persistent need to do something more than just report on the sector's shortcomings. It inspired us to create something practical, something that could help more third sector organisations build lasting and effective frameworks for inclusivity in their recruitment.

Two years ago, we simply wanted to understand the sector's pain points; to gauge whether action was actually being taken to build a workforce that actively represented the full breadth of the society it supported. Now, we want to make a difference. We want to go beyond inspiring charities to pledge their support to diversity and give them the tools they need to make tangible, lasting changes to the way they hire. That's why we have spent the last year implementing diversity initiatives in our hiring products, which includes the development of an anonymous recruitment feature in our new Applicant Manager to encourage fairer recruitment practices amongst our clients. Diversity recording and reporting will soon follow.

There has never been a better time to embrace change, and a range of steadfast social movements popping up online are forcing the sector to face their shortcomings head on and build much-needed foundations for a more inclusive and open workforce. So let's work together to stand with diversity. Let's set the standard for a more inclusive future. It's the only way we as a sector can take the necessary steps forward and start living the values we want to embrace.

That's why we created this guide—to establish a toolkit for change. We hope the content on the following pages not only inspires you, but helps you build the inclusive and diverse workforce the charity sector so desperately needs.
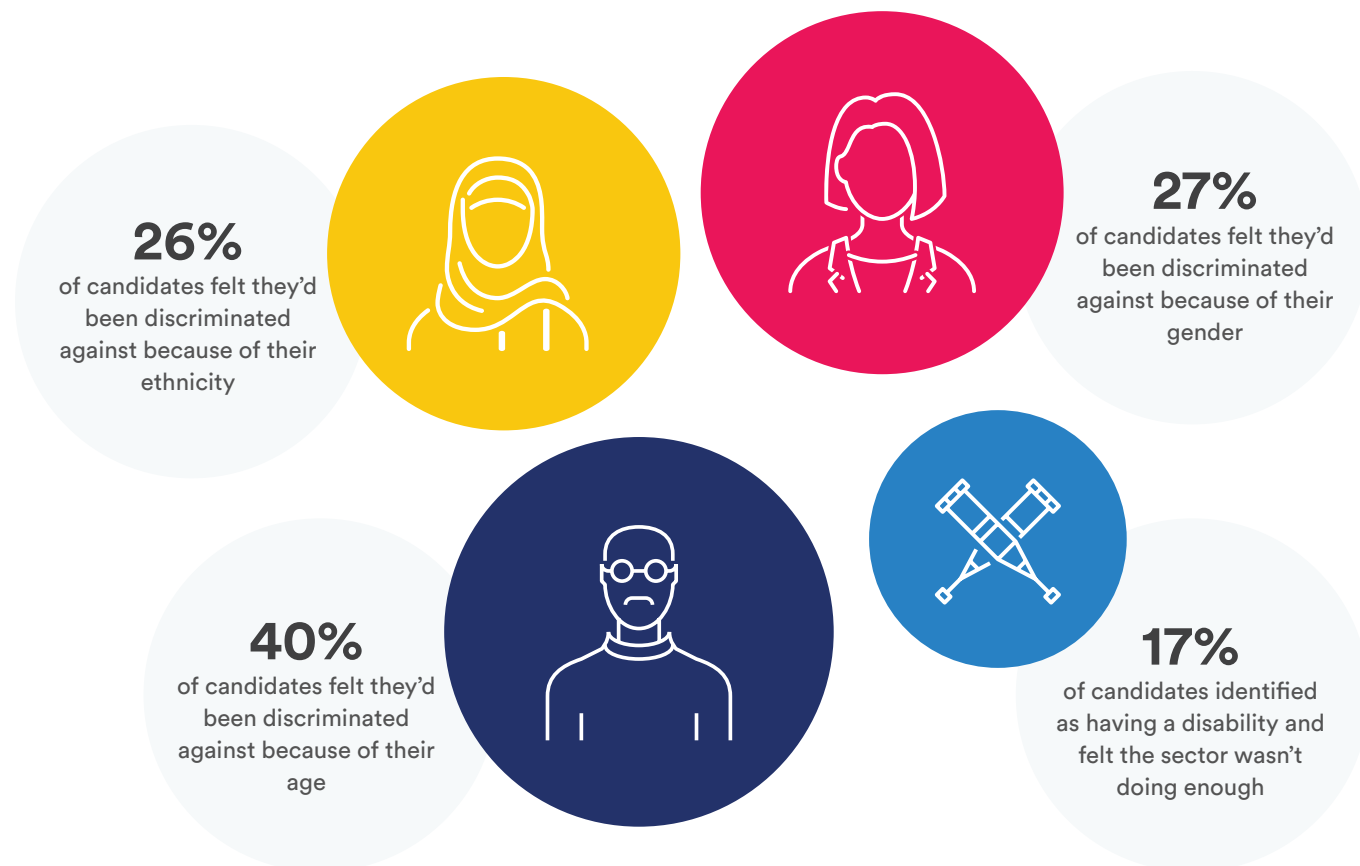
Steve & Raya Wexler
Co-Founders, CharityJob

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Understanding and accepting the business case for diversity

In 2018, we surveyed our vast network of candidates and recruiters to gauge where the sector stood in terms of diversity. What made our report stand out from others at the time was that we were asking what people working—or looking for work— in our sector had observed or experienced.

