



## Recruitment and Selection

### Introduction

Community businesses may take on “workers” who have different relationship with the managing committee. Whatever their status (including volunteers and consultants), the way they are recruited and selected must be carefully thought through in order to avoid discrimination and ensure fairness. This Information Sheet sets out the key stages in the process and ‘best practice’

### The Recruitment Process

The overall process generally involves the following stages, which help ensure that the process is open and people are treated on their merits. The process can be lengthy, allow between 6 and 10 weeks from the date of the advertisement to having someone in post. It is advisable that the management committee and others involved in this process receive background information and/or training, particularly in relation to the equal opportunities implications of these stages.

- **Identify post to be filled**  
This will be the outcome of an analysis of staffing needs to meet the objectives of the organisation, without compromising employment conditions or equal opportunities.
- **Investigate legal implications of employing someone to this post**  
Clarify the basis of employment (permanent, fixed term, full-time or part-time, job sharing etc.) and consider the implications for the contract of employment and equal opportunities.
- **Prepare Job Description (JD)**  
The JD is a basic document that is deemed a part of the contract of employment. It should clearly set out the job title, lines of responsibility, main purpose of the post, key areas of work with main duties or tasks, hours of work and other relevant conditions (such as acceptance and promotion of equalities policies)

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- **Prepare Person Specification (PS)**

The PS described the qualities needed to carry out the key areas of work outlined in the JD, including aptitudes, knowledge, experience and attitudes. The PS will generally form the basis for short listing, the questions asked at the interview and the evaluation of the applicants' answers. Person specifications should not be so specific or onerous as to rule out an applicant who would be able to do the job, and care should be taken to avoid indirect discrimination.

- **Decide selection panel**

The selection panel will undertake short-listing, interviewing, and selection of applicants. One panel member should be designated the chair and oversee the selection process, including chairing of the interviews. Ideally there would be 3 or 4 on the panel to avoid overwhelming the applicant and to provide a balanced evaluation. Panel members should be relevant to the post, with knowledge about the areas of work and associated PS. The equalities policy may also determine the panel composition (for example, by requiring at least one woman on the panel), and all members should be experienced or trained in interviewing techniques and equal opportunities issues.

- **Draw up selection criteria (using PS)**

Applicants will be selected based on the extent to which they meet the selection criteria, not assessed against each other. Hence the selection criteria should reflect the most important person specifications.

- **Draw up application and other forms**

Prepare standard forms for application, equal opportunities monitoring, and internal monitoring. Wording should not be discriminatory and only seek information that is directly relevant to the job. It is good practice to provide application forms rather than accept letters with CVs, as the forms ensure relevant information is obtained in a way that makes it possible to assess against the PS. Monitoring forms are attached to applications; these request voluntary provision of information on ethnic background, gender and disability, which is used to monitor responses from these groups. The monitoring forms are usually anonymous and should be separated from the application upon receipt.

- **Prepare information for enquirers**

It is important that each enquirer receives the same information, which at least would include the JD, PS, equalities policy and main conditions (pay, holiday, pension, special leave, place of work and other relevant information such as whether there is a car allowance). Ideally enquirers should be given the date planned for the interview and general information about the organisation.

- **Advertise the Post**

Decide what medium will most effectively reach all potential applicants, including all racial groups, women and disabled people. Local newspapers, Job Centre, local schools and colleges are obvious choices, but there may be newsletters and journals that reach particular groups and sectors (e.g. voluntary sector). Prepare an advertisement including basic information, summary of JD and PS, how to obtain information/application forms, and the closing date for receipt of applications. Wording should avoid discrimination.

- **Draw up interview questions**

The selection panel should agree a list of non-discriminatory questions, which cover the key areas of the selection criteria and obtain important information that didn't emerge from the written applications. Ideally each panel member would ask a set of related questions.

- **Shortlist applicants**

Each applicant should have separate records to keep track of where they are in the process. As soon as possible after the closing date the selection panel members should receive a set of applications (with the monitoring forms removed) and they should shortlist separately against the PS. The panel would then meet to agree a final shortlist for interviewing.

- **Interview short-listed applicants**

Applicants should be notified of interview dates and times reasonable in advance, and be asked what arrangements they would like for interpreters or signers. Each interview should be allocated the same time and all applicants should be asked the same question in the same way. Time between interviews should be allowed for marking notes, but discussion of applicants should wait until all interviews have been completed.

- **Select the best applicant for the job**

One way of making a final selection is for each interviewer to assess whether applicants have met each of the selection criteria in full, in part, or not at all; this usually results in a clear "best" applicant. Once each interviewer has come to a view, the panel can discuss and agree a final selection for that post. Record the basis of the final decision in case there are queries or complaints. Let all applicants know the decision as soon as possible.

- **Carry out checks on the selected applicant**

These might include references, medical ect. as appropriate. Ensure they comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

- **Appoint**

A probationary period (generally 3 or 6 months) may be stated. Making an offer of appointment constitutes the first part of a contract of employment.

***Disclaimer: The information provided here is intended to give some pointers and is not fully exhaustive. The C3 partnership cannot accept and legal responsibility for how this information is used.***

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