

The Bike Project: recruitment of a trustee with experience of the asylum system

Key details

- **Role:** we are looking for a trustee to join our board
- **Term:** trustee terms are three years with the possibility of renewing for a second term of three years
- **Required experience:** we are specifically looking for someone with first hand experience of the asylum system. No other specific experience is required
- **Salary:** this is a voluntary role and so is unpaid but we will reimburse all reasonable expenses (e.g. travel to and from meetings)
- **Commitment:** trustees are required to attend four meetings per year, a trustee away day, and be available for a few hours per month to deal with ad hoc issues.
- **Location:** when possible, meetings will take place in London but everything else can be done remotely. We will reimburse travel if necessary

About The Bike Project

Founded in 2013, The Bike Project provides an innovative solution to one of the most pressing problems facing refugees in the UK: the cost of transport in the UK and the impact that lack of mobility has on the daily lives of refugees.

Our mission is simple – to match up refugees and asylum seekers without the means or money to travel around, with the thousands of abandoned or unwanted bikes in London and Birmingham.

Since our launch in 2013, we have donated over 7,000 bikes to refugees and taught over 300 refugees women to cycle. You can read more about what we do and the impact it has in our latest [impact report](#).

The role of our board of trustees

The board of trustees and senior management together ensure that The Bike Project fulfils our charitable objects and abides by the laws and regulations relating to charities. Trustees are volunteers who use their knowledge, skills and experience to guide the charity for the benefit of the refugees and asylum seekers we support.

Our board has some specific roles on it: we have a chair who leads the board; a treasurer who is responsible for ensuring our finances are in good health; and a lawyer who is responsible for legal

and governance issues. We also have other specialists including trustees with a focus on digital marketing and Human Resources (HR).

For more information about the role of a board of trustees, check out the NCVO [website](#).

Lived experience leadership and our commitment to tackling structural inequality

As a refugee charity, we are deeply committed to tackling structural inequality and promoting diversity and inclusion in all of our work. Many of the people we support were seeking asylum because of their race, ethnicity, gender, religion or belief, sexuality or other personal characteristics. Many have experienced abuse, mistreatment or discrimination on these bases here in the UK. We recognise that in addition to combatting these problems in the world, The Bike Project must promote equality, diversity, anti-racism, non-discrimination, participation and inclusion within our charity too.

As part of this, we want to increase the diversity of our board of trustees by recruiting a trustee with lived experience of the asylum system. We know that increased representation on our board of people who share the experiences of the people we support will help us to:

- Ensure all our strategic and policy decisions are rooted in the lived experience of refugees and asylum seekers
- Be more accountable to the people we serve
- Honour our commitment to ensuring stronger refugee voices in our governance and management, so that refugees help to set our direction of travel
- Challenge structural inequality and promote anti-racism within our own charity and in society more widely.

Trustee responsibilities

The Charity Commission describes the formal (statutory) duties of trustees as being to:

1. Ensure The Bike Project:
 - a. Complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
 - b. Pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
 - c. Uses its resources only to further the delivery of its objects. (The Bike Project must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable the activities)
 - d. Has effective and efficient administration
 - e. Is financially stable
 - f. Properly invests any funds
2. Safeguard the good name and values of The Bike Project
3. Protect and manage The Bike Project's property
4. Contribute actively to the Board, giving firm strategic direction to The Bike Project, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets; and
5. Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor their performance.

Trustees have a collective responsibility to fulfil their duties. Each trustee brings to The Bike Project their own specific experience, skills and knowledge and is expected to use them to help the Board of trustees to reach sound decisions. Trustees are expected to come to meetings well prepared having read all Board and Committee papers in advance.

We require all of our trustees to:

1. Attend four board meetings per year and our annual away day
2. Respond to emails promptly when required
3. Be available for ad hoc meetings and/or other work for a few hours per month
4. Read, digest and scrutinise board papers
5. Engage actively in discussions

Who we are looking for

We are looking for a trustee who has first-hand experience of the asylum system. We particularly encourage applications from female, disabled, and ethnic minority candidates.

We specifically do not require the individual to have any previous experience of being a trustee or working for a charity as we know this would exclude a large number of the candidates whose voice we need on the board. The successful candidate will be given extensive support, a training and induction programme, and be assigned a 'buddy' on the board who they can approach with any queries. Our goal is to provide as much support as is required for them to feel comfortable fulfilling their duties as a trustee.

Our regulator, The Charity Commission, also specifically excludes an individual from being a trustee if they:

- are bankrupt (undischarged) or have an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA)
- have an unspent conviction for certain offences (including any that involve dishonesty or deception)
- are on the sex offenders' register

How to apply

To apply, please send a cover letter to recruitment@thebikeproject.co.uk. The cover letter should be no longer than one side of A4 and cover the following points:

- A little bit about your experience of the asylum system
- Why you want to join our board
- What you think you will contribute to the board
- A summary of any other skill and voluntary or work experience that might be relevant.

The closing date for the receipt of applications is 22 February 2021.

If you have any queries, please contact our CEO, Jem Stein, in the first instance. Jem is available at jem@thebikeproject.co.uk.

Good luck and we look forward to hearing from you!