

MISSION, VISION & VALUES

WHAT IS IT?

Mission, vision and values are the three key components that form the purpose of an organisation. Together they make up the basis of what an organisation is about. The vision is a description of the future; it is about how you want the future to be. The mission describes the business of your organisation is there to do, and therefore how it contributes to achieving the vision. The value statement describes the way you work, your behaviour and the enduring traits, beliefs, convictions and characteristics that are deemed to be important and worthwhile to your organisation.

WHY SHOULD YOU USE IT?

BENEFITS: Developing your vision, mission and value statement can:

- give your organisation a long-term view
- unite the organisation around a common sense of purpose and identity
- communicate clearly to your internal/external stakeholders what your organisation is about
- create a sense of purpose from which a strategy can be developed

LIMITATIONS: There is no agreed terminology when it comes to these headings; they can mean different things to different people and can cause tension and conflict when discussing them.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE IT?

If your organisation doesn't have a statement of its mission, vision and values, you should seriously consider developing one. If you already have one in place, you should re-look at the vision and values every **eight to ten years** and review the continuing relevance of your mission about every **three to five years**.

DEVELOPING STATEMENTS

When developing or reviewing your mission, vision and values, check for the following features in each one of them. Everyone in the organisation needs to be involved, led by the committee / board / trustees.

A GOOD VISION:

- describes the future you want
- is about the heart and the head, and is idealistic in tone
- conveys a standard of excellence
- reflects horizon-expanding ideals
- inspires enthusiasm and commitment
- is easily understood and accessible to all
- is congruent with the mission
- involves bringing about change

YOUR MISSION STATEMENT SHOULD SAY:

- who you are
- what you do
- why you do it
- how you do it
- why you exist

IT SHOULD BE:

- clear and easily understood
- short and focused
- inspiring (internally and externally)
- realistic, workable and achievable
- expressed in terms of outcomes
- congruent with charitable objectives (if it isn't, then these should be reviewed too)

FEATURES OF VALUES:

- people feel they have value or worth, and hold them dear
- they are beliefs, attitudes or principles expressed in behaviours
- they govern organisational behaviour – what people do and how they do it, for example, valuing diversity and equal opportunities
- they should be consistent with each other and with vision and mission