Person Specification

Trustees and Board Chair | Oracy Aotearoa

About the roles

Too many tamariki in Aotearoa New Zealand are starting school without one of the most important skills they need for life: **oracy, the ability to talk, listen and understand.** An estimated 1 in 4 children will start school without the basic language skills they need. That is a national challenge with lifelong consequences for learning, wellbeing and relationships.

Oracy Aotearoa is a charitable trust building a national movement that puts oracy at the heart of early learning, whānau life and community connection. Our vision is that every child starts school with the oracy skills they need to flourish. We are ready for our next phase and are seeking a **Board Chair** and **up to three trustees**. These are unpaid, voluntary governance roles, guided by our principles (Mātapono), including honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi alongside tangata whenua.

The board's priority needs are a new Chair, financial oversight, a speech-language therapist, tangata whenua leadership and a younger voice:

- **Board Chair:** governance or chair experience, strategic vision and strong facilitation. Appointed as a trustee first; the trustees then choose the Chair.
- **Treasurer / finance lead:** an accounting or finance qualification (e.g. CA, CPA) or substantial senior finance experience; can read, explain and challenge financial reports.
- **Tangata whenua trustee:** identifies as tangata whenua; can guide tikanga and Te Tiriti partnership; links to Māori education or community networks. Not expected to represent all Māori.
- **Speech-language therapist:** registered speech-language therapist (or equivalent clinical oracy expertise) who can bring clinical insight into governance and strategy. Not required to be Chair.
- **Younger / emerging leader:** fresh perspective, energy and willingness to learn. Governance experience is not required.

One person may fit more than one profile.

Requirements for all trustees

- Passion for oracy and the kaupapa: every child starting school able to talk, listen and understand.
- Commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to working respectfully alongside tangata whenua and diverse communities.
- A governance mindset: strategic, collaborative and willing to make decisions collectively.
- Integrity and good faith: declares interests and avoids conflicts; not disqualified as a charity officer.
- Time and energy: attends hui every six weeks (about 1.5 hours) as a minimum, prepares in advance, and helps Oracy Aotearoa reach its next phase.

Role-specific requirements

- **Board Chair:** proven chairing or board leadership; runs inclusive hui and brings the board to decisions; leads renewal, induction and succession; builds relationships with trustees, the founder, funders and community; models Te Tiriti-based practice; can give more time than other trustees.
- **Treasurer:** ensures financial and accounting policies are current and annual statements are prepared; understands fraud and funding risks; helps plan sustainable growth.
- **Tangata whenua trustee:** helps build tikanga into hui and decisions and advises on Māori engagement. Oracy Aotearoa will discuss mentoring and support so the cultural load is shared.
- **Speech-language therapist:** keeps the clinical perspective in decisions, programmes and advocacy, as the founding Chair has done. Does not need to chair or hold an office.
- **Younger / emerging leader:** brings the view of a younger generation and helps reach young whānau. Induction and a trustee mentor are provided.

Terms and conditions

- **Unpaid and voluntary.** Reasonable expenses are reimbursed.
- **Time:** hui every six weeks, 1.5 hours, as a minimum. We want people committed to helping us grow, which may involve work between hui.
- **Format:** hui are currently held in the Saxton complex, with online attendance available.
- **Term:** the deed sets no fixed term.
- **Appointment:** two-thirds of current trustees must agree (cl 10.1). General board decisions need 75% of trustees present.

How we will assess applicants

Applicants send a cover letter or short video or voice message and a CV. We then hold an informal hui with the Chair and a trustee, speak with two referees and ask for a declaration of interests. Trustees vote on appointments (two-thirds, cl 10.1) and then choose the Chair. Applicants may be scored 0–3 against the criteria.

Oracy Aotearoa welcomes applications from people of all whakapapa and backgrounds, and particularly encourages tangata whenua and younger people.