



EAST RIDING VOLUNTARY ACTION SERVICES (ERVAS) LTD

“The Charity for Charities and Communities”

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Who controls it?	Board of Trustees
What is the governing document?	Constitution
Who is the regulator?	Charity Commission
Does it have limited liability?	Yes
What sources of finance are available?	Grants, donations, membership fees etc
Is charitable status available?	Yes, automatic

CIOs are incorporated organisations, with their own legal identity. A CIO can hold assets in its own name. The CIO has limited liability, meaning that trustees are not generally liable for the debts or liabilities of the charity.

The CIO is the only bespoke vehicle for charities. It has been designed with charities in mind, unlike the other legal forms which are adapted for charities. A CIO is created on registration with the Charity Commission. Model governing documents can be found [here](#).

A CIO is only formed once it has been registered with the Charity Commission (it cannot be established without Charity Commission involvement). This may involve a delay as it can sometimes take a long time to achieve registration with the Charity Commission, especially if the organisation’s objects or activities are unusual, although this is not always the case.

A CIO has a two tier governance system. Like a charitable company limited by guarantee it has both trustees and members.

Where the CIO has a wider body of members it is called an “**association**” CIO. An association CIO has a wider membership, including voting members other than the charity trustees. Therefore, a member does not have to be a trustee, someone who manages the charity.

OR

As with a charitable company limited by guarantee, the trustees and members can be the same people: if this is the case the CIO is called a “**foundation**” CIO.

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