We learned that:

26%
of candidates felt they'd been discriminated against because of their ethnicity

27%
of candidates felt they'd been discriminated against because of their gender

40%
of candidates felt they'd been discriminated against because of their age

17%
of candidates identified as having a disability and felt the sector wasn't doing enough

This left us with an impression of a sector that's well-intentioned, but still rooted in its heritage of philanthropy, of 'haves' who help the 'have nots'. We're too white, particularly in leadership, and whilst we have a lot of women—and more mature women at that—they're not getting the same opportunities for career progression. And what's more was the realisation that issues like ageism are often neglected when it comes to diversity concerns.

Since we conducted this research, we've seen a host of organisations step forward to address diversity issues across the sector. Initiatives like the Chartered Institute of Fundraising's **Change Collective** or the **Diversity Charter for Charity Leadership** are not only encouraging third sector organisations to review their structures but challenging them to set an example for the wider workforce.

But despite having the right conversations, the sector is still falling short when it comes to putting processes in place. And much of this comes down to building a business case for diversity that has the backing and full support of senior leadership. Consider the impact diversifying your team can have.

Organisations that invest in diversity benefit from:

- **A variety of new perspectives.**
  Bringing in employees from different backgrounds means you can challenge thought processes and consider new ways of doing things.

- **Greater creativity and innovation.**
  When you put together a team of people that can see the same thing from a different perspective, you end up with a melting pot of fresh ideas.

- **Faster problem-solving.**
  Everyone is shaped by different environments and experiences; we all have varying methods of approaching problems. The more diverse your team, the bigger your idea pool becomes, meaning you can find solutions much faster.

- **Higher employee engagement and productivity.**
  When an employee feels included, they are more engaged. That, in turn, translates to better productivity. According to a 2018 McKinsey study, companies that are gender diverse are 21% more likely to outperform homogenous organisations; those that are ethnically diverse are 33% higher to outperform.

- **A better brand reputation.**
  Workplaces that are dedicated to building and promoting diversity are seen as good and socially responsible and prove that they are committed to seeing social change.

- **Reduced employee turnover.**
  It's pretty simple—the more accepted and valued someone feels, the longer they're likely to stick around.

Now, you might be asking yourself: *Why should this matter to me? I may be falling short in terms of diversity, but my charity is still having a positive impact on the community*. Beyond just the tangible benefits you'll gain from hiring a more diverse team, there's also an element of reputation management at play, with movements like **#CharitySoWhite** and **#NonGraduatesWelcome** challenging the sector and calling for change. It's about being conscious of the melting pot of diversity in this country and the communities we all support. In order to better serve our beneficiaries, we need to be open to employees from all backgrounds, experiences and cultures. More importantly, discrimination has no place in our sector or society as a whole.

We know that the charity sector is a uniquely rewarding place to build a career. It succeeds because of the talented, dedicated people who work in it. Stop and think about the way you present yourself to candidates. Are you being as inclusive as you can possibly be? Or are you simply hiring 'like for like' based on the last person who held the position? Remember, change is good; innovation is better.

Charity leaders need to do more than just state that diversity is important—they need to fully accept and embrace the business case for it and press ahead with open recruitment policies and employment practices that change the way they hire and manage staff long-term.

Building an Inclusive Workforce

Step 1
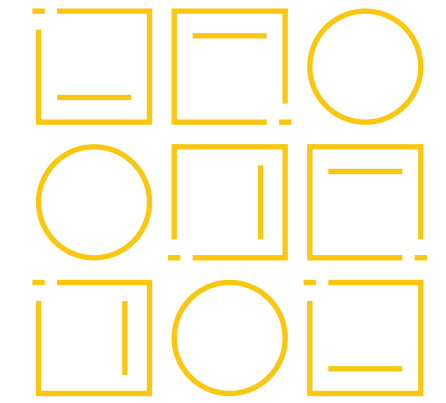
Think your workplace is inclusive? Your employees may not agree.

According to research conducted by Accenture, two thirds of leaders believe they're building an empowering environment—one that encourages individuality and innovation, where you can be honest and challenge the status quo. But in fact, only one third of employees actually agree.

Did you know that employees who feel their voice is being heard are nearly five times more likely to perform their best work? If you want to make equality a reality, it needs to become a priority. And that means putting the right processes and foundations in place to attract and retain a diverse mix of talent.

It means acknowledging that inclusive recruitment isn't just an exercise in ticking boxes. It's about creating and maintaining a culture that celebrates difference and inspires creativity. It's about benefitting from a range of people of different ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and social backgrounds. It's about taking positive steps to encourage people with disabilities to apply for jobs they can do and supporting them when they're in work.

Be bold. Be innovative. And above all else, be empowering. The more you do to support your staff—no matter where they come from or what they bring to the table—the easier it will be to attract and hire people from all walks of life.

And that all starts with establishing the right framework.

How to create a lasting diversity framework

Discrimination happens. We don't always mean for it to happen, but it does. And though it's not necessarily the product of malicious intent, it can impede our ability to build a robust and diverse workforce that offers a multitude of experiences and ideas.

So ask yourself: *Is my organisation really living up to its values? Do I have the right processes in place to support my staff?*

If the answer to either of those questions is 'no', then there's a bit of work to be done. In order to do that, we must first look inwards and discover where we fall short. Then, it's simply a case of taking the necessary steps to **educate**, **adapt** and **evolve**.

1. Do your homework

Before you start implementing practices, it helps to see what other charities are doing (and whether or not they've been successful). Reach out and ask questions. Online communities like **CharityConnect** and LinkedIn are great places to do just this.

