



# An Introduction to The Charity IT Association

*enabling charities to achieve IT excellence*

*CITA seeks a world in which all charities can harness the full potential of technology through access to affordable, trustworthy and independent technology services.*

## About CITA

The Charity IT Association (CITA) was founded in 2016 for the purpose of enabling all charities to be able to access expert IT help and support. CITA introduces volunteers with relevant IT skills and experience to charities who want or need to improve their technology capabilities.

Our vision is to have a world in which charities can harness the full potential of technology to increase their impact for good and this is achieved by providing charities with access to affordable, trustworthy and independent technology services in order to allow them to achieve their own strategic mission.

## How does CITA support charities?

CITA provides a wide range of services, delivered by professional IT volunteers, that help charities overcome the challenges of using and managing IT:

### CITA Review Services

**Independent advice on effective IT:** Your CITA volunteer will help you to identify and qualify potential IT projects and initiatives that will support your charity's strategic and operational objectives.

### CITA Advisory Services

**Helping you through your IT project:** Your CITA volunteer will help you to define, plan and manage an identified IT project, from scoping to completion. The volunteer can offer invaluable advice on procurement and help to properly draft an RFP for services to ensure that you cover all the bases.

### CITA Delivery Services

**The right skills for a successful IT project:** Once you have defined and planned your IT project, your CITA volunteer will provide the technical skills needed to fulfil the project. The project will be managed by your charity, or another CITA volunteer, under your direction.

Areas that are quite common in terms of help and support include:

- Cloud migration
- CRM (including SalesForce) consultancy
- Digital policy / GDPR compliance
- Document/ records / case management
- Email set-up and management

- IT software or hardware selection and deployment
- Migration to new PCs and file sharing
- Office 365 deployment
- Web analytics / support

CITA also offers charity members opportunities to access discounted IT services and products from our partners.

***“Digital technology, cloud computing and the internet offer huge benefits to charities, but the security and privacy issues are complex and could hold many charities back. CITA matched us with a volunteer who was very experienced with IT security in an organisation of our size. Our volunteer patiently helped us work through our key risks and identify practical steps we could take to use our new cloud system with confidence.” Step by Step***

### **What’s CITA’s impact on charities?**

CITA makes it easy for charities to get the IT support and advice that they need and can afford to meet their charitable aims.

***CITA has worked with over 700 charities, delivering a value of consultancy services of over £2,000,000.***

CITA allows charities to access technology expertise easily and cost effectively. Whilst a small charge is applied to those charities able to afford it, using CITA avoids costly consultancy charges.

***74% of the charities we work with have no dedicated IT resource***

CITA has worked with charities that have needed help with advice on cloud migration, GDPR or Office 365, through to delivering or project managing major integration projects.

***100% of charities who have implemented changes found the service ‘useful’ or ‘very useful’, 94% were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the service received; and 87% of charities would recommend CITA to others.***

CITA provides a broad range of technology support to charities through a network of independent and trustworthy professional IT volunteers, who provide their time, knowledge, skills and experience free of charge.

***98% of volunteers are willing to participate further with CITA and 73% of volunteers have participated in more than one volunteering activity***

***“The advice and support provided by the CITA Review Service has helped make the previously overwhelming task of overhauling all of our IT systems into a manageable process, clearly linked to our strategic objectives for the next 5 years.” Accessible Arts & Media***

### **Why do charities work with CITA?**

As a charity ourselves, CITA understands the challenges faced with having to balance the costs incurred in meeting organisational and tactical needs with the necessity of ensuring that expenditure is focused on meeting your strategic charitable aims. That is why we offer affordable technology support and consultancy – to ensure that your systems, processes and resources can provide the data, information and content that you need, when you need it.

***"The free IT consultancy offered by CITA allowed Respect to assess its IT needs and plan for the future. The volunteer Consultant was friendly and knowledgeable and offered advice suitable to Respect's needs and size. I would recommend the service to anyone."*** Respect

***CITA makes it easy for charities to get the IT support and advice that they need and can afford to meet their charitable aims.***

### **Why volunteer with CITA?**

CITA volunteers help charities to harness the full potential of technology and thereby increase their impact for good.

