

Charityworks Strategy 2024 onwards

February 2024

Objects

The Objects of the Charity are, for the public benefit, to advance education in such charitable ways as the Trustees think fit, in particular but not exclusively, the provision of training and development programmes for the benefit of the voluntary not for profit sector.

Registered Charity number: 1136964

Registered company number: 07304744

Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

An impactful not-for-profit sector that is connected, collaborative and capable, supported by excellent leadership and management, and that is representative of the society it serves.

Our Mission

To support our Vision, our Mission is to -

- attract, grow and retain future leaders and managers for the not-for-profit sector
- ensure that sector leadership is representative of a wide diversity of characteristics and backgrounds
- promote the value of recruiting, developing and retaining talented people
- support the development of cross-sector, supportive networks of current and future leaders

Our Values

In our work, we will prioritise and demonstrate these Values -

Inclusion

We will:

- actively welcome and respect diversity of experience and perspective
- encourage everyone to participate regardless of their background or role

Integrity

We will:

- be open and honest, demonstrating accountability in all our work
- use evidence-based and transparent decision making

Improvement

We will:

- create and take opportunities to advance and deliver on our Vision and Mission
- foster a climate of ambition and excellence drawing on expertise from across the sector
- strive to be a learning organisation, reflecting on both successes and failures
- actively welcome fresh ideas and approaches

Collaboration

We will:

- work collaboratively, both within our organisation and with our partners
- promote the value of collaboration within the sector, with employers and with participants in our programmes

Inspiration

We aim:

- to inspire the next generation of leaders by championing the role of the not-for-profit sector in improving society
- to be inspired by a range of viewpoints and stakeholders

Context

The Charityworks portfolio comprises –

The ***Graduate Trainee Programme*** which has the aim of recruiting, developing and retaining the next generation of social leaders.

The 2027 Programme which is a paid training programme that prepares people from working class backgrounds for professional, decision-making roles in the grant-giving sector.

Our interim, two-year strategy 2022-24 was published as the charity and the world were emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic. The environment was uncertain at that time: our strategic focus was to restore and grow the profile, impact and size of the Graduate Trainee Programme. This would build on the Programme's strong brand keeping it fresh and relevant, demonstrating value for money and with a continued emphasis on equality of access and inclusivity.

We have made good progress since 2022 but as explained below, not necessarily sustained progress. We have seen strong performance in attracting BAME applicants – with about 40% entry from that demographic.

Operationally, we have –

- continued to work closely with Koreo, our delivery partner
- implemented the recommendations of the 2019 governance review (these actions were interrupted by the pandemic)
- reviewed and refreshed our Vision, Mission and Values
- appointed new trustees widening the skill base and diversity of the Board
- continued to work with project support but without staff. This constrains what we are able to aspire to and deliver on

Two years on, while the immediate uncertainties of the post-pandemic period are behind us, there is a very challenging environment for Charityworks characterised by:

- entrants to the world of work, graduates in particular, having many career choices
- a very significant rise in the cost of living. This especially affects young people many of whom are already burdened with debt. Career options that pay more may be their imperative even if “careers with a purpose” are their true aspiration
- changed working patterns adopted during the pandemic. Many smaller and not for profit employers struggle to continue to offer flexible working making them less attractive to potential employees

These challenges have led to recovery at a slower pace than had been hoped. “Recovery” in this context means strong uptake on our programmes back to the levels experienced pre-pandemic. Analysis shows that participant numbers (trainees and employers) are the key determinants in the performance of the charity. As in 2022, we have some doubt about the longer-term financial resilience and sustainability of the charity.

Strategy review process

The process has been led by a trustee through successive Board meetings including two specially convened sessions. This has followed a divergent process of broad thinking to elicit options converging the discussions to a series of choices. There was no shortage of ideas. However, mindful of the constraints on our resources and the capacity of Koreo, we have agreed three strategic themes for the coming period.

We remain aware that the charity still needs to attain a sustainable and stable future.

We are grateful to all those who have given their time and energy to this review, including past and current trustees.

Strategic themes

Our three strategic themes for 2024 onwards are:

Expanding the Graduate Trainee Programme – by expanding the Programme, we can deliver more benefit, equip the sector with its future leaders and attain better value by deploying our resources more efficiently

Developing engagement with our alumni – with over 1100 alumni on the charity's programmes, we aim to engage with and support these talented people through their careers in the not-for-profit sector

Developing adjacencies to our programmes – we will explore and exploit opportunities aligned with our purpose and programmes focused on widening access to and inclusivity of opportunity to careers in the not-for-profit sector

Underpinning these themes, we will continue to develop governance and the operational sustainability of the charity.

Delivering the strategic themes

We will develop a delivery plan working to address each strategic theme as follows:

Expansion

- research the size of the market – this data does not seem to exist anywhere at present
- agree the extent of expansion with review and evaluation points

We will undertake continuous review of progress against this theme to ensure that the Programme continues to be attractive, offers value to trainees and employers and represents increasing benefit for the charity.

Alumni

- conduct a survey of alumni to find out what help or support they would value
- progressively deliver the help and support they need being mindful of what we can achieve

We will develop an initial alumni support proposal to test with a pilot group and use the feedback to refine that offer. We will prioritise support that can be provided quickly and ensure overall that this initiative delivers increased benefit for the charity.

Adjacencies

- explore opportunities for us alone or working with others further widening access to careers in the sector. This includes options for project based or longer-term collaborations

We remain aware of the limited capacity and capability of the charity to develop and deliver new opportunities. We are therefore open to the potential to work with others in order to ensure the best value for the sector and the best value to the charity.

Our longer-term ambitions

In the longer term, we –

- seek to make the charity fully operationally sustainable
- look to appoint further paid support for the charity
- look to Charityworks becoming the UK voice for the sector in talent, leadership, development and inclusivity
- aspire to extend our activities outside the UK enabling others to benefit from more than a decade of success in attracting and developing leaders for the sector

Reviewing this Strategy

We plan to review progress against this Strategy during the year 2026-27. We have agreed that with the rate of change in the sector and the entry level employment market, along with impact of implementing our strategic themes, a review two-three years on is a necessary step.