



## **Giving and Gaining Our ProBono Prospectus**

**Join our ProBono Support  
to the  
NonProfit (Third) Sector**

**November 2024**



Certified Management Consultant® is the internationally  
recognised professional business consulting

Members of The Worshipful Company of Management  
Consultants provide pro bono support to the Third Sector



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Worshipful Company of Management Consultants is a sociable and philanthropic community of management consultants, sharing our talents and experience with a larger network of like-minded people in the City of London. We are justifiably proud of the work we do with charities via our ProBono Committee. About 50 Members actively volunteer to support charities in a variety of ways, through Consultancy engagements and Mentoring Support. Our work typically ranges from help with Strategy, Income Generation, Organisational Design and Governance, to best use of Information and Finance Systems, to helping with Grant Applications. Essentially, all the business areas that combine and relate to running successful charitable organisations.

In this prospectus, we outline what we do and how we go about doing it – particularly with the aim of showing that any member can get involved, typically building on their previous consultancy experience. And for those members who would like to support our very successful mentoring activities, we regularly run mentoring workshops to equip those new to the role with the necessary skills and experience to work with senior charity executives and trustees asking for support. All this is against the backdrop that we are all volunteers; yes we follow many of the disciplines and processes that you would recognise from commercial consultancy and mentoring practices – but no money changes hands and there is little or no commercial pressure on any of us to make things happen. We are simply all committed to what we are doing for our clients.

We aim to ensure that pro bono assignments deliver both value for the client and worthwhile experiences for volunteering members. Members generally find their involvement in ProBono activities to be very rewarding. We summarise this in the phrase "Giving and Gaining" and many Members join the Company with the broad aspiration of "giving something back". With this in mind, we now look at what you might be expected to give – and indeed what you might expect to gain from volunteering to carry out ProBono assignments.

## 2. GIVING AND GAINING

We regularly talk about how we Give and Gain from our membership and volunteering, particularly in relation to our ProBono work, but what exactly do we mean?

### 2.1 Giving

It's all about giving your time and expertise but it's up to you to define the amount of time and energy that you can commit. At the outset of any engagement, we recommend and encourage all volunteers to agree a scope and expected duration at the outset. We do not ask volunteers enter a client relationship where there is an ongoing commitment, for example by filling an operational role. We do not aim to support charities by providing long term resourcing.

We aim to make a difference with short-term interventions in the form of defined consultancy assignments or mentoring relationships. The time on any particular ProBono project might vary from a few hours, perhaps helping to prepare and run a strategy workshop, to a few days and possibly even a month or two on a longer-term assignment. But this is all under your control. Mentoring relationships do tend to be spread over a longer elapsed time, but in total not involving a major commitment of time.

Often members worry that their expertise may not be directly related to the NonProfit sector. We can assure you that this is rarely the case as the vast majority of skills are directly transferable and therefore your past experience will be relevant to each new client situation. Each consultancy or mentoring engagement is overseen by a member of the ProBono Committee, particularly to help those new to working in the NonProfit sector but also to provide light touch support and guidance. All members have found this to be incredibly valuable.

During an engagement, all we ask is for volunteers to provide an update periodically to the ProBono Committee about progress, any issues encountered and the amount of time that they have donated.



## 2.2 Gaining

Picking up on this point, the first thing you will gain upon volunteering to work on a Company ProBono engagement is the support from a member of the ProBono Committee. This person will not necessarily be available to help you do the work, but they will be there to support you in terms of identifying issues, acting as a sounding board and providing any other support you may need. This often includes some additional skills development. For example, we regularly run mentoring workshops to equip our volunteers with the necessary skills and frameworks to carry out productive mentoring assignments. Similarly we hold consultancy workshops to discuss current challenges in the NonProfit Sector and methods to address them.

So, you'll certainly be able to gain new skills. And as well as new skills you will learn new subjects and might quickly become an expert in areas such as fund raising, grant applications, organisational design, governance and so on.

We make no guarantees, but you will have “interesting experiences” working on any ProBono engagement. We sometimes talk about “life affirming experiences” and they can indeed change your life. Many Company Members will happily talk about the opportunities that have arisen because of their volunteering.

You will undoubtedly meet interesting, passionate and indeed inspirational people who are committed to their charities. Many Company volunteers develop relationships to the point where they become a Trustee of the charity that they have been helping. This is a regular occurrence and can lead to multiyear ongoing relationships but it's all up to you as the relationship is always between you and the charity in question.

You'll also gain and benefit from the network of Members who engage with ProBono assignments (beyond our regular Fellowship activities) and will have the opportunity to share your knowledge and experiences as well as learning from others. Ultimately you will be able to bask in the glow of satisfaction that arises from knowing that your efforts have increased the productivity, the impact and the social outcomes of the charity that you have been working with.

Finally, you will undoubtedly receive unreserved thanks and “positive strokes” from those that you have worked with. The warm glow of actually “giving something back” will be tangible, hopefully memorable and indeed measurable, as all good consulting and mentoring engagements should be.

## 3. WHAT SORT OF WORK DO WE DO?

This is best answered by reference to the diagram on our website that sets out many of the questions that client organisations ask of us. Clearly, Income Generation is a critical area for our clients, then more often than not we are asked to help develop their strategy – in particular looking to focus their priorities. Underpinning all this there are the areas of processes and systems, and people management; how best to use the resources the client has at their disposal.

All these areas map very easily onto the skills needed to work with commercial organisations. Governance is the one area that is notably different. There are three core models: the traditional Trustee based structure and more recently CICs and CIOs. We have experience of all three and it is not difficult to learn about their relative advantages and disadvantages. The golden rule is that the Trustees are non-executive, yet hold responsibility for the performance and financial probity of the charity. This can cause issues between the Trustee Board and Senior Management...





## **4. HOW DO WE GET NEW ENGAGEMENTS?**

Since the Company was founded in 1992, our philanthropic focus has been on our ProBono Consultancy and Mentoring. Like all Livery Companies, we have a Charitable Fund that makes financial grants, but we knew that as a Modern Livery Company, our professional skills would be of far greater 'cash value' than the financial grants that we might ever be able to provide. Putting this into context, we have been providing up to £1.3m of ProBono support each year, which is equivalent to some £7m of value according to metrics used by the Management Consultancies Association.

We have therefore slowly built our reputation through collaboration with membership organisations such as ACEVO and CFDG, and of course City University and Bayes Business School. These relationships have waxed and waned over the years, as we are all volunteers as explained earlier in this prospectus. However, in parallel, word of mouth has helped us to become one of the "go to" organisations supporting the NonProfit Sector.

Most recently, we have been at the forefront of growing pan-Livery cooperation. There is now a more active network across a number of Livery Companies, typically Modern Companies, that brings together deeper knowledge of areas such as Marketing, Finance, HR and IT. We can ask colleagues from other Liveries to work with us, or indeed to take over from us, on particular engagements. This initiative has made the Livery movement a growing force in supporting the NonProfit sector.

## **5. HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

In conclusion, we are always looking for more volunteers, either to resource new engagements, or to help with building our networks of contacts to build our pipeline of opportunities.

All you need to do is ask! Thank you.