



Generalist Trustee

Recruitment & Information Pack

Autumn/Winter 2024

Dear potential applicant,

Thank you for your interest in joining the Transition Network (TN) team as a Trustee.

Key information:

Being a trustee is an unpaid, voluntary role (as generally required by charity regulations).

The following are some expectations and/or guidelines for the Treasurer role:

- 3 official online trustee meetings per year, usually 2-5pm UK time in Spring (March), Summer (June/July) and Autumn (Nov)
- Approx half a day a month (averaged out) - contributing to online work/discussion, responding to requests for feedback / authorisations etc.
- Our agreed trustee term is 4 years with an option to extend for another term (+4 years) if all parties agree
- Timeline: interviews in autumn/winter 2024, induction Jan/Feb.
- This is a remote position with no current plans for any in-person meet ups unless there are regional opportunities for occasional 1-2-1's or small group meet ups
- This role is potentially open to those living outside the UK although knowledge of England & Wales charity law and [UK SORP](#) is desirable
- We work internationally, so we will benefit from a new trustee who has connections and experience of working beyond the UK context - desirable

We welcome applications from everyone. We are committed to actively exploring how we can make our organisation a place where people from a wide variety of backgrounds, lived experiences and with varied needs can thrive. Where appropriate, we may use positive action in a tie-break situation to appoint a candidate from an under-represented group. We have identified that people of colour are particularly underrepresented in our organisation and in the environmental and climate justice sector.

Applicants are asked to send a CV and a covering letter, **of a total of no more than 4 pages**, or alternatively an audio or video application of no more than 8 minutes. The covering letter should briefly outline a) why they are interested in becoming a trustee, and b) outline how they meet the [person specification](#). Applications should be sent to trustee-recruitment@transitionnetwork.org by the **end of Fri 29 Nov 2024**.

If this application process is a barrier to you applying or you would like to apply in a different format than suggested above, then please get in touch via trustee-recruitment@transitionnetwork.org to discuss potential alternatives.

Interviews will be held online in Nov/Dec at a mutually agreeable date and time for the candidate and the TN panel (made up of at least one team member and one trustee).

We look forward to receiving your CV and cover letter.

Warm wishes

Amber, Bess and Keyne

Amber Ponton - HR / Admin & Compliance / Trustee Compliance Link

Keyne Walker - Generalist Trustee

Dr Bess Saunders - Generalist Trustee / Risk Lead

Information Pack for potential Trustees

This pack contains information about our movement, our organisation and our ways of working. We definitely don't expect you to commit all this information to memory or even to fully understand everything that is set out here - much of it will only be made real through experience. However, we are looking for people who feel intrigued and excited by the possibility of becoming part of our organisation. Your questions and ideas are very welcome throughout the process to trustee-recruitment@transitionnetwork.org.

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Transition Network and the Transition Movement

The Transition Movement emerged in 2005 as a grassroots response to concerns about environmental and social challenges. It is now active in 50 countries, with thousands of local groups self-organising to reimagine and rebuild our world, thinking globally and acting locally. Internationally, it is supported by Transition Network, an organisation created in 2007 and registered as a charity in March 2009.

We currently have around 20 part-time team members and five trustees. Our core team members are made up of employees and freelancers based in the UK, Europe, N.America and S.America. We also work closely with freelancers and volunteers across the world, including members of the UK specific [Transition Together](#) project and the [Transition Hubs Group](#). Our most recent financial statements can be found [here](#).

Why we want new Trustees

Currently we have five trustees: Anna (co-chair), Bess, Darren (treasurer), Kelly (co-chair) and Keyne.

"Over the last four years I've served as Treasurer, I've had the fantastic experience of working with others across the world who support the work of the charity. It's been fantastic to work with a passionate and dedicated team of staff, freelancers and volunteers who have a shared belief that there is a better way of doing things, and a commitment to making that better way happen"

Darren Watmough, Trustee Treasurer

Our current treasurer has completed a four year term and we are looking for a [new trustee treasurer](#) to help us on the next part of our journey.

Our aim is to have eight trustees to accommodate representation across as many areas of work as possible and to ensure good trustee succession planning.

The wisdom brought by our trustees often comes from the sense of perspective available from stepping back from the day-to-day work, as well as drawing on their experience in Transition groups and/or Hubs, or their work in aligned environmental, social, cultural or economic fields.

Any trustee can take on other roles in our team and wider structure as skills, capacity, interest and opportunity allow.

Seeking diversity

We would like to recruit new trustees from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences, so that we can widen the range of perspectives and different voices brought by trustees. Increased diversity in our group of trustees will help us listen better to voices and perspectives that are more marginalised in society and currently under-represented in Transition Network, and to reflect this in our planning and actions.

