



Trustee Candidate Brief

Embrace. Empower. Educate.

We are looking for people with passion, energy, and commitment to join our Board. We welcome expressions of interest from people with knowledge and experience in at least one of the following:

- People and Culture
- Safeguarding and Youth Services
- Fundraising
- PR and Communications
- Finance

This job description is in Arial size 12 font. Should you require this description to be sent in a larger size or read out to you, please contact 0800 801 0400 or email recruit@mermaidsuk.org

Mermaidsuk.org.uk

Recruitment enquiries: recruit@mermaidsuk.org.uk

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A little bit about us...

'We use 'trans' as an umbrella term for people that are binary trans, non-binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender or of other non-cisgender genders, including those of non-Western origin.'

The Charity

Mermaids has been supporting trans children, young people, and their families since 1995. Mermaids has evolved into one of the UK's leading LGBTQ+ charities, empowering thousands of people with its secure online communities, local community groups, helpline services, web resources, events, training, policy and stakeholder engagement and residential weekends.

We also seek to educate and inform wider society on gender identity by helping professionals accommodate and reassure gender diverse young people. Over the years, we've seen many changes in the language and understanding surrounding gender issues, but one thing remains the same: trans children deserve the freedom and confidence to explore their gender identity wherever their journey takes them, free from fear, isolation and discrimination.

Message from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trustee with Mermaids. This is a truly exciting time to join the charity; there's no other organisation like Mermaids. Whatever you do here you will be supporting our work to achieve our mission and make positive change for transgender, non-binary, gender diverse children and young people for generations to come. Given the challenges facing young transgender people on numerous fronts, it is more important than ever for the charity to step up.



If you want to be involved in one of the most significant civil rights movements of our time, then this is where you need to be. As a Trustee, you will play a vital role in supporting organisation sustainability and ensuring that the charity remains firmly focussed on the needs and wellbeing of trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse young people.

We are entering an exciting period of strategy development, where our support for trans kids and their families is more important than ever. Trustees will have the opportunity to provide guidance and strategic challenge to help shape the future direction and long-term impact of the organisation.

I joined the organisation as Chief Executive Officer in November 2025, bringing with me a long-standing commitment to youth advocacy and inclusive leadership. Supporting trans, non-binary and gender-diverse young people is central to my work. Throughout my career, I have championed policies that promote safety, dignity and equal access to opportunities, and I continue to listen closely to the communities we serve to ensure their experiences guide our direction. I am dedicated to fostering a culture of respect, belonging, and meaningful change for all young people.

If you have the passion and drive to help us achieve our vision, we look forward to hearing from you and, hopefully, joining us soon.

Yours,
Jo Hardy (CEO)

Message from the Chair

For over three decades, Mermaids has provided support, advocacy and safe spaces for trans, non-binary and gender diverse children, young people and their families.

Trustees will join a committed Board, a passionate staff team, and an organisation that continues to provide essential support to thousands of young people and families. They will also share a collective responsibility to lead with integrity, thoughtfulness and resilience in a complex and highly visible environment.

We are seeking individuals who understand that effective governance is not simply about compliance, but about stewardship: creating the conditions in which an organisation can deliver impact, remain accountable, and stay true to its purpose even during difficult periods.

The role requires sound judgement, emotional intelligence, and the ability to navigate complexity with confidence and empathy. It also requires individuals who can foster constructive relationships, both internally and externally, while keeping the needs of beneficiaries at the centre of decision-making.

Serving on the Board of Mermaids offers an opportunity to help shape the future of an organisation that matters enormously to many young people and families across the UK. As the charity enters a pivotal stage in its development, Trustees will play an important role in supporting its long-term sustainability, strategic direction, and impact.

Best wishes,
Kathryn Downs
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Role Profile

Trustee

The young people, children and families that we support are at the heart of everything we do at Mermaids.

Mermaids operates in a highly visible and often contested social and political environment. The organisation is emerging from a period of significant scrutiny and governance reform and is focused on rebuilding trust, strengthening organisational resilience, and delivering meaningful impact for beneficiaries.

