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Charities urged to submit annual information before deadline

Every year, every registered charity in Scotland must send OSCR a set of accounts, a trustees' annual report and an external scrutiny report. Charities do this by completing an online annual return using **OSCR Online**.



OSCR requires this information within 9 months of a charity's 'year-end'. For example, when a charity has a financial year-end of 31 March its deadline date is 31 December. It is clearly marked on a charity's entry in the **Scottish Charity Register** if they have missed their deadline.

Out of 25,413 charities on the Register, 9295 (37%) have a deadline between December 2021 and January 2022. OSCR is awaiting information from 5824 of them.*

We know that there is a range of legitimate reasons that charities may have for not submitting on time, which is why OSCR actively works with charities and third sector organisations to discover any underlying issues.

In addition to displaying this information on their entry in the Scottish Charity Register, if a charity does not provide us with the required information the following could apply:

- under section 45 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, we can appoint an accountant to prepare the accounts at the trustees expense
- funding for the charity may not be granted as many funders use the information on the register to inform their judgements
- it may affect some of the benefits that charitable status brings, for instance a water rates exemption.

Historically, some charities wait until the festive period to submit the information. **OSCR's office will be closed from 12pm on 24 December 2021 until 05 January 2022**. OSCR staff will not be available between these dates to support those who are having difficulties logging in to OSCR Online. Charities should make sure they can access OSCR Online **now**. If you cannot access the system, there is a password reset link on the **OSCR Online login**

page. Our staff can look into your system access during our opening hours if this is not working for you.

OSCR's website has a range of information to support you with providing annual information. This includes guidance on:

- [Submitting an online annual return](#)
- [Charity accounts](#)
- [Trustees' Annual Reports.](#)

New OSCR videos



OSCR has its own **YouTube channel** where we publish helpful videos covering different aspects of being a charity trustee.

Here are the new videos since our last newsletter:

Embracing Hybrid Working

In this webinar recording, we talk about the new ways of working many of us are embracing following the pandemic. What have we learned? What does hybrid working mean for trustees, employees and organisations? What are the new possibilities, and what are the risks?

Martin Tyson, Head of Regulation and Improvement at OSCR chairs this webinar with Stephanie Fraser, Chief Executive of Cerebral Palsy Scotland and John Fitzgerald, trustee of the Joseph Rowntree Trust.

Collective Responsibility

Our staff discuss real life scenarios highlighting challenges faced by charity trustees, and key learning points for the sector.

Charity Fraud Awareness

This online event, hosted by the OSCR in association with the Cyber Scotland Partnership, has some great hints and tips on how you can avoid your charity or voluntary sector organisation becoming a victim. We will be joined in conversation with guest speakers Alison Stone (Cyber Resilience Co-ordinator for the Third Sector) and Dave Carter (Head of Counter Fraud Management at the British Council).

OSCR publishes new research on Scottish charity sector

New research published by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) sets out the current state of the country's charity sector.



The research reveals:

- Two thirds of Scotland's twenty-five thousand registered charities are run entirely by volunteers
- Charities in Scotland also employ over two hundred thousand staff
- The majority of charities in Scotland have an income of less than £25,000 per year, with over a third reporting an income of less than £10,000 over the same period
- Scottish charities have a combined annual income of over thirteen billion pounds, making the sector a similar size to the Scottish NHS.

The key findings of the new research, which are based on a snapshot of Scotland's official charity register taken in February 2021, also show that that the key aims of Scottish charities are to advance education (51%) promote community development (36%) and give relief to those in need (25%).

The most popular beneficiaries of the work of Scottish charities are children or young people (47%), people with disabilities (23%) and older people (22%).

[Read the research here.](#)

Third sector organisations asked for views on Scottish Public Procurement



The Scottish Government has commissioned Blake Stevenson Ltd., an independent research company, to investigate the views and experiences of third sector organisations and new private sector companies, in relation to

public procurement in Scotland.

In their definition of 'third sector organisations', they include charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups. By 'new' private sector companies, they mean companies set up within the last 5 years.

You may have recently bid for a public contract (either as the lead or as part of a consortium) or may have decided not to for a variety of reasons. In either of these cases, the Scottish Government are interested in your views.

The survey is open until 21 December 2021. The **Scottish Government has published a blog** to provide some more information.

[You can access the survey here.](#)

Digital Trustees - Match Making Event

Charities across the UK require digital specialists to join their board of trustees. Digital specialists across the UK want to volunteer their time effectively in a strategic role but often don't know where to start.



Third Sector Lab are holding a free event that gives charities and those working in the technology sector the chance to connect via matchmaking, talks and more.

Digital Trustees is an initiative funded by The Catalyst and organised by Third Sector Lab. This FREE event takes place on Thursday, 9 December 2021, from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.

During the event, you will hear from digital professionals about their trustee journey and charities sharing their experiences of having a digital expert on their board. There will be an opportunity to discuss the role of digital trustees during a Q&A plus signposting to a range of useful resources to help you recruit the right digital trustee.

[Find out more and register here.](#)

New blog on our website



Our website has a range of blogs about charity life. Click on the link below to read our latest blog.

Charity data: All things tangible

OSCR's Data and Research Manager provides some background to our latest research - the Scottish Charities 2021 Sector Overview.

We are recruiting new Board members - Application window closes TOMORROW

The OSCR Board sets the strategic direction and ensures that activities focus on the delivery of key priorities. The Board also sets the overall vision for OSCR and works with the Chief Executive to monitor performance.



We are looking for up to five new Board members. We welcome interest from individuals who may not have had previous Board experience, but who have the potential to contribute, who wish to develop their skills in this area and are willing to learn.

We would welcome applications from anyone who believes they could make a strong contribution although we are also seeking to broaden the diversity of the Board including the breadth of its geographical involvement, gender balance and engagement of other groups currently under-represented on Scotland's public bodies, such as disabled people, those from black and minority ethnic communities and people under 50.

Full information on these positions, including information on how to apply, can be found on the [Public Appointments Scotland website](#).

The closing date for applications is midnight tomorrow (3 December 2021).

Scotland's charity regulator: OSCR is the independent registrar and regulator of Scotland's 23,000 charities

www.oscr.org.uk | info@oscr.org.uk | General enquiries: 01382 220446 | Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) 2nd Floor, Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee, DD1 4NY |

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OSCR Online makes it easier for charities to report to OSCR, and improves transparency for the public. For more information, or to register, visit www.oscr.org.uk

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