We work internationally, so we will benefit from a new trustee who has connections and experience of working beyond the UK context. However, given the focus on England & Wales charity regulations, it would be an advantage if our new trustee resides in or near the UK. We have other mechanisms to seek feedback from and share power and resources with the wider Transition movement.

Our shared governance model

Since April 2018 Transition Network has been operating an innovative shared governance model, drawn from [sociocracy](#) and [holacracy](#), and developed with the support of [Université du Nous](#). We work this way to distribute power, to empower individuals in the team to act, to have clear decision-making processes that help us access collective intelligence and to create a more resilient, agile and collaborative organisation.

Our shift to a shared governance model is an ongoing experiment and we hope and expect that our team culture, structures and processes will continue to evolve as needed, in service to the [organisation's purpose](#).

We work through self-organising circles in which all roles in the circle exercise equivalent power. Roles and circles choose the best way to fulfil their purpose, gathering information, seeking advice and feedback and making decisions as feels most appropriate to them. We use consent decision-making and election-by-consent when appropriate. We will support and guide someone who hasn't got experience with these particular ways of working and making decisions.

We have a Purpose Circle (Vision, Mission, Strategy) made up of at least two Trustee reps, Team Member reps and representatives from the movement we serve, which is responsible for connecting to TN's evolving organisational purpose, agreeing our strategic focus and keeping our overall governance model under review. The Purpose Circle meets at least twice a year as part of our annual (currently online) Strategy Gatherings and may meet at other times if the need arises.

Responsibility for delivering the organisation's current organisational strategy rests with the Core Circle which is populated by the Lead Links of Sub Circles and one elected Trustee rep. The structure is designed to evolve organically in response to tensions and needs within the organisation and people accept and relinquish roles as circumstances change.

What is it like to be a trustee in a shared governance structure?

Shared governance is easiest to understand through experiencing it, so to give you an idea, here is a quote from current trustee Kelly Tyler (Co-Chair):

" Since I have been part of Transition Network my eyes and heart have been opened to a completely different way of working! The decentralised decision-making and governance processes are inspirational ways of working, which I've learned a lot from and I'm really excited to be involved with projects where I can see the impact of the work of the organisation."

How do we divide up roles in the trustee group?

We currently have three formal roles within the group of trustees: two Co-Chairs and a Treasurer. The Chair of Trustees position is shared by two people. This aids succession in the Chair role; when one Co-Chair steps down and the other stays on, there can be a smooth handover of knowledge and responsibilities.

Trustees can choose to, or be elected to, step into additional roles and responsibilities. These could be temporary or longer-term.

Trustee recruitment schedule

1. The Generalist Trustee vacancy **is open in Oct/Nov 2024**. The closing date for applications is **Friday 29th Nov 2024**.
2. Applicants are asked to send a CV and a covering letter, **of a total of no more than 4 pages please**, or alternatively an audio or video application of no more than 8 minutes. The covering letter should briefly outline a) why you/they are interested in becoming a trustee, and b) outline how you/they meet the [person specification](#). Applications should be sent to trustee-recruitment@transitionnetwork.org
3. Candidates have the opportunity to contact us via the trustee recruitment email above if they have queries before they submit their applications.
4. An appointments panel made up of trustees and team members will review the applications and arrange informal online discussion meetings with applicants at a mutually agreed date and time

5. Further discussions and opportunities to meet team members or observe meetings will be arranged for the short-listed candidate/s. Transition Network and the short-listed candidate/s will be given time to explore and review both separately and together before the panel makes a final decision to offer appointment as trustee.
6. As part of the induction process, the new trustee will be assigned a steward/s who will develop an induction plan appropriate to their needs and experience. The stewards in this instance will be Amber who currently holds the HR Role and Trustee Compliance Link role, alongside one existing Trustee.
7. When the steward and the new trustee agree that the time is right, they will put a proposal to the Trustee Group that the trustee should be granted objection rights (when at least 6 months has elapsed).

Role Description - Trustee

The role of Trustee at Transition Network can be viewed as having three aspects:

1. The legal role of trustee as required by England & Wales [charity and company law](#)
2. A member of the TN team who can step into specific roles (temp or longer term), responsibilities or tasks, as skills, capacity, interest and opportunity allow
3. A potential Trustee rep for other Circles and Working Groups e.g. Core Circle (1 x trustee rep), Purpose Circle (2-3 x trustee reps), HR Decision Making Group

1. The legal role of trustee in relation to England & Wales charity and company law

- On matters reserved for the trustees relating to finances, funding, risks, policies and other aspects of their legal responsibilities:
 - Analyse, consider and discuss information prepared for the group of trustees;
 - Make recommendations and agree actions;
 - Take collective decisions.
- Able to attend at least three x 3-hour online Trustees Meetings per year, as well as any other online or in-person meetings required.
- Able to respond to emails, Mattermost channel comms, comment on various online Google-Docs as well as responding to anything relating to the [Schedule of Matters Reserved for the Trustees](#).