Then identify internal and external resources you can rely on for support. Some great examples of this are:

- The Chartered Institute of Fundraising's **Change Collective Recruitment Guides**
- The Arts Council's **How to Recruit Diverse Talent: Culture Change Guide**
- The NCVO's **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion advice page**
- The Equality & Human Rights Commission's **Advice & Guidance page**

2. Audit your current processes

Senior-level staff and your Board of Trustees are pretty crucial here, but don't be afraid to get the rest of your employees involved. We suggest building a diversity committee that brings together staff members from all corners of your organisation—that way you get a nice mix of opinions and ideas. You may even want to engage some of your beneficiaries or volunteers to get an outside perspective.

Then start brainstorming. This process can look slightly different depending on the size and structure of your charity, so find whatever method works best for you. Take vigilant notes, and make sure to really listen to what your people have to say.

3. Put an action plan into place

Once you've gathered feedback and brainstormed some ideas, you need to build the foundation of your new diversity framework. We recommend:

- Determining how much budget will be needed
- Selecting an internal Diversity Champion to lead the project to completion
- Finalising a Diversity Committee (why not use some of the people who were involved in the brainstorming?)
- Deciding whether you want to bring a consultant on board for planning and implementation
- Clarifying time commitments and expectations for all participants
- Setting deadlines for milestones you'd like to meet

4. Establish frameworks for continued support

Having a proper framework in place not only makes it easier to implement your new practices, but it helps to ensure you're reinforcing your commitments long-term. A successful framework should articulate your vision, connect back to your charity's mission and outline the ways in which diversity can improve operations and enable your paid and voluntary staff to effectively meet the needs of your beneficiaries.

To set up your framework, you need to:

1. **Define your culture** - What are your values? What policies and practices are important to maintain those values? What sort of employee dynamics/working environment do you want to encourage?
2. **Communicate the benefits** - Articulate to your wider staff what the added diversity will achieve.
3. **Develop criteria for success** - How will you evaluate whether or not your framework has been effective? And how will you share that evaluation with the wider organisation?
4. **Encourage candour** - A big part of inclusion is trust; you want your employees to be open and honest about how they feel.
5. **Develop inclusive policies** - Your diversity plans and policies should take into account ongoing operations and future plans.

5. Make a bold and public commitment to diversity

This isn't something you should do quickly or quietly—and why would you want to? If you're committing to diversity, then make it known. Be transparent and willing to admit your faults. Let candidates, volunteers, staff and beneficiaries know you're still learning and that their feedback is important.

Ultimately, there is no perfect formula for being more inclusive. You just need to take the advice on board and tailor it to your charity. Then put your money where your mouth is. It's about more than just claiming to be diverse—it's about blazing the trail so others can follow in your footsteps.

Instituting change from the top down

Of course, you can't champion diversity in your charity if your leadership isn't diverse. Take a long, hard look at your Board of Trustees—do they truly represent the communities you serve?

According to ACEVO:

62% of the UK's top charities have all-white boards

34 out of 100 major UK charities have all-white senior leadership teams

92% of trustees are white, older and have above-average income and education

This is a problem—one that needs to be addressed.
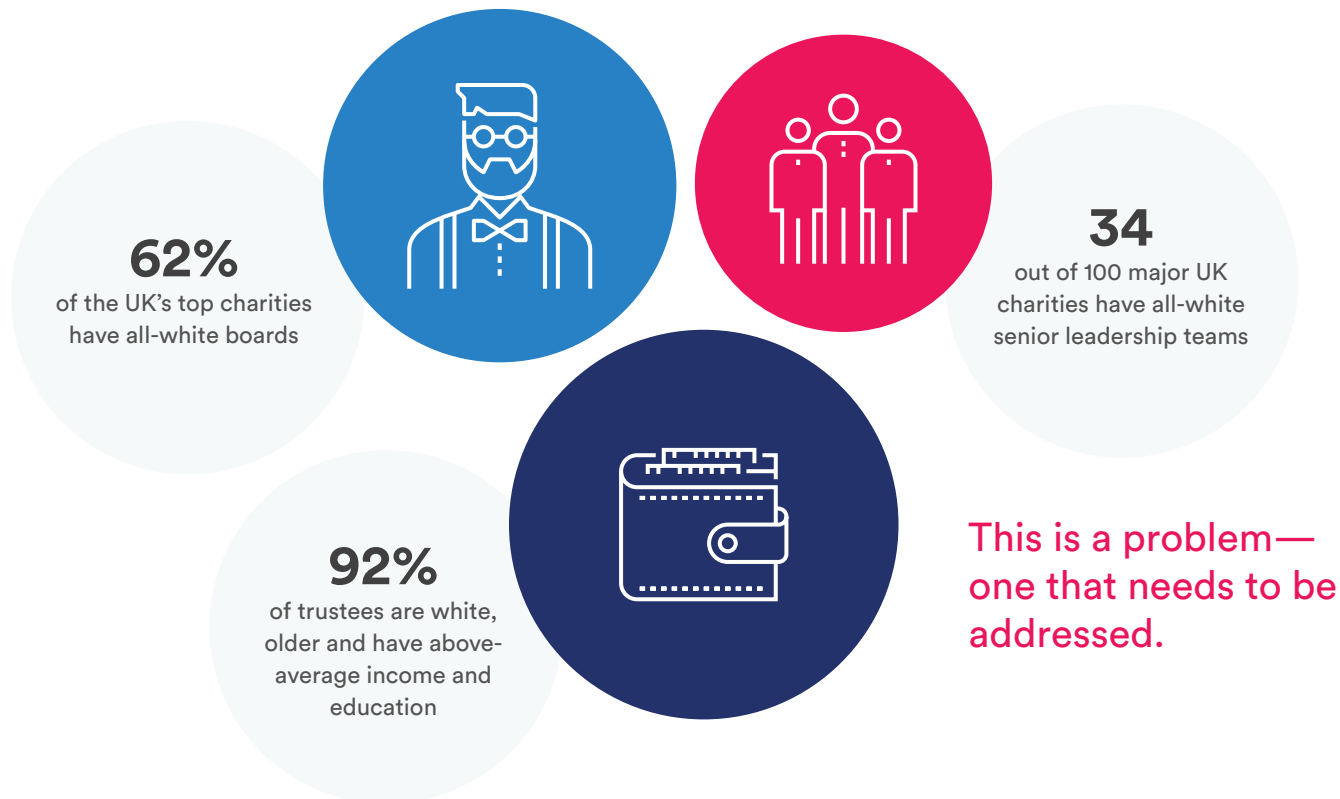
The fact is that a Board need to represent the people they serve in order to stay relevant. So, take a look at the people you've historically hired on your Trustee Board. Do they fall into the same pattern? Or are you already making more of an effort to bring in people who can engage in constructive challenge?

