



**workforce** hub

## **Free sources of human resources support and advice for your organisation**

### **Free sources of HR support and advice include:**

The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)  
Business Link  
The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)  
Councils for Voluntary service (CVSs)  
The Cranfield Trust  
The Department for Trade and Industry (Dti)  
The Equality Commissions  
Equality Direct  
The Health and Safety Executive  
NCVO  
PEACe  
ProHelp  
Trade Union Congress (TUC)  
Unison Health and Safety website  
UK Workforce Hub  
VolResource  
Working Families  
Your own networks  
Your trustees

### **Further ideas**

### ● **The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)**

Acas is Government funded, and aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations.

It provides up-to-date information, independent advice, high quality training and works with employers and employees to solve problems and improve performance.

It produces a large number of publications on various aspects of managing people, including guides on discipline, absence, redundancy and performance appraisal. Most of the publications can be downloaded free from the Acas website at [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

Acas sometimes provides free places on its training courses for very small organisations. Call 08457 47 47 47, textphone 08456 06 16 00 or visit the website for more details.

The **Race and Equality Advisory Service (REAS)** is a part of Acas. This service provides strategy and advice so that employers can develop and implement policies and practices for racial equality in their workforce.

### ● **Business Link**

The Government website Business Link has some useful information on employment. Go to [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) and click on 'Employing People'.

You could also visit the **Business Link for London website**, [www.businesslink4london.com](http://www.businesslink4london.com). Whether or not you are based in London, you can register on the website free and then access fact sheets on a range of human resources matters.

Business Link for London also offers a free Business Healthcheck service to organisations in London with up to 250 employees. This is an independent review of your organisation, the aim of which is to give you new insight into your business, provide constructive feedback, highlight areas for improvement and generate action plans.

### ● **Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)**

The CIPD is the professional body for those involved in the management and development of people. Some of its website is accessible only to its members, but there is much information that can be accessed free.

Visit the website at [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk) or call the CIPD on 020 8612 6200.

### ● **Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs)**

There are currently around 300 Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs) in the UK. Their national body is NACVS, the National Association of Councils for Voluntary Services.

Your local CVS should also be able to help you. They may have example employment policies that you could adapt for your organisation. Some CVSs also give employment advice to member voluntary organisations, and some provide a payroll service, although there is usually a fee for this service.

If you do not know the contact details of your local CVS, you can look in your local telephone directory or visit the National Association of Councils for Voluntary Services website at [www.naccvs.org.u](http://www.naccvs.org.u). The website also has some model policies and procedures, which you could customise for your own organisation.

### ● **The Cranfield Trust**

The Cranfield Trust offers free consultancy projects to charities involved in addressing issues of poverty, disability or social exclusion and uses a register of over 600 volunteers from the commercial sector who act as free consultants. Most of the Trust's 200 annual projects fall into the following areas:

- Business or strategic planning
- Marketing advice or marketing planning
- Human resources issues
- Financial management or planning
- IT reviews and strategies

Call the Cranfield Trust on 01794 830 338 or email [admin@cranfieldtrust.org](mailto:admin@cranfieldtrust.org).

The Cranfield Trust also has a free specialist internet-based human resources advice service, **HRNet**, which allows member charities to post questions on human resource issues to a panel of Trust volunteers with specialist HR knowledge.

There are no restrictions on the kinds of charities that can use this service. Members can share information and ideas on employment questions with other members, and as questions and answers are received, they are categorised and stored on the website so that an information resource is built up that can be referred to by members at any time.

Contact the HRNet administrator if you would like to join: call 01794 830 338 or email [hrnet@cranfieldtrust.org](mailto:hrnet@cranfieldtrust.org)

### ● **The Department of Trade and Industry (Dti)**

The DTI employment website, [www.dti.gov.uk/er](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er) has an employment section, with several useful guides for employers on a variety of employment matters.

The website is particularly useful for straightforward guidance on existing and new employment law. It includes, for example, information on the Working Time Regulations, the Transfer of Undertakings Regulations (TUPE), fair and unfair dismissal, and legislation on rights for parents.

### ● **The Equality Commissions**

For information and advice about racial, gender or disability equality, contact the relevant equality commission:

Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)

T: 020 7939 0000

W: [www.cre.gov.uk](http://www.cre.gov.uk)

Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

T: 0845 601 5901

W: [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)

Disability Rights Commission (DRC)

Telephone helpline 08457 622 633

Textphone 08457 622 644

W: [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)

### ● **Equality Direct**

Equality Direct is an England-wide advice service for businesses, offering telephone advice about equality issues.

Contact Equality Direct on telephone 0845 600 3444.

### ● **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**

HSE's role is to help the Health and Safety Commission ensure that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled.

The Health and Safety Executive provides information to employers about complying with the law. It has a large number of free publications, including a publication to assist you in drafting a health and safety policy.

For further information, go to the HSE website at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) or call the helpline on 08701 545 500.

### ● **National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)**

NCVO has several free services that the UK Workforce Hub currently manages:

- AskNCVO, an online best practice resource for the voluntary and community sector. Information is updated regularly and includes fact sheets on employment matters. You can access it at [www.askncvo.org.uk/hr](http://www.askncvo.org.uk/hr).
- NCVO's HRBank, which contains example HR documents. These documents have been donated by voluntary and community organisations to share good practice and so that organisations don't have to 'reinvent the wheel' each time they want to develop a policy.

Visit [www.askncvo.org.uk/hr](http://www.askncvo.org.uk/hr) for more details or write to

UK Workforce Hub, Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London N1 9RL.