We are fortunate to have a Board that is engaged, passionate and personally supportive of our work. We look to our Board for accountability and constructive challenge.

A Trustee owes a duty of honesty, integrity, loyalty and good faith to the beneficiaries of the trust. A trustee must at all times act exclusively in the best interests of the Charity and be actively involved in any decisions.

This is a pivotal governance role for experienced, values-driven Trustees who can provide strategic insight, support strong and effective governance, and act as positive ambassadors for the organisation.

We are particularly interested in candidates with experience in the following areas:

- People and Culture (including candidates interested in Chairing the People and Culture Subcommittee)
- Safeguarding and Youth Services
- Fundraising
- PR and Communications
- Finance

Mermaids is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage applications from those with lived experiences (directly or indirectly) and/or close ties to the LGBTQ+ community. We actively support and encourage people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences to join us and shape what we do. We are particularly keen to

receive applications from BPOC (black and people of colour) and/or disabled and trans candidates.

Duties

- Support and provide advice on Mermaids' purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Approve organisational strategies and policies for Mermaids and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee Mermaid's financial objectives, plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
Keep appropriately informed on Mermaids' activities and operating environment and conversant with their duties and responsibilities as Trustees.
- Endeavour to attend all Board meetings, ensuring that they are adequately prepared to contribute to deliberations.
- Exercise independence of judgment, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect Mermaids' interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests and use information received with discretion and to the ends for which it was provided.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of Mermaids' objectives, aims and reputation through the application of their skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

In addition to the broadly statutory duties set out above, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. As a small charity, there will be times when the Trustees will need to be actively involved beyond Board meetings. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, presenting externally, or other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise.

Person Specification

Trustee

We are particularly interested in candidates who can demonstrate a combination of the following:

- A strong commitment to the charity's mission, values, and the wellbeing of trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse young people and their families.
- Strategic thinking and the ability to contribute effectively to Board-level discussions and decision-making.
- An understanding of good governance, accountability, and the role of Trustees within a charity setting.
- The ability to provide constructive support and challenge while working collaboratively with fellow Trustees and senior leadership.
- Sound judgement, integrity, and the ability to navigate complex or sensitive issues with professionalism and empathy.
- Strong relationship-building and communication skills, with the ability to act as a positive ambassador for the organisation.
- Experience or expertise in one or more of the priority areas identified by the Board (People and Culture, Safeguarding and Youth Services, Fundraising, PR and Communications, or Finance).
- A commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and creating safe and supportive environments for young people.
- The capacity to contribute time, insight, and energy to support the charity's long-term sustainability and impact.

Key terms

Salary: The role of Trustee is voluntary (unpaid), but reasonable expenses – such as travel will be paid.

Commitment: We meet quarterly, generally on weekday evenings. Meetings are usually held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Trustees are also expected to attend occasional public or private events such as profile events.

Term: Trustees will serve an initial three-year term and will be eligible for re-appointment for an additional term of three years.

The selection process

How to apply

If you would like to be considered as a Trustee, please send:

- A comprehensive, up-to-date CV.
- A supporting statement explaining how you believe your skills and experience match the priority skills and experience that we are looking for, as outlined in the personal specification
- Details of any business or other interests which might give rise to conflict of interest, and how you could address this should your application be successful

to recruit@mermaidsuk.org.uk with Trustee and relevant area of experience i.e. Trustee People and Culture in the subject title.

Please include hyperlinks in the letter to relevant material and add all social media accounts to the body of the email..

Safeguarding

Mermaids is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and this is a responsibility that is shared by all members of staff and volunteers across the Charity. The successful candidate will be subject to reference requests, safer recruitment checks and will be required to pass a Basic or an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (criminal records) check.

Data Collection and Protection

We treat personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion monitoring form

We want a team at Mermaids which is representative of society, and we want everyone to feel encouraged that our work speaks to their background and experience.

We won't deliver our mission (to relieve the mental and emotional stress of all trans*

YP) if everyone shares homogenous experiences and backgrounds. To help us review if we are reaching out in the way that helps us achieve this, we would be grateful if you would complete this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring [form](#).