To change the status quo, you need to honestly assess how you're tackling the issue of diversity, and much of that starts from the top down.

Ask yourself:
- What is missing from our leadership team?
- What challenges and opportunities are we going to face in the next few years?
- Are there any groups that are underrepresented on our Board?

- Are there any major skill gaps we need to address?
- Am I hiring like-minded Board members for the ease of decision-making, rather than prioritising a plurality of thought?

Here's where an outside perspective could be useful. Many charities recruit Trustees from other sectors because it helps break down different institutional and confirmation biases you may not have even been aware your Board had.

And if your Board is lacking in diversity, don't just acknowledge the issue—fix it. Consider adding more Board members or promoting people who are underrepresented in your leadership team.

A quick note on compensation...

It's shocking that in 2020 we're still having conversations about salary transparency and equal pay. Though there's been a valiant effort in recent years to **report on pay gaps**, many charities are still leaving salaries out of the job spec, assuming talented candidates will apply, nonetheless. But the reality of the matter is that not including the salary in your job advert can do more harm than you might think.

As we strive for greater inclusivity and diversity in our workforce, we need to honestly evaluate some of the tired and out-dated practices that we refuse to let go of—not showcasing the salaries on offer is a big part of this.

When a company keeps its salaries a secret, they're only reinforcing pay gaps. Being honest and transparent allows charities to gain the trust of both current and prospective employees. And that, in turn, means better retention and engagement from your team.

As a female-dominated sector, we should be leading the pack in terms of pay equality, yet there is still a disproportionate rate at which men (white men, we might add) are paid more than their female counterparts.

According to Robertson Bell, women working in the 50 largest charities in the UK are still making 11% less than their male colleagues. And it's not just gender that affects pay. The same report states that white British workers get paid 18.3% more than BAME co-workers.

This needs to change. Committing to fair and transparent compensation is paramount to running a charity and retaining talent from underrepresented groups. And it's good for your bottom line. If your employees feel like they're being compensated fairly, you'll have less costly turnover and higher levels of productivity. And when you commit to salary transparency in your recruitment, you're gaining a competitive edge when it comes to attracting the best candidates.

If you're not sure what you should be paying your employees, you can find more detailed benchmarks in our **2019 Charity Sector Salary Report**.

For more information on determining pay rates, check out the **NCVO's Know How guide**.

> " This is not only the right thing to do and a valuable tool to think harder about how to maximise talent in the workplace, but it is also a way to move towards increased transparency which promotes public trust and confidence in charities.
> **Sue Cordingley,** Director of Planning and Resources at the NCVO "

NCVO

Widening Your Talent Pool

Step 2

Charities that are committed to becoming more diverse and inclusive places of work are doing a lot more than just meeting the basic legal requirements. They're practicing open recruitment and that means:

- Encouraging all hiring managers to test their own assumptions about the kind of person they want
- Ending unpaid internships
- Abandoning long application forms that discourage applicants, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Removing the criminal records tick box from the first stage of the application process and only ever including it if the job requires a DBS check
- Promoting that they're an equal opportunities employer who welcomes applications from people with disabilities
- Focusing on the language used in jobs ads to remove inherent bias
- Thinking about where they concentrate their search to encourage applications from a wider demographic

It's about recognising that diversity is a holistic process—it's not just changing one thing and expecting your company culture to follow suit. Once you're able to identify the biases that exist in every step of the recruitment process, you can face your limitations head-on and inspire real change in your organisation.

In this section, we take a closer look at setting goals and implementing key changes in the way you advertise and interview for your vacancies.

Embedding Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) into your recruitment process

Now that you've assessed your organisation and started to put long-term diversity frameworks in place, it's time to take a good hard look at your recruitment. A big part of widening your reach is evaluating how you present your roles. Think about the language you use and the requirements you set. Are there any phrases in the job spec that are biased towards a particular gender, age or ethnicity? And are all 'necessary' skills and experience listed *really* required or are you setting the bar much too high?

