

# EAST OF ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY



## ARE RECRUITING FOR TRUSTEES

The East of England Agricultural Society has a requirement to recruit two new trustees with specific areas of expertise - a trustee with an education background and a trustee with a financial background.

## TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT INFORMATION PACK

### About us

The EEAS was formed by a merger through the 1970's of the Agricultural Societies of Bedfordshire (founded 1801), Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely (1863), Huntingdonshire (1837), Northamptonshire (1848) and Peterborough (1797). Since the cessation of the East of England three-day summer show in 2012 and for which we were predominately known, we have adapted our outreach programme to continue delivering on our charitable objectives and these can best be explored by visiting our web site [www.eastofengland.org.uk](http://www.eastofengland.org.uk)

More recently with the upcoming sale of the East of England Showground the Board of Trustees is reshaping the strategic direction of the EEAS to ensure it has a sustainable future for generations to come.

The EEAS is to become a grant funding charity that promotes knowledge exchange, engagement and education about food, farming and the countryside in the East of England. With the forthcoming sale of the East of England Showground, the trustees are committed to diligently protecting its up-coming legacy. The change in strategic direction will widen the field of opportunities for the EEAS to reach more people and promote its charitable aims.

Work now starts to transition the EEAS to its grant funding model and we are looking to strengthen our existing board with some new trustees.

### Our charitable aims remain as:

- To promote agriculture and to such generally improve it in all its branches and to encourage skill and industry in it and all trades, crafts and professions connected with.
- To promote education and further understanding of agriculture, horticulture and food production amongst the general population.
- To promote rural life and all aspects of the countryside.

Good governance is crucial for effective, impactful organisations. This includes a strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. We believe that boards whose trustees have different backgrounds and experience are more likely to encourage debate and make better decisions. With your help, we want EEAS to make a bigger difference, this is a pivotal time to join the board and also shape the blueprint for agricultural societies to remain relevant and important in the fabric of the UK.

## How to apply:

If you are interested and would initially like an informal chat about what the role of a trustee involves or about any aspect of the selection process, please contact [vicechairman@eastofengland.org.uk](mailto:vicechairman@eastofengland.org.uk)

Please apply in writing, no more than a few sides of a Word document, a short letter and your CV. When you apply your application should cover why you wish to be a Trustee and what you would bring to the role.

We will acknowledge its arrival and send you a diversity monitoring survey to complete. This will be kept separately from your application, it is not part of the selection process. However, it will assist providing vital information about whether we are extending our reach as an organisation.

**Closing date:** Your application should reach us by **1st March 2024**. Once your application has been considered by our Nomination Committee, you will be invited to an interview if it is felt you have the potential and right skills required to become a trustee on our board.

Interviews with the Nomination Committee will be held at FitzRoy House. We may go to a second stage in the selection process and will advise you once this process has commenced. We will contact all applicants either to tell them they have been successful in getting to interview or not.

If you are successful and accept a position on the board, the Nomination Committee will propose and recommend you joining the board. At the next AGM (June 2024) your appointment will be ratified by the EEAS Members of Council.

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## The EEAS is governed by a board of trustees, which comprises:

- the chair
- the vice chair
- the treasurer
- up to fifteen elected trustees in total and no less than five.

The Trustee Board appoints a vice chair from among the trustees.

Our trustee board is responsible for making sure we manage our money and resources wisely and deliver our charitable aims. The maximum term a trustee can remain on the board is nine consecutive years subject to re-election following each third anniversary/s of their appointment.

## The trustee board must:

- always act in the best interests of EEAS
- be responsible in their decision making
- act as a group and not as individuals.

In addition to being a registered charity, EEAS is also a company limited by guarantee, and our trustees are registered as directors at Companies House.

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## Duties of a trustee board member:

We take good governance of the EEAS seriously. The statutory duties of a trustee board member are to:

- ensure EEAS complies with our governing document (our articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- ensure that EEAS pursues the objects defined in our articles of association;
- ensure EEAS's resources are only used to pursue these objects. We must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be
- actively contribute to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction. This includes setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets;
- safeguard the good name and values of EEAS
- ensure the financial stability of EEAS.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions.

This may involve:

- leading discussions
- identifying key issues
- providing advice and guidance on new initiatives
- evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has expertise.

Our aim is to have a board of trustees with a broad range of skills, diversity and experience that have been identified to reflect the needs of the Society going forward. These currently include (not exhaustively) possessing experience and knowledge in the following areas:

- Agriculture / horticulture
- Education
- Agri Technology
- Property
- Finance
- Agribusiness
- Rural pursuits
- Comms/ Marketing
- Legal/ Political
- Diversity
- For continuity the Board to include someone with a knowledge of the history and working of the Society.

This is a voluntary role and trustees receive no remuneration.

### Minimum Time Commitment:

We would normally expect trustees to commit at least 12 days each year for board and committee meetings, with additional time for reading papers and other communications. Other events, such as our council meetings (minimum of two per annum) and our annual general meeting (AGM), will increase this commitment.