Please remember to state clearly which policies you would like (these can also be emailed to you) and remember to include the following information:

"I understand that if I want a policy that reflects the latest legislation and is appropriate to my organisation, I will seek specialist legal advice. I understand that if my organisation decides to rely on a document obtained from NCVO's HR Bank, it does so at its own risk."

- NCVO has produced the *Good Employment Guide 2005*, priced £25 (£17.50 for NCVO members). This Guide has chapters on each stage of employing people, such as how to recruit your first member of staff, staff appraisals and dealing with grievances/disciplinary situations. It includes several sample documents and case studies.

### ● **Personnel Employment Advice and Conciliation Service (PEACe): London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC)**

If your organisation is based in London, you could use PEACe at the London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC).

You can look at several documents free on the PEACe website at [www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?NodeID=90165](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/Templates/information.asp?NodeID=90165)

PEACe also has a free telephone helpline available on Wednesday or Friday on 020 7700 8147. You can also email PEACe at [peace@lvsc.org.uk](mailto:peace@lvsc.org.uk)

If you would like support on particular projects from PEACe, there is a charge. Call the above helpline for further information.

### ● **Prohelp**

ProHelp has been established by Business in the Community and is a national network of over 1,000 professional firms that give their time and expertise free to local community groups and voluntary organisations.

There are 40 locally based ProHelp groups across the UK.

ProHelp also responds to community needs by providing one-off training events and seminars to community groups on matters such as health and safety, employment law, and business planning.

To contact your local ProHelp organisation, visit [www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/programme\\_directory/prohelp](http://www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/programme_directory/prohelp), email Business in the Community at [information@bitc.org.uk](mailto:information@bitc.org.uk) or call 0870 600 2482.

### ● **Trades Union Congress (TUC)**

Trade unions can be a valuable source of help in the workplace.

Unions can help attract and retain a high quality workforce through improved conditions, staff participation and communication and training opportunities.

Unions provide advice on individual and collective employment rights, and can help with guidelines for volunteer and paid workers.

They have access to model policies and guidelines on a range of issues like stress, bullying, redundancy, relocation, whistle blowing and diversity.

They can also provide assistance in many areas, with expertise in pensions, health and safety, employment law, HR and pay issues.

Unions provide access to education and training advice and courses, leading to vocational and professional qualifications.

There are over 6,500 union learning representatives in the UK, trained to assist their members to receive relevant training and unions have an important role in developing basic skills in the workplace.

The main unions for the voluntary and community sector are UNISON, T&G, Amicus and the GMB.

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) also provides information about UK trade unions. Visit [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) for more details.

### ● **Unison Health and Safety website**

The trade union Unison has a dedicated website for employers in the community and voluntary sector at [www.unison.org.uk/voluntary/index.asp](http://www.unison.org.uk/voluntary/index.asp)

### ● **UK Workforce Hub**

The Hub is working to promote skills development and good employment practice to support recruitment, retention and development of staff, volunteers and trustees in the voluntary and community sector.

It is also a 'standards setting body' for the voluntary sector; that is, it develops, promotes and implements National Occupational Standards for the sector.

Visit [www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk](http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk) for more details about the hub and its work, including details of training events and free and paid-for publications on issues affecting workplace training and development. The hub is also responsible for managing three of NCVO's free networks:

- Charity Trainers' Network, which is open to anyone who has responsibility for training within a voluntary organisation
- Diversity Forum, which is open to anyone who is responsible for promoting and enabling diversity within a voluntary organisation
- Personnel Network, which is open to anyone who has responsibility for human resources/ personnel within a voluntary organisation.

The main aim of these three networks is to share information and good practice. Each network produces regular email briefings for its members. Each network runs four events a year, with speakers and presentations around relevant topical issues.

Although these events are currently held in London, the Workforce Hub plans to work with other organisations to run additional events outside London.

Visit [www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk](http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk) for details for forthcoming network events.

### ● **VolResource**

VolResource is a website that gives practical management information for all people involved in charities, voluntary or community organisations.

Visit the site at [www.volresource.org.uk](http://www.volresource.org.uk)

### ● **Your own networks**

Use your own networks as much as you can!

You can share policies, ideas and practice. Consider setting up a group of similar voluntary organisations, or join an existing networking group.

Lots of HR issues will be common to several organisations, so share ideas rather than reinvent the wheel.

The UK Workforce Hub has three free networks that you can join: the Personnel Network, Diversity Forum and the Charity Trainers' Network.

If you would like to join one of these networks, please visit our website at [www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk](http://www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk) or email Satvinder Kaur at [satvinder.kaur@ukworkforcehub.org.uk](mailto:satvinder.kaur@ukworkforcehub.org.uk)

### ● **Your trustees**

Use your trustees to assist you with HR matters.

If you do not have anyone on your board who has HR expertise, consider appointing someone.

Your trustees may sometimes be able to provide you with example HR documents or HR information from organisations for which they work.

### ● **Working Families**

Working Families is a campaigning charity that supports and informs working parents and carers. It also works with employers to encourage them to reap the business benefits of helping their employees balance their work and home lives.

The Working Families website has a number of useful fact sheets which may help you to draft policies on all types of parental leave, as well as flexible working and other 'family friendly' policies.

There is a specific section for voluntary sector employers.

Visit [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk) or call 020 7253 7243.

### **Further ideas**

If you have further ideas about good sources of HR support, we would like to hear from you!

Please contact Mary Davies, Employment Practice Project Officer at the UK Workforce Hub, by emailing [Mary.Davies@ukworkforcehub.org.uk](mailto:Mary.Davies@ukworkforcehub.org.uk) stating 'HR support' in the subject line of your email.