Chances are, you're scaring good people off without even realising it. We're all guilty of it—we have a clear picture of the ideal candidate in our head. But in doing that, we often neglect things like talent potential.

Put yourself in your candidate's shoes. You find a job that sounds absolutely amazing, but maybe it's asking for a degree-level qualification and you didn't go to university. Or maybe it doesn't offer flexible working

conditions and you have a disability that makes it hard for you to commute into the office. So you instantly assume you're not right for the role and you don't apply.

The problem with this scenario is that it eliminates a huge chunk of diverse candidates that don't fit a particular mould. You're falling into the trap of hiring 'like-for-like' when you really should be open to new perspectives and experiences that can take the role even further. True, the candidates you scared off might not have the *exact* experience you're after, but that doesn't mean they won't be fantastic once hired.

So how do you stop this same situation from happening again and again? You need to recognise and squash your unconscious biases. Once you have a greater awareness of those biases, your hiring teams will learn to become less reliant on shortcuts that limit their better judgement.

It may sound like a tall task, but it's a bit more manageable if you break it down into three simple steps:

1. Learn to write better job descriptions

2. Establish guidelines for candidate evaluations and interviews

3. Continuously measure and monitor the process and adapt accordingly

This is not a 'do once and you're set' sort of activity. Candidates' expectations and circumstances are constantly changing and as such you need to continue to evaluate and adapt your recruitment strategy. But once you've done the initial leg work, revising the process down the line will be much more manageable.

How to write better job descriptions

Your advert is not just a job description—it's a window into your charity. It should accurately represent the mission and vision of your organisation, appealing to the widest possible range of jobseekers.

But more often than not, job descriptions act as a sort of checklist of requirements that may or may not actually match the role being advertised. They paint a picture of what the ideal candidate should 'look' like instead of what they should accomplish. And that, in turn, limits the pool of candidates who are inspired to apply.

So next time you're putting together a job description, try thinking of it as an **impact description** instead. This can be broken down into two key parts:

1. The outcomes you'd like the new hire to achieve in the first few months/years

2. What skills the candidate should have vs what skills you would expect them to develop

Not only does breaking it down this way force you to think more seriously about your expectations, it also shows candidates that they don't have to match the job spec 100% to be a good fit. Some things *can and will* be learned.

Now, not all charities have the money or resources to train up new hires. But it's an investment worth making. The more you upskill your employees and show you care about their development, the more likely they are to stick around. And with the average cost-per-hire in the UK standing at around £3,000, you're going to want to try and retain as many talented employees as you can.

What candidates really care on the job spec

Of course, you still want to sell yourself to candidates, and that means providing a full picture of your organisation. If you're not sure what information is important to jobseekers, try sticking to these key elements:

What your charity does
Don't assume this is immediately clear to everyone. This doesn't need to be in-depth, just a sentence or two about what you do, who you support and why your work is important. This will inspire passionate and talented people to want to work for you.

Salary
Did you know that job ads with salaries get over 30% more applications than those without. That's because candidates don't want to put in the work only to find out the salary is nowhere near what they were after.

Benefits and company culture
Employment is a two-way street. Your staff work hard for you, and in return, you thank them with things like perks and benefits. Do you have a cycle-to-work scheme? Any childcare offerings? Don't wait until the interview stage to touch on these things—shout about them right from the get-go!

Time commitments/flexibility
Can the role be done remotely? Do you offer flexible working options? If so, this opens the job up to a wider pool of candidates. Not everyone can work traditional 9-to-5 hours and showing that you're flexible can encourage people with a range of circumstances to apply.

How to spot and avoid biased language in your job spec

The language you use in your job spec is reflective of the type of person you're looking for. Recent studies have shown words associated with male or female stereotypes can affect who's applying. Take the phrase, 'we're looking for someone to manage a team'. Analysis based off hundreds of job ads shows that the word 'manage' encourages more men to apply than women. Whereas if you said, 'develop a team', that might encourage more women to apply.

The same is true when it comes to age and ethnicity. We tend to base a job advert off the last person who held the position and as such, your advert may be describing them rather than encouraging candidates from across the board to apply.

> " Really look hard at the unconscious barriers you create. All our staff are remote, but we realised that advertising a role as 'home based' could be a barrier to candidates from disadvantaged communities who don't have space to work at home. We now describe ourselves as working in a virtual office environment. We also make it clear that we support staff to work virtually (including hot desk arrangements) rather than 'at home', and we've revised our policies and procedures to reflect that language. "
>
> **Jane Ide,** Chief Executive at NAVCA

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Not sure what language is biased and what isn't? Here's a handy little list to help you spot discouraging language in your job spec (and words you should be using instead). But keep in mind, this is just a guide and may not be applicable for every organisation.

Avoid male biased words like...

| Adventurous Aggressive Assertive Driven | Competitive Confident Persistent Self-sufficient | Active Champion Fearless Headstrong |

And use these words instead

| Goal-oriented | Motivated | Exceptional |

Avoid female biased words like...

| Agreeable Compassionate Considerate Nurturing | Collaborative Honest Supportive Understanding | Committed Enthusiastic Loyal Reliable |

And use these words instead

| Respectful | Professional | Responsible |

And here are a few ageist terms to be aware of...

Language that targets young candidates	Language that targets mature candidates
Digital native Eager to learn Energetic Forward-thinking Progressive Rockstar Vibrant Young	Experienced Hit the ground running Industry veteran Proven track record Seasoned Self-starter *Any other corporate jargon or acronyms....