Volunteers choose the projects, where and when they work, and can determine the timescales that they are able to commit. This helps to ensure that CITA can match the right volunteer skills, experience and availability to the needs of a specific charity.

***CITA values the time, talent, and passion our volunteers contribute to help charities run more efficiently through technology review, advice and delivery.***

CITA volunteers benefit from gaining greater experience and exposure to IT issues and concerns, as well as knowing that they are indirectly helping people in need of charity support. As part of the CITA Community, volunteers also can network with fellow volunteers, charity members and partners to share experiences and discuss best practice.

### **Why partner with CITA?**

CITA relies on supporters (like minded organisations who provide pro bono help) and partners (organisations that provide financial backing) to help provide affordable services to charities. Association with CITA means that you can be assured that your contributions will positively impact a number of charities and enable the effective delivery of their products and services to those in need through improved use of technology.

### **How is CITA funded?**

***The volunteers registered with CITA provide their services on a pro bono basis, i.e. free of charge***

CITA is funded through the benevolence of our sponsors and generosity of individual donors, and by asking charities that we support to contribute towards our administration costs, where they are able. Many charities find the means to fund the administration fee comes from money saved (either by following through on volunteer recommendations, or by associating a value to the expertise received).

***CITA will never turn away a charity that is unable to afford a contribution towards our administrative costs.***

### **FAQs**

***Can you help me understand how I can get better technology or use my current technology better?***

CITA has an expansive bank of IT professionals with wide and varied IT skills and experience. Through the registration process, CITA will carefully match your needs to the right volunteer - an appropriate, independent IT professional who can help you understand how to get better technology and/or how to use your current technology better.

### ***What skills can you provide?***

The skills will depend upon the specific need and may be specific to a defined software or technology type. Typically, the sort of skills most often required include:

- Consultancy
- Cloud strategy knowledge
- Coding skills
- Data management
- Data security
- Integration skills / migration knowledge
- Project management
- Web skills / analytics

### ***Will we have to pay?***

There is a small charge made to charities that have an income of over £50,000 to cover CITA's administration costs. This charge is made on a project-by-project basis and is the only cost. The volunteers registered with CITA provide their services on a pro bono basis, i.e. free of charge.

### ***What is the process to engage a CITA volunteer?***

When you register to apply for a CITA service (CITA Review, CITA Advisory or CITA Delivery) you will outline your needs in detail. CITA will use this as a basis to match you against a list of potential volunteers. Where a volunteer is available and able to support you, they will contact you for an initial call to talk through your requirements in more detail.

### ***How long will it take to find us a volunteer?***

For most charities CITA can match a volunteer within a week, but for some it can take longer. It will often depend on the complexity of your project, the estimated timescale and duration of the volunteer effort, or your geographic location. We believe providing the right volunteer is more important than rushing into an assignment – so if you have very tight, unmovable timescales, please let us know – we wouldn't want to be part of your problem!

### ***What training will I receive as a volunteer?***

CITA will carefully match you to charities that have expressed a requirement for the specific skills and experiences that you will have told us about, so training should not be required. Whilst CITA provides no training, we do offer guidelines, built from other volunteers' experiences which share best practice in terms of approach, behaviour and traps to avoid!

### ***As a volunteer, what if my circumstances change and I can't commit myself to supporting CITA?***

CITA recognises that careers in IT can ebb and flow and that a volunteer's availability will vary accordingly. If you find that you cannot commit to supporting CITA, you can either alter your preferences to opt out of further contact or decline any invitations to engage with future assignments until you are ready to volunteer again.

### ***Will I get paid as a volunteer?***

No. All volunteers expected to work pro bono (i.e. free of charge). Where there are travel & subsistence costs, these may be recoverable from the charity – but you would need to agree



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to these in advance directly with the charity. CITA does make a nominal charge to some charities (above a certain income threshold) to recover our administration costs.