



Support Service for Chairs Terms and Conditions

About our support service

Our support service is a scheme run by Association of Chairs and made possible by the funder Garfield Weston Foundation. It is a service to provide extra guidance and support for chairs and vice-chairs who are facing challenges in relation to the good governance and leadership of their charity or non-profit organisation.

Eligibility

Our support service offer is for Association of Chairs members only.

You need to be the chair or vice-chair of one of our member organisations to apply for this free service.

For chairs or vice-chairs who are looking for support but are not an AoC member, we have a limited number of free bursary memberships available. To apply for bursary membership you need to be the chair or vice-chair of a UK-based charity or non-profit organisation.

What is offered

The different kinds of support that may be offered include:

- Connection with an experienced chair/mentor who can act as a sounding board to help you find solutions
- Access to third-party professional guidance and advice, where relevant professional resources are available to us
- Peer support through AoC's online community
- Signposting to relevant AoC resources
- Signposting to external sources of information and guidance

What isn't offered

Our support service is not a counselling service and we are not able to provide access to therapeutic services as part of this scheme.

We cannot guarantee being able to offer you any specific type of support or advice that you may request. We will let you know if we are unable to help and wherever possible will aim to signpost you to other relevant services.

As our resources for this scheme are limited, the support and guidance we can provide free of charge to you may cover only part of your enquiry. Further support may be suggested, to be taken up at your discretion and at your own expense.



AoC support team responsibilities

Our support team will:

- Offer impartial information, signposting and support that we think will be of benefit to you and can help you make your own decisions.
- Aim to reply to your initial enquiry within two working days, with an email response outlining what support we can offer.
- Contract with any third party to cover the cost of delivering a service that may be offered, with your agreement.
- Adhere to AoC's [values](#), policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding and protecting people, equity, diversity and inclusion, and [reasonable adjustment](#).
- Not be responsible for any failure by us to perform our obligations to you where this failure is caused by circumstances beyond our control.

Your responsibilities

Users of our support service will:

- Be responsible for your own well-being, decisions, and actions.
- Act in accordance with AoC's [membership terms and conditions](#). This includes acting in a manner that does not bring AoC, our members or affiliated organisations into disrepute or goes against our safeguarding and protecting people policy.

Confidentiality and use of personal data

The AoC support team will treat all enquiries in a confidential manner, recording and sharing only such information as is required to run the service.

Conversations and data are subject to [AoC's privacy policy](#).

If we refer you to a third party for delivery of a service, we may share with the third party your name, contact details, and other details that would enable them to tailor their service to your needs, such as the nature of your enquiry. Your contact details will allow these third parties to contact you solely for the purpose of providing you with that particular service.

Content from support sessions is confidential. Exceptions to maintaining confidentiality relate to legal obligations and our duty of care. In very rare circumstances, AoC may feel the need to disclose content – for example, if individuals indicate involvement in something illegal or appeared to pose a risk to themselves or others, or there is any concern about safety.

Mentoring

As part of this service, the AoC support team may connect you with a mentor to provide a confidential space for discussion.



Mentors are all experienced chairs who have mentored others in the past and are giving their time voluntarily. All have committed to act within AoC's policies, procedures and standards for volunteers.

Mentors will:

- Be in touch with you to arrange an online meeting within 1-2 weeks.
- Carry out an initial call with you, to find out more about your enquiry and help you assess what is needed.
- Be available for up to 3 sessions of mentoring in total, if you both agree this will be helpful.

If you are a first-time chair and feel you would benefit from longer-term mentoring, we also have [another scheme](#) that might interest you.

Third-party consultants

For some challenges that might require more specialist input, the AoC support team may connect you with a third-party consultant.

The consultants we work with all have specific professional expertise in areas such as charity law/compliance, charity finance, HR, conflict resolution and mediation. We contract with them to pay for an agreed service and they will contract separately with you for the delivery of the service. AoC is not liable to you in connection with the delivery of that contracted service.

Our support service third-party consultants will:

- Be in touch with you to arrange an online meeting within 1-2 weeks.
- Carry out an initial call with you, to find out more about your enquiry and help you assess what is needed
- Agree with you what support they can offer, within the overall fee for services agreed with AoC.

Disclaimer

While we aim to support you in different ways by providing information, guidance and mentoring, the final responsibility for judgements and decisions that you make, and the actions that flow from them, lie with you as the service user.

AoC and its associates will not, in any circumstances, be liable to you or to any third party for any loss, damage, cost or other liability which occurs as a result of, or in connection with, providing services to you.

If you have a complaint or have been made to feel unsafe or unwelcome while making use of our service, please follow the process laid out in our [complaints policy](#).