Disability and the job search — things to keep in mind

According to the disability charity Scope, disabled people are twice as likely to be unemployed. That's because they're trying to stand out in an already saturated market that is inherently stacked against them. Of course, that's not to say that charities aren't trying to make an effort, but there are things you probably don't even realise get in the way of convincing a disabled candidate to apply.

That stark reality is that disabled people are hugely under-represented in employment. They want to work but fear they will be discriminated against in the recruitment process because of adjustments that need to be made.

But what that means is that we're underutilising a huge pool of talent. And in order to make our recruitment more accessible, we need to make sure disabled candidates aren't deterred from applying for vacancies.

Purple, a UK charity dedicated to bringing businesses and disabled people together, suggest considering the following when recruiting for your next role:

- Make sure the language used in your advert is accessible, avoid jargon and be precise about essential requirements.
- Use at least font size 12.
- Think about using specalist disability recruitment portals like **Evenbreak** when you advertise your roles.
- Be open about your approach to disability.
- Don't make any assumptions about who does and doesn't have a disability.
- Consider the level of flexibility in receiving info from candidates—i.e. could people send in a video application rather than a written one?
- Ensure the interview takes place in an accessible location to minimise requests for adjustments.
- Consider using disabled people (with a range of impairments) to test your end-to-end recruitment process and provide feedback.

And remember, disability can be hard to define. Sometimes it's physical, sometimes it's mental. But if a candidate shows talent potential and a clear ability to excel in the role, then it's worth being encouraging and accommodating to ensure equal opportunity to all.

> " I don't think it's about attracting people; lots of disabled people want the jobs and would be great in the third sector. Poverty makes us great budgeters—we have to risk assess and problem solve on a continual basis in order to navigate life in an enabled person's world and we have huge stores of empathy. But we're starting from such huge disadvantage and we need employers to recognise our potential and invest in us as long-term prospects. When disabled people find good employers, they stick with them. "
>
> **Amy Palmer,** Lived Experience Consultant

Building a fair and focused interview process

Once you've gotten past the first hurdle—the job spec—it's time to think about how you screen and interview candidates. When you're drudging through dozens, if not hundreds, of CVs, you learn to make gut decisions on who is and isn't a good fit.

But if you want to break away from the like-for-like hiring trap and start investing in new, diverse talent, you need to fundamentally change the way you do this.

We recommend establishing basic guidelines for how you want to review CVs going forward. Then, make sure everyone is on the same page. Remember that the CV only tells part of the story—you need to learn to read between the lines.

Rather than asking…

'Where did this person go to university?'

Ask this instead

'Has this person shown demonstrable growth in their career?'

It's all about how you frame your approach. Don't go at it looking for a list of 'don't haves'; rather try to spot things they 'do have' that you didn't even think of—those are the sort of things that can make them better suited for the role than someone else.

Then, structure and plan out your interview process. This should be consistent for all applicants you decide to interview. That way, the playing field is level and every applicant has an equal chance for the position.

In order to ensure fair practices in your interview processes, we recommend doing the following:

- Diversify your interview panel
- Check with candidates ahead of time about necessary adjustments
- Use a set of standard questions
- Focus on the value a candidate can bring rather than box ticking
- Beware of the phrase 'they seem like a good fit'

Considerations for remote interviews

Digital exclusion is a real and persistent issue, especially in a time when we're having to rely more heavily on remote interviewing technology. In order to ensure fairness in a remote environment:

- Don't assume every candidate is digitally savvy or has reliable technology—consider making arrangements for face-to-face or phone interviews where necessary

- Try to accommodate for all potential disruptions and don't let technical difficulties influence your decisions

- Remember, remote interviews can be stressful, so don't be quick to judge someone's anxiety or discomfort

- Make the necessary adjustments for disabled jobseekers—Do you need an interpreter? Or maybe enlarged text for interview tasks?

- Make it clear if you intend to record the interview—not everyone is comfortable with being recorded and this may influence their behaviour

And above all else, be empathetic. Job hunting is hard, especially when it feels like the cards are stacked against you. Try to see things from the candidate's perspective and be respectful of their time. You never know if a candidate is on a tight schedule because of caring responsibilities, transit requirements or other constraints.

Do	Don't
Test all technical tools needed for the interview ahead of time (i.e. video conferencing)	Cancel or reschedule an interview at the last minute
Start and end interviews on time	Schedule interviews back-to-back (this will avoid any feeling of being rushed)
Thank your candidate for their time	Make snap judgements on 'culture fit'

How anonymised recruitment is revolutionising hiring

We don't mean to make snap judgements based on someone's name, but it happens. One study in France revealed that candidates with foreign sounding names were less likely to get a call back from recruiters. And research conducted by the NatCen Department for Work and Pensions found that applicants with white sounding names were 74% more likely to receive a response.

So how do you avoid this from happening when you hire? It might be time to invest in a tool that can help you anonymise your recruitment.

