

Finding Volunteers

Question	Answer	Handy Tip
How do I find volunteers for my vacancy?	<p>There are two ways to find volunteers. You can make your vacancy ‘public’ so that registered users on our site can view it and get in touch with you.</p> <p>You can also search for and contact registered volunteers in your area who might be suitable for your governing board.</p>	There is also a short video on the website that explains how the online matchmaking works.
If I make my vacancy public, who can see it?	Your vacancy will be made available on our secure Inspiring Governance site, which means it will only be visible to volunteers who are registered with and logged into the site.	Your vacancy will be visible only to volunteers who indicate that they are interested in a governor/trustee position.
How do I make my vacancy public?	<p>The first thing to do is to register your vacancy on the site.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once you have logged into www.inspiringgovernance.org as a governor, click on ‘Manage opportunities’ in the top left of the menu bar. On the next screen, click ‘Create new opportunity & invite’ at the right of the page. 2. Here you will fill in some details about your vacancy. 3. To make sure that volunteers can see your vacancy, check the box that says ‘Tick here to make public’. 4. This means that volunteers who search in your area will be able to view the information about your vacancy and send an “Expression of interest” for more details. 	Check out our user guide for full instructions on how to register your vacancy.
How do I find and contact volunteers I’m interested in?	<p>There are two routes to find volunteers. For both, you first need to go to www.inspiringgovernance.org and log in to the secure site as a governor.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you would like to link the volunteers to a specific vacancy, click on ‘Manage opportunities’ in the top left of the menu bar. On the next screen, either click ‘View & edit’ for a vacancy you have already created, or click on ‘Create new opportunity & invite’ to register a new vacancy. Once you have saved your vacancy, you can click on the ‘Find volunteers’ button. 	Check out our user guide for full instructions on how to search for and contact volunteers.

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	<p>2. If you don't wish to register your vacancy first, simply click on 'Search for volunteers' in the top menu bar. Volunteers you select will remain in your shortlist, but will not be linked to your vacancy.</p>	
<p>Who am I seeing when I search for volunteers?</p>	<p>The volunteers you can see have indicated that they are interested in being a governor/trustee in the area your school is located. You can filter volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location radius – how close they are to your school • The professional skills you are looking for <p>To see the full list of volunteers available in your area, leave all the search fields blank and click 'Search'.</p>	<p>Volunteers will come up in a map view. To see them in a list view, click on 'List' at the top left of the map.</p> <p>If you have included multiple professional skills, the search will bring up all volunteers who have at least one of those skills.</p>
<p>How many invitations should I send?</p>	<p>Not every volunteer will be right for your school context or your governor role. Therefore we recommend sending invitations to all the potential governors who match your criteria.</p> <p>If you receive multiple replies, you can use an interview process to decide who is the best fit for your governing board.</p>	<p>If on your first attempt you don't find the governor you need, you can easily go back into the system and send additional invitations.</p>
<p>What if I can't find a volunteer that fits my criteria?</p>	<p>Try widening your search. Your search will bring up all the volunteers who say they have at least one of the skills you have ticked, so the more skills you tick, the more volunteers you'll have to choose from.</p>	<p>If you leave the 'Skills' field blank, all the volunteers in your area will be shown.</p>

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What Happens Next

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What should I include in the message?	<p>Our system will automatically include in your message the name of your school, where you are located, the type of governance role and the skills you're looking for. In your message it is helpful to state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who you are• A bit about the context of your school• A bit about what's expected of the role <p>Invite them to have a telephone conversation to find out more and to see if it will be a good fit for both of you.</p> <p>As much as you can, personalise your message. Let them know what you liked about their profile that prompted you to invite them.</p>	<p>Volunteers may not be familiar with how schools work. Therefore, watch out for jargon, abbreviations and school language that might not be understood.</p> <p>Check out the sample messages below for inspiration.</p>
What happens to my invitations?	<p>The system will send your message(s). Volunteers reply through the system indicating whether they are interested in finding out more about your vacancy. Their response will be emailed automatically to you via the system.</p> <p>If they are interested, we suggest you have a telephone call to find out more about them and tell them about the role. If it appears to be a good fit, you can follow your normal interview process for governors.</p>	<p>To view sent messages and responses, after you log in click the Messages tab in the top menu bar.</p> <p>Add enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org to your email contacts so that replies arrive in your inbox, rather than spam or junk mail.</p>
I haven't heard back from volunteers. What can I do?	<p>We send text messages once a week to those volunteers who have not responded to an invitation and have entered a mobile number. However, it may be that some volunteers simply do not respond.</p> <p>Volunteers are sometimes reluctant to contact schools, so if you see someone whose profile looks promising, don't wait for them to contact you!</p>	<p>New volunteers sign up all the time. If you don't have success the first time around, keep checking back to see who else has joined.</p>

