



National Council for Voluntary Organisations

NCVO Governance & Leadership Services March 2009

NCVO's Governance and Leadership Services supports voluntary and community sector organisations by providing a platform for shared learning and networking, bringing together key products and support services that will help you to lead the way.

In this month's newsletter:

[Connecting Leaders](#): key events and networking opportunities.

[Tools and information](#): key resources and information to help you lead the way.

[Focus on...](#)Reserves.

Connecting Leaders

NCVO/UBS Strategic Financial Management Seminar, 30th March 2009, London

Following on from the success of the NCVO/UBS Strategic Financial Management Seminar held in February 2009, we are pleased to offer a further chance to attend this seminar. This free event looks at risk policies, reserves policies and investment management. Speakers include Andrew Hind (Charity Commission), Paul Palmer (Cass Business Schools), and Petra Ingram (Sight Savers). [Book on-line](#) or for further information contact Georgina Anstey on governanceandleadership@ncvo-vol.org.uk or call 0207 520 2511

NCVO Risk Management Conference, 12th March 2009, London

NCVO's Risk Management conference will help you to understand how you can manage your risk more effectively. Using case studies and an interactive workshop, this one-day conference will provide delegates with advice and top tips to identify, analyse and manage their risk. The seminar will also draw on real examples to demonstrate the importance of risk management. For further details and to [book now](#), or contact Lauren Baker on lauren.baker@ncvo-vol.org.uk.

Tools and information

Recession Action Plan and Information

The Office for the Third Sector published its Third Sector Action Plan earlier in February outlining a £42.5 million package of support for the sector in the face of the difficult economic climate. Download a copy of [Real Help for Communities: Volunteers, Charities and Social Enterprises](#). The Local Government Association and NCVO have also produced a joint report highlighting work that local authorities are doing with third sector partners to support local people through the recession. It also contains information on good practice that can be put in place to ensure that vital support services and good working relationships are not undermined. Download a copy of [Backing Communities: local solutions](#)

Civil Society a Framework for Action

Stuart Etherington launched NCVO's Civil Society Framework for action at NCVO's Annual Conference held in February. The action plan outlines how the voluntary and community sector is at the heart of a vibrant Civil Society, and how NCVO will work with others to develop a programme of work that will focus on four key challenges facing our society; community cohesion, individual and community well-being, climate change and financial security. Read more about the [Civil Society Framework](#), or find out more about [NCVO's Annual Conference](#).

Boardscount benchmarking for governance 2009

BoardsCount benchmarking for governance is open for 2009, with the earlybird discount now available for all organisations. This initiative helps you to review your own governance, but also compares your governance anonymously with others within the sector and shares best practice from other organisations. Find out more and register your interest at <http://www.trans4mgt.com/boardscount/future/>.

NCVO Fourth Charity Forecast Survey

Four out of five charity leaders believe that the economic conditions in the voluntary sector will worsen over the next twelve months, according to NCVO's [latest charity forecast survey report](#). You can participate in the 5th Charity Forecast Survey now at www.ncvo-consult.org.uk/takethesurvey. Join other sector leaders by taking this 10 minute survey and contribute to this vital quarterly planning tool. All survey takers will receive a free copy of the final report.

Are you a Chair of an organistaion?

One of the least researched aspects of the governance of voluntary organizations is that of the role and impact of Chairs of governing bodies. The Open University is conducting a [Board Leadership Survey](#). This research will provide useful information on the importance of the Chair's leadership role, its impact on the board and organization, what influences it, and practical assistance on how to develop effective Chairs in the future. As a benefit of participating in this important study, a report providing a summary of study results and practical recommendations on developing Chair leadership in voluntary organizations will be made available to you at no cost. If you have problems completing this questionnaire or have any questions about it and the broader research study, please contact Prof Chris Cornforth at c.j.cornforth@open.ac.uk or Prof Yvonne Harrison at yharriso@seattleu.edu.

'The Point of no return' research project

The JB Consulting is carrying out qualitative action research into executive working relationships that have fundamentally broken down. This research will lead to a short, practical paper on "The Point of No Return" – how to avoid it, and how to recover from it. They are keen to speak to individuals who have experiences of this kind. If you would like further information or would be available to be interviewed please contact james@jbconsulting.co.uk or telephone 07956 308 324.

Twitter with NCVO

NCVO are now using Twitter, a micro-blogging facility. You can keep up to date with information and news from across NCVO at <http://twitter.com/NCVO>. If you find talk of twitter and blogging confusing, why not read more about how ICT can help your organisation at <http://www.ichub.org.uk/publications/>.

Governance and leadership consultancy services

The Governance and Leadership team offers a consultancy and training service. From comprehensive governance reviews to board away days, we can support you. The consultancy is a customised service, and can be tailored to your organisation's

needs. If you require any further information please contact [Emma Kirk](#) or call Emma on 0207520 2509.

Focus on...

Reserves policies and managing your reserves in challenging times.

Reserves are receiving increased attention in the press, with organisations now deciding to use some of their reserves in this challenging economic climate. In 2006 the Charity Commission found that Charities held reserves totalling £35.5 billion, but that only 40% of organisations had a reserves policy in place. Now more than ever it is crucial to have a robust reserves policy in place that works for the circumstances and work plans of your organisation.

- Does your charity have a policy on the level of reserves?
- Is the policy reviewed each year?
- Are new trustees given a copy of the policy?
- Does it meet regulatory requirements?

Further information and support on developing your reserves policy:

The Charity Commission has a variety of information on reserves, including document CC19 and RS5 Small Charities and Reserves, all can be found at <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/>

NCVO Guidance on reserves can be found at <http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/askncvo/index.asp?id=2586>

NCVO and UBS are also hosting a free Strategic Financial management event on the 30th March 2009 which discusses reserves policies. [For further information and to book your place](#) or contact Georgina Anstey on governanceandleadership@ncvo-vol.org.uk or call 0207 520 2511

We are keen to hear your feedback and suggestions about the newsletter. To contact us, please email governanceandleadership@ncvo-vol.org.uk or phone Carrie Deacon on 020 7520 2501.