

Finding Volunteers

Question	Answer	Handy Tip
How do I search for volunteers?	<p>It's easy to search for volunteers via Inspiring Governance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to www.inspiringgovernance.org and log in as a governor, using your username and password. Click the 'Find Volunteers' tab. 2. Search for governors who have indicated specific skills and/or sectors, using either the tick boxes or drop down menus. 3. Read their profiles and select the volunteer/s you would like to invite for an exploratory chat about becoming a governor/trustee. 4. Send them an invitation and wait for them to respond! 	<p>There is also a short video on the website that explains how the online matchmaking works.</p>
Who am I seeing when I search for volunteers?	<p>The volunteers you can see have indicated that they are interested in being a governor/trustee in the area your school is located, and that they meet the criteria (skills, industry) you have selected. You can filter volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector they work in, and • The professional skills you are looking for 	<p>If you click 'View Profile' for a volunteer, you can see their job description, their postcode and how far they are willing to travel, and how much time they have to give a month.</p>
How many invitations should I send?	<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. 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>
What if I can't find a volunteer that fits my criteria?	<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. If you do not tick any skills or industries, all the volunteers in your area will be shown.</p>	<p>If you're really struggling, contact our schools team on enquiries@inspiringthefuture.org and we'll look to help.</p>

TIPS & GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

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, the phase (eg primary), and the skills you have said you're looking for. In your message it is helpful to state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school name and where you are located• 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 message 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>	
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. However, it may be that some volunteers simply do not respond.</p> <p>Remember that 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. If you really get stuck please email us on enquiries@inspiringgovernance.org and we will try to help.</p>	<p>You can sort by the newest volunteers first. This is a good way of getting those volunteers who have most recently registered and are keen.</p>

TIPS & GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

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How do I check who I previously invited?	Simply log in , and click on the My Project/Events tab. Click the “Show Invitee prospects” button to see who you invited. You can also see this information under the My Messages tab.	When you search on the Find Volunteers page, it will pull up all volunteers who meet your criteria, but those you have previously invited will be clearly marked.
How do I update my profile?	After you log in , click on the My Profile tab. This will take you to My Personal Details page. Click ‘Edit’ to make changes. You will also see tabs for My Account Details and My Activity, which you can edit.	

Good to know

Question	Answer
Does Inspiring Governance provide training or support for governors?	Yes. The National Governors’ 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 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?	We can help. Please contact us on enquiries@inspiringthefuture.org and we will discuss how we can best support you to fill your vacancies.

TIPS & GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS

Sample 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 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.

Let me tell you a little about us. 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, the governing board 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 are on an upward trajectory and 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.

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I am very happy to give you more detail and answer any questions you might have. Perhaps we could arrange a phone call one day next week at a time convenient for you? You might also like to visit our website at www.thegreenschool.sch.uk

Best wishes,

Chris Smith