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How do I check who I previously invited?	Simply log in , and click on the 'Manage opportunities' tab and then the 'View & edit' button for your vacancy. On the next screen, click 'Shortlist' towards the top of the screen.	When you click on 'Search for Volunteers' page, those you have previously shortlisted will be marked by a green pin.
How do I update my profile?	After you log in , click on 'Update profile' in the top menu bar. Here you can change your personal details and some details about your governing board. To update the details about your school, please contact us at enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org	The link to change your password is at the bottom of the 'Update profile' page.

Good to Know

Question	Answer
Does Inspiring Governance provide training or support for governors?	Yes. The National Governance Association (NGA) is providing free support and expert guidance for governors/trustees appointed through the Inspiring Governance service, via a dedicated helpline as well as through induction materials and online guidance.
Does inspiring Governance get enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks for volunteers?	We do not organise DBS checks, as we expect that schools will do this as part of their usual induction process for new governors.
Does Inspiring Governance vet what volunteers say in their profile?	We take it on trust that volunteers have been honest about their skills and experience. There are also legal terms and conditions that they must agree to before registration.
How old are volunteers?	They are aged 18 right through retirement age. People with many years' experience bring a range of skills to governing boards, but people in their 20's are close in age to secondary school students and have invaluable insights too.
What if I need to recruit governors for multiple schools, for instance in a multi-academy trust or a local authority?	You can do this through Inspiring Governance. When you sign up to the site, you will be asked if you are recruiting for one school or multiple schools. If you have already signed up and your circumstances have changed, please contact us on enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org

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Sample invite email 1

Dear Sam,

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a governor of a secondary school in the Mackingham area. Your profile looks very interesting and we are indeed looking for someone with HR experience to join our small and dynamic governing board.

Mackingham School is part of a multi-academy trust, a group of schools that work closely together, and the vacancy is for our local governing body which consists of 12 individuals with a range of skills. We have 10 meetings a year, which take place in the evening, and we ask governors visit the school once per term with a specific focus, for instance maths or special educational needs provision (SEN). While we serve an economically disadvantaged community, we have high expectations for our 850 pupils and are committed to raising their aspirations. The governing board plays a key role in helping to achieve this.

I wonder if we could arrange a phone call next week to discuss the vacancy and see whether you are interested. In the meantime, if you would like to find out more about the school, please visit our website at www.mackinhamschool.org

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Pat Cook, Chair of Governors

Sample invite email 2

Dear Ali,

I am chair of governors at The Green School, a primary school in Weatherfield, and I'm writing to see if you would be interested in joining our governing board. We are looking to build the financial expertise on our board, and I was interested to see on your profile that you are a qualified accountant and run your own business.

We have 350 pupils who live mostly in the nearby community. About 25% of our pupils receive free school meals and about 10% are from an ethnic minority background. At our Ofsted inspection a year ago, we received a 'requires improvement' judgment and since then, governors and senior team at the school have been working hard to address areas of weakness and build on our strengths. We are confident that we will be rated 'good' at our next inspection.

We are an enthusiastic and committed group of 11 governors, with one vacancy on the board. Our meetings are normally at 5pm, lasting for 1.5 to 2 hours, and we meet 8 times a year. Governors are always welcome to visit the school during the day.

I am very happy to give you more details. Perhaps we could arrange a phone call one day next week? You might also like to visit our website at www.thegreenschool.sch.uk

Best wishes,

Chris Smith