

Trustee recruitment pack

About us and who we're looking for

Shift

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Hello! We're Shift.

A letter from us to you!

Hello and thanks for your interest in joining our board!

Shift entered the world 20 years ago (originally as We Are What We Do), and the organisation is entering an exciting next phase of life. The team has transitioned from a founder-led organisation to a [flatter, roles-based organisation](#). And together with the team, we are developing an ambitious new strategy to shift how social innovation happens in the UK. This transition draws on Shift's rich history: building and launching social ventures, partnering with incredible charities, foundations and social purpose organisations, and pushing forward the practice of social research, design and entrepreneurship.

With your help, we want to build a board that can help Shift grow partnerships, continue to develop its practice and realise the team's renewed purpose and vision. We're especially keen to speak to a mix of first-time and experienced trustees, people with expertise from either personal or professional experience, and those who (together with our existing trustees) will make up a diverse board, including people not traditionally represented in charity governance.

We're looking for up to 4 new trustees to join our board. If you've got a love of social change, a passion for community-led design and are excited about working with a charity that is challenging existing governance structures – you might be perfect for us.

Do you want to go on this journey with us? If you're keen, we'd love to talk.

Polly, Liz & David (Shift trustees)

"Shift has a rich history of turning bold ideas into reality. I'm excited to work with the team as they reimagine who is driving social change in the UK."

Polly Mackenzie, Chair

"We're a deeply committed bunch of people with big ambition and an insatiable drive to build services and programmes (that work) in partnership with the people who'll use them."

Louise Cooper, Responsible for Shift

"Shift has always been the sum of its parts, so I can't wait to see what our team and new trustees create together"

Hester Kitchen, Designer & Studio Manager

The Shift team on a recent outing



An overview of Shift

Our work

We exist to create on-the-ground social change that is visibly improving the lives of people most negatively impacted by systemic inequality. Here are three projects we're working on at the moment to give you an idea of our work:

The UK's first community-led incubator, Eastlight Homes. We're working with four teams of community entrepreneurs to research, design and prototype [community initiatives](#) to tackle local issues including the cost of living, mental health, social isolation and opportunities for young people.

A new social investment fund for marginalised founders, [Growth Impact Fund](#). We're part of a consortium (with Big Issue Invest and Unlimited) designing and delivering a new investment fund for social entrepreneurs who are typically underserved and underrepresented in social ventures.

A new service helping over 50s find jobs after redundancy, [Ageing Better](#). We co-designed a new redundancy course with 56 older workers and frontline staff, which helps them process redundancy, build their confidence and get a job that they actually want. It's currently being [delivered in pilot](#) across the West Midlands.

Grow with the Flow team as part of our Eastlight programme



Workshops and team photos from our recent work with MTVH



How we organise

At Shift, we believe in practising what we preach. That's why in 2020 we started a long journey to transition from a founder-led organisation to a [self-managing, roles-based organisation](#). When starting this journey, we knew it would be one of ongoing learning. Trying to operate differently in a hierarchical world that requires 'directors' and 'boards' means there is friction. But we think it's worth it!

To give you a taster of what this means in our team – we don't do line management, every team member runs their own reviews and our salaries are transparent. So far, we haven't explored what this could mean for our relationship with the board, but we would love to pick this up with people passionate about changing charity governance. You'll love being a trustee at Shift if you're no ego, kind, collaborative and have fire in your belly to challenge how things work!

Who we're looking for (job description)

Shift is entering a new phase, and with that, we're looking for 4 new trustees to help build a new, energised board that can guide and challenge us along the way. As there is change underway (a new strategy and chair, amongst other things!), we're looking for trustees passionate about the work we're doing and who want to play an active role in shaping our organisation.

The role

At the heart of Shift's work is the knowledge that we make better, more impactful decisions as a diverse group of individuals working towards a common mission. This means we want to make our board more representative. We encourage applications from people of all backgrounds, all ages, all types of formal or informal education and those with or without experience working in charities or as a trustee. If you're looking to take on a trustee role for the first time, we'd be happy to support you with whatever you need, including training or mentoring.

