



**CHARITY COMMISSION**  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

# Small Charity Constitution

## Small Charity Constitution

Suitable for small charities with an annual income under £5,000 that don't own a building or employ people and do not intend to register with the Charity Commission.

### 1 Name

The charity's name is 'Benzo Research Project'.

### 2 The purposes of the charity are:-

- a) The advancement of training and research into the subject of non-medical use\* of benzodiazepines among young people in the UK and into its effects on the public and society, together with the publication of the results of any such research.
- b) To advance the education of the public in the harms of non-medical use of benzodiazepines to help prevent and mitigate the suffering caused by such harms and associated behaviours.

*\*Non-medical use: The use of prescription drugs, whether obtained by prescription or otherwise, other than in the manner, for the reasons, or time period prescribed or by a person for whom the drug was not prescribed ([Papazisis, Tsakiridis and Siafis, 2018](#)).*

### 3 Trustees

- (1) The charity shall be managed by a committee of trustees who are appointed at the Annual General Meetings (AGM).
- (2) Trustees will hold office for up to nine years, subject to the [Charity Governance Code](#). If a trustee wishes to serve for more than nine years, their reappointment is:
  - Subject to a rigorous review and takes into account the need for progressive refreshing of the board;
  - Explained in the trustees' annual report.
- (3) If a trustee decides to step down before their term ends, current trustees will elect their successor at the next general meeting. Upon vacancy of a trustee position, any member may stand for election as a trustee.
- (4) Trustees may take on the position as a Project Advisor at the end of their terms and upon concluding their role as trustee. A current trustee cannot also be a Project Advisor.

### 4 Carrying out the purposes

In order to carry out the charitable purposes, the trustees have the power to:

- (1) Appoint executives to lead working groups within the charity. Trustees may also take on an executive role, provided sufficient measures are taken to avoid any conflict of interest.
- (2) Raise funds, receive grants and donations.
- (3) Apply funds to carry out the work of the charity.
- (4) Cooperate with and support other charities and stakeholders with similar purposes.
- (5) Do anything which is lawful, in good conscience, and following the charity's values to achieve the purposes.

### 5 Membership

- (1) The charity shall have a membership, consisting of voluntary roles within working groups as set

out by the trustees.

- (2) People who support the work of the charity, are aged 18 or over, and willing to conduct voluntary work on behalf of the charity can apply to the trustees to become a member.
- (3) Once accepted by the trustees, new members will be subject to a 1-month probationary period. Following a successful probationary period as evaluated by the trustees, membership lasts until the next AGM and may be renewed.
- (4) If a member would like to cease volunteering for the charity before the end of their membership period, they must give the trustees 14 days notice.
- (5) The trustees may remove a person's membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the charity. The member has the right to be heard by the trustees before the decision is made and can be accompanied and supported by a friend or family member.
- (6) The trustees will keep an up-to-date membership list.

## **6 Annual General Meeting - AGM**

- (1) The AGM must be held every year, with 14 days notice given to all members telling them what is on the agenda. Minutes must be kept of the AGM.
- (2) There must be at least 50% of members present at the AGM.
- (3) Every member has one vote.
- (4) The trustees shall present the annual report and accounts.
- (5) At the following AGM, the charity membership shall elect between 3 and 5 trustees to serve for the next term.

## **7 Trustee meetings**

- (1) At the first meeting after the AGM, the trustees shall appoint a chair ('Project Lead') and treasurer.
- (2) Trustees must hold at least 3 meetings each year. At least 3 trustees must be present at Trustee meetings to make decisions, where consent must be gained from all trustees prior to implementing decisions made during the meeting.
- (3) Minutes shall be kept for every meeting.
- (4) If trustees have a conflict of interest they must declare it and leave the meeting while this matter is being discussed or decided.
- (5) During the year, if needed, the trustees may – upon consensus vote – appoint additional trustees and/or executives.
- (6) The trustees may make reasonable additional rules to help run the charity. These rules must not conflict with this constitution or the law.

## **8 Money and property**

- (1) Money and property must only be used for the charity's purposes.

- (2) Project Lead must keep accounts. The most recent annual accounts can be seen by anybody on request.
- (3) Trustees and executives cannot receive any money or property from the charity, except to refund reasonable out of pocket expenses.
- (4) Money must be held in the charity's bank account. All cheques must be signed by 2 trustees.

## 9 General meetings

If the Trustees consider it is necessary to change the constitution, or wind up the charity, they must call a General Meeting so that the membership can make the decision. Trustees must also call a General Meeting if they receive a written request from the majority of members. All members must be given 14 days notice and told the reason for the meeting. Minutes must be kept.

- (1) **Winding up** - any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to a charity with similar purposes to this one.
- (2) **Changes to the Constitution** - can be made at AGMs or General Meetings. No change can be made that would make the organisation no longer a charity.
- (3) **General Meeting** - called on written request from a majority of members.
- (4) Trustees may also call a General Meeting to consult the membership.

## 10 Setting up the charity

This constitution was adopted on 20 September 2023 by the people whose signatures appear below. They are the first members of the charity and will be the trustees until the next AGM meeting, which must be held within one year of this date.

Signed

Print name and address

DocuSigned by:



B1150278F2BE4A4...

MONICA RICHARDS

██████████  
EAST SUSSEX, BN ██████████

DocuSigned by:



6B00BE2345F5486...

ALEXANDER JAMES LAURENCE MARTIN

██████████ LONDON, W12 ██████████

DocuSigned by:

Julia Agnieszka Uszpolewicz

A294807143F0461...

JULIA AGNIESZKA USZPOLEWICZ

██████████ LONDON, N16 ██████████

DocuSigned by:



A24AA1D914DE491...

JOANNA BRIGHT

██████████ LONDON, SE5 ██████████