There are several application tools out there that allow you to conduct unbiased recruitment. At CharityJob, we're developing the first sector-specific Applicant Manager with an anonymised recruitment functionality—a product we are very excited about that will be launching soon. Anyone who chooses to hire using this feature will receive a badge on their advert that communicates their commitment to the anonymous recruitment process. That means candidates will instantly know the steps you are taking to diversify your candidate pool.
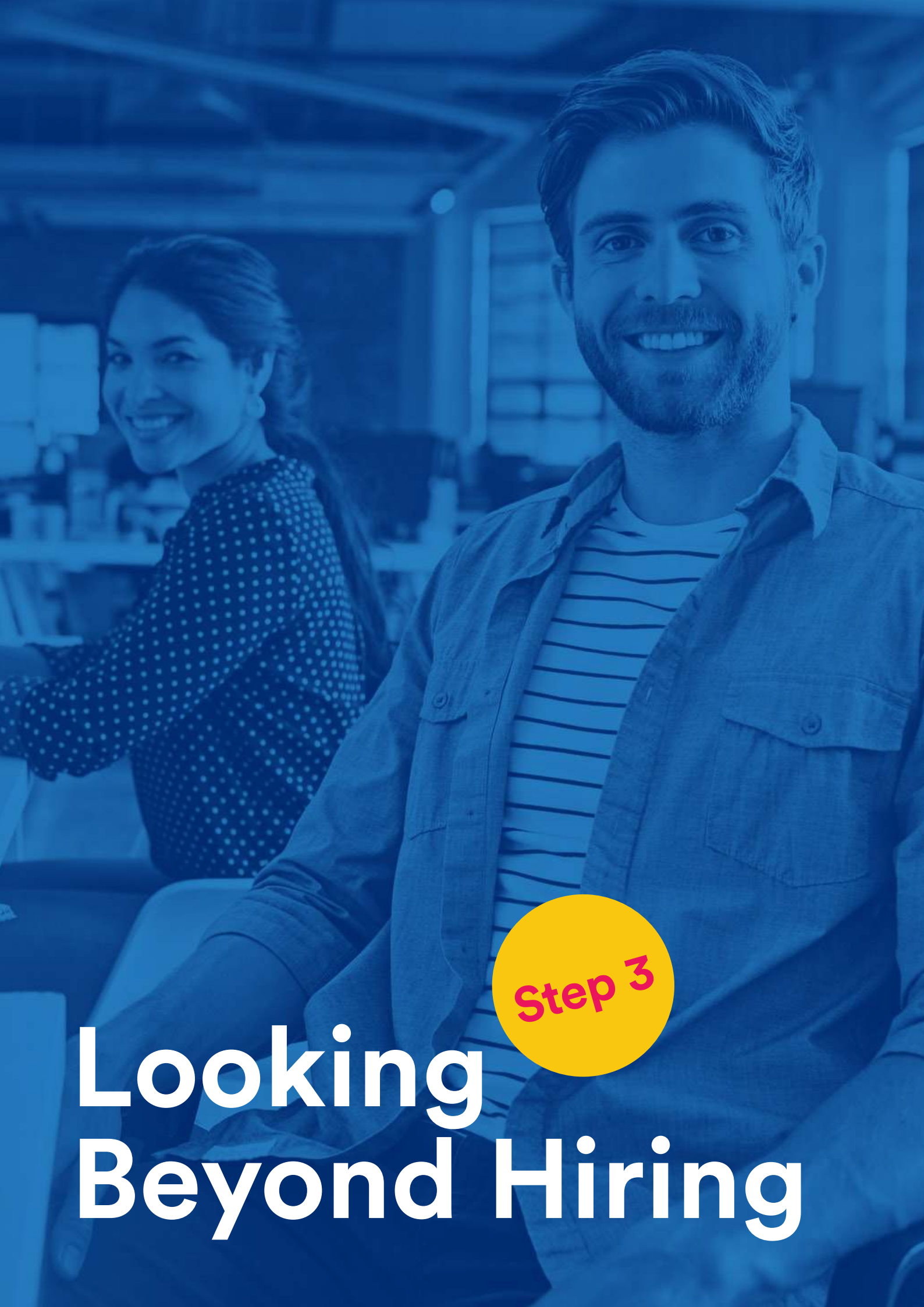
Of course, not every charity has the funds readily available to invest in anonymised recruitment, and some even choose to build their own in-house versions. It really comes down to the time and resources you have available. If you prefer to manage it yourself, you can specify in your job advert that you'd like the candidate to submit an anonymised CV (i.e. remove any signifiers that can determine age, gender or ethnicity). But keep in mind this process can be extremely time consuming and something a bit more 'off the shelf' may help you streamline the hiring process and avoid simple clerical mistakes.

"
We frequently get feedback from candidates that one of the reasons they are applying is because they value the commitment we make to blind recruitment and what that says about our values. That's invaluable for a small charity outside of London looking to recruit great talent.
Jane Ide, Chief Executive at NAVCA
"

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Recruiting for diversity is tough. But what's tougher is changing the behaviour that made your organisation less-than-diverse in the first place.

And that comes with time—it's about keeping your team informed and fully committed. That way, you don't just hire diverse employees; you retain them.

This is not about filling a quota. You're not hiring someone *because* they're diverse. You're changing your practices to widen the pool of candidates you have to choose from and then picking the best person from that bunch. You should never hire someone just because of their gender, ethnicity or the like. If you do that, it will become painfully clear quite quickly and you'll end up back at square one.

So if you've managed to diversify your talent pool and find someone who brings something unique and exciting to the table, there are a few things you can do to help ease them in and ensure that everyone is on the same page. Not sure where to start? Here are our tips on inclusive onboarding and creating a more collaborative culture.

