

THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH CENTRE TERMS OF REFERENCE

REFERENCE GROUP: BELOW THE RADAR

A. Role and Purpose

A key element of TSRCs programme is research into 'below the radar' activity in the sector. This includes not only those groups who do not appear on legal registers (Charity Commission etc) but also those small community based, black and minority ethnic, refugee and new migrant organisations which are under-researched, are not present in current policy agendas and are involved in advocacy and representation activities rather than direct service delivery.

TSRC's aim is not only to develop an understanding of how such groups form and their life cycle but also to explore new forms of grass roots organising and the contribution of 'below the radar' organisations to the third sector, to local communities and the wider society.

B. Members, Chair, Attendees, Secretary, Terms of office

This research theme is being led by Dr Jenny Phillimore and Angus McCabe at the University of Birmingham. As part of the early development of the 'below the radar' research, TSRC is seeking to establish an Reference Group which brings together practitioners and network organisations from a range of perspectives with academics and policy makers with expertise in working with 'below the radar' groups to inform the focus, activities and findings of this area of TSRC research.

C. Duties of the Group

The aim of the Reference Group is to advise, comment on, and respond to plans for research activity and publications; and to assist in the dissemination of findings through web-links for publications, invitations to conferences etc.

In return for involvement in the Reference Group, TSRC will:

- ensure members have early access to research findings
- support members in accessing research training and exchanges through the Active Citizenship and Community Engagement Capacity Building Cluster
- where feasible, provide commentaries/feedback on members own research proposals and/or acting as an academic research partner
- act as a 'sounding board' for ideas/issues around 'below the radar' organisations and activities in the Third Sector.

D. Meetings, Frequency, Notice, Quorum

The advisory group will meet once a year – though smaller 'special interest groups' can also be formed if Reference Group members feel this is helpful around specific research ideas/current issues.

The majority of work will happen 'virtually' – through email/on-line discussions particularly around research ideas and acting as 'critical readers' of publications and think pieces.

Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed on production of receipts for those members who cannot recover them from their own organisation and where costs would preclude an individual/organisation taking part in meetings.

E. Minutes and reporting

All proceedings of this Group will be noted, such meeting notes being approved and signed at their subsequent meeting.

The key academic lead of each Reference Group will be asked to produce two reports a year in March and September for submission to the Project Management Team . The Principal Investigator will be responsible for forwarding these reports to the Advisory Board on an annual basis in April.

F. Review of Constitution

The Group's constitution and working arrangements are subject to a review every three years.