We hold board meetings on average six times a year. All board meetings are generally in person (with a hybrid option) and committee meetings are usually held in person or on a hybrid basis. Ordinarily, board meetings are held at our office FitzRoy House outside of office hours from 6pm.

Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings and undertake a careful annual review of its performance with the Chair on an individual and collective board performance to improve the boards practice.

- Papers are distributed one week in advance of meetings.
- Trustees may be asked to join one of our five board committees, which include Audit & Risk, Investment, Nominations, Awards & Grants, Education. Each committee meets between two to four times a year for approximately two hours during normal office hours.
- Trustees are invited to our AGM which takes place during the evening in June. In order to also be voted onto Council whilst as a Trustee you will need to be a member of the Society.
- Trustees are encouraged to attend EEAS organised activities where ever possible.

New trustees will receive a full induction and should expect to allocate two half days for this online training plus time with the Chair and/or CEO learning about the Society history and current strategic direction.

### Person Specification:

Each trustee must have:

- a demonstrable commitment to the mission of EEAS, including a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion
- a willingness to meet the minimum time requirement
- integrity
- strategic vision
- good, independent judgement
- an ability to think creatively
- a willingness to speak their mind
- an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties and responsibilities of trusteeship

- an ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to make decisions for the good of EEAS.
- a commitment to Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

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### The duties of a trustee of the EEAS are as follows:

- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensuring that the organisation complies with its governing document (ie its trust deed, constitution or memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensuring that the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable objects (ie the charity must not spend money on activities that are not included in its own objects, however worthwhile or charitable those activities are) for the benefit of the public
- Ensuring that the organisation defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguarding the good name and values of the organisation
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the organisation, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the chief executive (if the charity employs staff)
- In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.
- Agree to abide by the EEAS code of conduct for trustees of the board.





## ***ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR A FINANCIAL TRUSTEE AT THE EAST OF ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY***

The overall role is to be the trustee with a financial background that maintains an overview of the organisations financial affairs, ensure its financial viability and ensure that proper financial records and procedures are maintained.

Working closely with the Chair, Chief Executive and Financial Director.

In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee, duties include the following:

- Being assured that the financial resources of the organisation meet its present and future needs. This currently also encompasses monitoring the financial aspects of the present land sale agreement in place with AEPG to ensure the Society achieves the desired outcome.
- Ensuring that the charity has an appropriate reserves policy.
- Ensuring that appropriate accounting procedures and controls are in place.
- Liaising with any paid staff and volunteers about financial matters.
- Advising on the financial implications of the organisation's strategic plans.
- Work with the Investment Committee to propose investment return targets and guidelines for approval by Board and to provide the basis for budgeting and ensure there is an appropriate investment policy.
- Working with the Audit & Risk Committee ensuring that the accounts are prepared and disclosed in the form required by funders and the relevant statutory bodies, for example the Charity Commission and/or the Registrar of Companies.
- Keeping the board informed about its financial duties and responsibilities.
- Liaising with the Financial Director to agree a formal presentation of the accounts at the AGM and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way.
- Membership of the Audit and Risk Committee to ensure the Society has the required financial control systems and staff and that they operate effectively.

### **Person specification**

In addition to the person specification for a trustee, the applicant should have the following qualities:

- Financial qualifications and experience at a senior level.
- Some experience of charity finance, fundraising and pension schemes is desirable.
- The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences.
- Proven ability to communicate and explain financial information to members of the board and other stakeholders.
- Being prepared to make unpopular recommendations to the board.
- A willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.





## ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR AN EDUCATIONAL TRUSTEE AT THE EAST OF ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

The overall role of our educational trustee is to be the trustee that maintains an overview of the organisation's support to individuals, schools, colleges and universities to promote knowledge about and skills development in the food, farming and industries.

The EEAS currently needs to strengthen its board with an individual with knowledge and experience in education as they look to transition to a grant funding organisation. Working closely with the Chair, Chief Executive, Education Committee and Scholarship Committee.

A trustee is sought to advise on opportunities where the EEAS can fund activities to give the best charitable benefit and maximum impact to any outreach being funded.

**In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee, duties of the treasurer include the following:**

- Communicating the features and benefits of food and farm production to school children and also at secondary school age that this sector presents a wide ranging career option.
- Structuring scholarship funding to individuals to support career development.
- Assessing the educational benefit of project proposals and the outcome of those funded by the EEAS.
- Identifying projects where EEAS funding could be beneficial in meeting educational objectives.
- Preparing and presenting educational outcome reports to the board.
- Liaising with any paid staff and volunteers about educational matters.
- Advising on the educational implications of the organisation's strategic plans.
- Membership of the Education and Scholarship Committees to ensure the Society has the required systems and staff and that they operate effectively.

### Person specification

**In addition to the person specification for a trustee, the treasurer should have the following qualities:**

- Experienced professional educator.
- An understanding and empathy to our sector including enthusiasm and communication skills to support the Society's activities in education.
- Experience of charity.
- The skills to analyse proposals and examine their financial consequences.
- Proven ability to communicate and explain financial information to members of the board and other stakeholders
- Being prepared to make unpopular recommendations to the board.
- A willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.