Step 3

Looking Beyond Hiring

Understanding and building an inclusive onboarding experience

The first day at a new job is always a nerve-wracking experience. You're the new kid—someone who needs to quickly learn anything and everything about the organisation and prove that you were the right person to hire. Add in the fact that you're in a minority and suddenly there's a new layer of unease.

So what can we, as employers, do to ensure that our onboarding processes are not just inclusive, but welcoming to each and every type of employee that we hire?

Here are a few simple steps to help you get started.

1. Let your new hires know that inclusion is important to you.

An easy way to make all new hires feel welcome is to emphasise your charity's commitment to diversity and inclusion straight from the get-go. This can be done through a D&I onboarding session. The purpose of this is not to instruct, but rather to communicate why your organisation cares about inclusivity. How do you define it? And what are the goals? This helps create an open dialogue and encourages your new employees to feel that they can talk openly about diversity and inclusion-related issues.

We recommend sharing any resources you might have on how your employees can get involved in making the workplace more inclusive.

2. Provide a 'big picture' overview.

It's easy to forget how overwhelming things can be in the first few days (or weeks) of a new job. That's why you should try to go out of your way to make your new employee feel like they're 'in the know', avoiding any danger of them feeling left out.

We recommend sharing your team's current roadmaps or strategies as well as an organisational chart that says who is who and how responsibilities are distributed and shared. Doing this will make your new employee feel more comfortable and less intimidated in navigating their new workplace.

3. Make sure the team is prepared for their arrival.

An inclusive culture isn't one that inducts new employees into an existing company culture. Rather, it expands that culture to incorporate the fresh perspectives your new hire will bring. That's why it's so important to work with your existing team to ensure a smooth integration of your new employee.

Why not run a workshop on accommodating different communication styles? Or maybe schedule some team bonding activities for your new hire's first week. Always encourage feedback and respond to input, ensuring the whole team is as invested in your charity's culture as you are.

4. Empower your managers to be D&I leaders.

More often than not, the hiring manager plays a big part in whether someone accepts a job offer. They can also influence someone's decision to stay in a job long-term. That's why it's so crucial to equip your managers with the tools to advocate for every single one of their employees, no matter their background.

Consider running regular management training to ensure that your leadership team is equipped to lead D&I initiatives at your organisation.

5. Build a mentorship programme.

Not only is this a quick way to get your new employees up to speed, but it also helps them build relationships right from day one. And it shows that you're choosing to invest in your new hire's professional development.

A mentoring culture is one that nurtures deeper working relationships and places value on development. But even more than that, it helps the wider organisation understand that differences aren't just seen, they're encouraged and valued.

> "It's about so much more than recruitment—if you're looking for diversity (however defined) anticipate that people will be different and be open to that. I've come across too many charities who recruit people who add diversity—for all of the right reasons—and then expect them to behave and think exactly like everyone else.
>
> I've seen bad examples where charities recruited for diversity and then accused the individual of not being the right cultural fit. But I've also seen good examples where boards actively led change by starting to listen, address and model different behaviour."
>
> **Maggie Gardner,** Charity Consultant

In the end, it's all about collaboration and facing shortcomings head-on…

In order to create a more diverse sector, you need to bring your biases out into the open. Only then, can you start to embed inclusion into your organisation—in the way you hire, in your cultural values, in how your decisions are made and how you evaluate your leaders.

People are fundamentally stubborn. Most won't want to admit that they had any biases in the first place. But having the right education and tools—as well as a firm commitment—will make people realise their shortcomings and start to change their behaviour. It just takes that crucial step of recognising that diversity and inclusion is an organisational responsibility.

If you want to be inclusive, you have to create a culture that it is attractive to a diverse group of candidates. And part of that involves having more diversity in your management team. Develop strategies that encourage collaboration—things that bond your employees and

inspire them to be more creative in their thinking. This could be anything from company-wide brainstorms to social events that allow your staff to share experiences and stories, celebrating their cultural differences and working styles. Ultimately, it's about empowering your team, providing opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to work and flourish. And it's about actively valuing and addressing the input of your employees so that the sector can have an even greater impact on society.

It can be hard to make sweeping changes and drive results. But tangible change is rooted in persistence, not just good intentions. We hope that this guide has provided you with the tools you need and inspires you to strive further every day. Now is as good a time as any to get started.

If you have any more questions about how to improve your recruitment strategies for better inclusivity or want to know more about how our Applicant Manager can help you anonymise your candidates for fairer recruitment, feel free **to get in touch with one of our Account Managers today.** They're here to provide you with valuable advice on the job posting process and share any exciting new developments on the horizon for our Applicant Manager tool.

And if you want to learn what other organisations are doing to improve the diversity of their workforce, check out **what conversations are happening on CharityConnect.** Who knows, you may even be leading the conversation in the months to come on how to successfully implement a D&I process in your charity recruitment.

CharityJob

> " I've worked in HR/Recruitment in the charity sector for around 7 years now and have always used CharityJob as both a recruiter and job seeker. It is absolutely the UK's leading job board for recruitment in the charity sector. Their pricing plans are incredibly reasonable and you can usually find an option to fit most budgets. I can also confirm that CharityJob is the job board that brings in the most diverse candidates to our roles. "

Gemma Aston, Ambition Institute

Trust our expertise

For over 20 years, CharityJob has been connecting the UK's top charities with its brightest talent. This allows us to constantly monitor and gather data from the sector so that we can help charity people thrive in an ever more challenging climate.

Get in touch
020 8939 8430
info@charityjob.co.uk
charityjob.co.uk

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