2. A member of the TN team who can step into specific roles (temp or longer term), responsibilities or tasks, as skills, capacity, interest and opportunity allow.

- Take up opportunities, if you wish, to step into specific roles, responsibilities or tasks at TN:
 - contributing to the delivery of TN's evolving organisational purpose
 - working within the context of the shared governance model

- Such use of your skills, experience, qualities and interests are usually outside of Trustees meetings, and could involve online meetings, emails, drafting documents, commenting on documents, representing or speaking on behalf of TN or attending events.
- Welcome opportunities to learn and develop skills and practices which enhance your contribution to the team and support other members of the team to do the same.

4. A potential Trustee rep for other Circles and Working Groups e.g. Core Circle (1 x trustee rep), Purpose Circle (3 x trustee reps), HR Decision Making Group (1 x trustee rep)

- Exercise objection rights in Purpose Circle/Core Circle (and/or in other working groups) via decisions by consent and elections by consent. Please note: new trustees will not be granted objection rights until they have become familiar with our organisation and have demonstrated that they can work within the shared governance model, a process which we expect to take **at least six months**.
- Engage constructively and carefully with Transition Network's [relational agreements](#) and support other team members to do the same.
- Bring your skills, experience and knowledge into discussions.
- Able to attend Purpose Circle/Core Circle online meetings/strategy gatherings (usually twice a year), as well as other meetings as required.
- Able to respond to emails and comment via online documents relating to the work of the Purpose Circle/Core Circle/other working groups.

Person Specification - Trustee

The following skills, experiences and qualities are ones we see as important to have within and across our group of trustees. **It is not expected that any trustee will meet all of these criteria.**

- Understanding and alignment with the aims, values, [principles](#) and practices of TN and the Transition movement. This might include experience of active participation in a Transition group or a Transition Hub, or other grassroots organisations or networks for social change.
- Committed to maintaining high levels of trust and openness between trustees, the TN team and the wider Transition movement.
- Willingness to experiment, access creativity, and bring whole self to the role.

- Understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship, and/or previous experience of charity or voluntary organisation governance.
- Experience as a storyteller, with the ability to tell stories about the way we work.
- Experience of fundraising, connections with funders, and/or experience of income generation or social entrepreneurship.
- Experience of financial management of an organisation.
- Experience of developing and applying Human Resources practices and policies, particularly around Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Justice.
- Legal experience or knowledge.
- Ability to listen to and collaborate with people across different levels of scale, from local through to international, and across multiple cultures and countries in an inclusive and empowering way.
- Personal resilience - a commitment to self-care and the ability to remain grounded in the midst of uncertainty and the potentially overwhelming global context.
- Willingness to engage in an ongoing exploration of healthy collaborative culture and the skills, attitudes and practices which support us to work effectively across difference.
- Experience of, or willingness to engage with, what leadership looks and feels like within a collaborative/shared governance context, and willing to understand, use and experiment with practices such as consent-based decision-making and governance circles.
- Experience of organisational capacity-building and/or strategic planning.
- Experience of evaluating and monitoring an organisation's impact and effectiveness.
- Mentoring skills and experience, and/or skills and experience in conflict resolution.

We hope to make appointments that reflect a diversity of backgrounds and lived experiences, to promote a rich range of perspectives within the group of trustees.

Some Practicalities

The move to shared governance has focused the trustee role more firmly on compliance with England & Wales charity law. We are open to appointing trustees residing in countries other than the UK, but we are aware that previous non-UK-based trustees have found the aspects around running a charity based in England & Wales to be the least satisfying aspects of the role. We welcome prospective trustees who have an international perspective. Trustees need to be fluent in English to contribute fully to the role of trustee.

We seek to minimise unnecessary travel so a very high proportion of our meetings and other collaborative activities take place online. We experiment with ways to bring creativity and heart to our virtual meetings. Trustees will need access to good IT equipment and a high quality broadband connection, and be comfortable working online.

All trustees are expected to:

- Participate in online Trustee meetings which are held at least three times a year.
- Attend TN strategy gatherings once or twice a year. These are currently held online and usually take place in January (over 3 days) and summer/autumn (over 2 days).
- Participate in online discussions/decisions or other online meetings. Trustees may volunteer to take on additional roles or tasks.

Repeated non-attendance at meetings and/or strategy gatherings may result in the trustee being asked to resign.

This is an unpaid, voluntary role. However, trustees may claim reasonable expenses related to board meetings and/or any in-person meetings. Expenses for other work may be payable with prior agreement.

Trustees serve an initial term of four years and may then apply for reselection for a further four years. The Co-chairs of the board may serve more than two terms with the agreement of the group of trustees.