

Leadership Exchange Programme Frequently Asked Questions

You will find answers to our frequently asked questions below. If you have any other questions however, please don't hesitate to contact the Service Co-ordinator **by email** or by telephone 0131 510 8940.

Q - How will a Leadership Exchange benefit me?

Benefits for you as a leader

- The space to take time out and reflect on your leadership role
- An opportunity to enhance your awareness of another organisation and sector, developing an understanding of their challenges, business planning processes and governance
- An independent and confidential 'sounding board' to exchange and challenge ideas and explore innovative ways of working that both motivate and inspire you
- A fresh perspective on your own role, improving leadership skill capacity
- A chance to gain some mutual informal mentoring
- The ability to share best practice and encourage collaborative working
- Development of a new relationship with a cross sector colleague, gaining essential connections and future networking opportunities

The wider impact of a Leadership Exchange

- An exchange creates stronger links and a greater understanding between organisations, highlighting areas of synergy and opportunity for mutual benefit
- Leadership Exchanges can act as a conduit between sectors once a strong link is built between individuals

Q - Am I eligible to apply?

The Leadership Exchange Programme is open to leaders from middle, senior, and executive level from all sectors in Scotland. We also now provide Board Exchanges for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of voluntary sector organisations via our **Chairs Network Scotland** membership offer. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility, or if you would like to discuss if the programme is right for you, please do not hesitate to **contact us**.

Q - When should I apply?

The Leadership Exchange Programme has application submission dates in Spring and Autumn. For exact dates see the **Leadership Exchange** page. For application submission dates for our Board Exchanges see **here**

Q - How much time is involved?

The programme has been designed with the busy schedules of leaders in mind. The format, length and frequency of your meetings are agreed by you and your match partner to suit – it can be as short as 30 minutes or as long as a full day. Some of our participants have found it useful to spend a full day or half day together each month, spread over a 6 month period. Others are meeting for 2 hours every 2 months.

Generally though, participants tend to meet between 3 – 6 times over a 6 –12 month period and ACOSVO make contact with you at regular intervals to find out how the exchange is going. Occasionally exchanges last several years, although we will submit an end of exchange evaluation to participants after 12 months. There will also be the opportunity to share exchange reflections via case studies, blogs or information session events.

Q - Who will I be matched with?

On the application form you will be asked to indicate what you would like to get out of an exchange, what you can offer or what sector you would like to gain more experience of. Based on this we will undertake a matching process to ensure a 'good fit' between applicants; taking into account the knowledge and experience offered and the desired outcomes of the exchange.

Q - How long will it take to confirm a match?

The matching process may take us up to 3 months, although we will endeavour to offer you a suitable exchange partner quicker than this. On rare occasions, we may feel there is no suitable match in the participant pool, so we would initially seek out a bespoke match via our networks. If none are available, we would then propose deferring your exchange until the next cohort of applications are received.

Once anonymous suitable matches are emailed to participants for approval, we will chase a response no more than 2 times over a 3 week period prior to marking an applicant as "No Longer Interested" in the programme. You will be offered up to a maximum of 3 exchange matches. If two application cohorts have passed and we are still unable to find you a suitable match, we will reimburse you our matching fee.

Q - How can I ensure confidentiality?

All participants commit to confidentiality terms and conditions as part of their initial application. However, should you prefer to sign an additional Partnership and Confidentiality Agreement with your match partner then ACOSVO are happy to provide you with a form.

Q - What types of exchange activities are involved?

The programme is designed to be flexible and to suit individual needs and requirements. Exchange activities to date have included: on-the-job shadowing, meeting your exchange partner's colleagues or front-line staff, attending work meetings, paired conversations, attending events/conferences together.

Activities should be co-ordinated by the participants to suit their own learning objectives and fit round participants' diary commitments. Individuals are encouraged to look at their initial online application before their first meeting to remind themselves of what they were looking to gain from the exchange. A non-mandatory Objectives Template form is provided by ACOSVO to record exchange outcome expectations and as a rough agenda guide for meetings as well as a Reflection Template form to help track conversations and provide exchange evaluation.

Q - Are there any costs involved?

There will be a £80 matching fee charge, payable on application for non-ACOSVO members. This charge is waived for all ACOSVO members and for applicants of some funded pilot exchange projects.

For organisations interested in multiple employee Leadership Exchange Programme applications, a discounted block booking matching fee charge is available which will be invoiced accordingly. For more information, please email the Service Co-ordinator at [**services@acosvo.org.uk**](mailto:services@acosvo.org.uk)

Please note: Our matching fee will be reimbursed if we are unable to find you an exchange partner after two application cohorts have passed. You will be offered up to a maximum of 3 exchange matches.