To support us into the next phase of our journey, we're looking for people with experience in one or more of these areas:

Shifting power through design

- You may be experienced in community building, grassroots activism or people-led change in an area or issue you're passionate about.
- You may be experienced in participatory design or research, co-production, and be able to help push our practice.

- You may think that power sits in the wrong hands today and want to support us in achieving our vision of community-led change.

Workplace and organising

- You may be interested or have experience with organisations that don't adhere to traditional models of hierarchy (e.g. self-management, holacracy, TEAL, horizontal leadership) and be able to advise us on improving our ways of working and organising.
- You may be able to support us in becoming a more diverse, equitable and inclusive organisation, both in our work and in how we manage ourselves.
- You may want to challenge how charity governance works and reimagine the role of a board.

Building sustainable partnerships

- You may have connections with social purpose organisations that you think will be great partners for us and be able to connect us and build sustainable partners.
- You may agree with us that we've got ideas that can transform social innovation and be able to promote and spread our message through your networks.

Experience with the challenges we're trying to tackle

- You have experience with the challenges we're trying to address and want to help us to solve them – that experience might be in your personal life or your work.
- You may have experienced working with us as a member of the community and want to help us to spread our impact.

Financial and commercial

- You may have experience in financial and commercial management and be able to help and challenge us to be a sustainable organisation.

You don't need previous experience to be a trustee. In its simplest form, trustees have a set of legal responsibilities to adhere to ([you can find more details here](#)). These are:

1. Make sure Shift is carries out its purposes for the public benefit
2. Comply with Shift's governing document and the law
3. Act in Shift's best interests
4. Manage Shift's resources responsibly and in pursuit of its objectives
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Make sure Shift is accountable

These statutory duties are defined by law and are the minimum requirements for our trustees. We're looking for people who can and are motivated to go beyond the minimum requirements of the role by contributing to our development as an organisation.

Time commitment

We have quarterly board meetings online or in person between 4 and 6 pm. The dates of the 2023 meetings are as follows:

- 20th June 2023
- 20th September 2023
- 12th December 2023

Trustees will need to read board papers ahead of these meetings and are asked to commit to attending all board meetings. Trustees unable to attend more than 3 out of 4 meetings a year may be asked to step down. In addition, we plan to have a half-day away day in October to bring our team and board together, which you would be required to join.

As described in the role description, we're seeking individuals that can go beyond the minimum requirements and play an active role in our board and organisation. This means that in addition to the time commitments above, we'd love to have trustees that might be interested in, for example, running workshops with our team, facilitating introductions to partners or contributing to monthly meetings.

If you are passionate about our mission and want to support us, but cannot commit to the commitments of being a member of the board, we are happy to discuss advisory positions.

A recent workshop on our strategy



Recruitment process

We are looking to fill several roles on our board over the next year, so we encourage you to apply at any time, and please get in touch if you have any questions!

We want to make this application process as simple as possible. The five steps are described below:

1. (Optional) [Book an informal chat](#) with Louise or Duncan (who are responsible for Shift) to learn more or ask any questions
2. Submit an [expression of interest](#) by Friday 12th May
3. Interview with our current trustees, Polly and/or Liz, on a rolling basis up to 26th May
4. Appointments made by 2nd June
5. The first board meeting for appointed trustees is on 20th June

The link for the expression of interest will request the following:

- Two short questions about your experience and interest in the role
- A request for your CV
- A question on your eligibility, which you can find more information about [here](#)

As we are looking to appoint multiple trustees, we are anticipating another round of recruitment before the board meeting on the 20th of September, so if you are unable to apply this time, please do let us know by expressing your interest to hello@shiftdesign.org.

**Thank you, we look
forward to hearing
from you!**
