



Disabled people
leading
Real change

Join us as a
Trustee

Our Vision

A world without barriers where Disabled and D/deaf people are respected and empowered, and experience equity.

Our Mission

- We empower all D/deaf and Disabled people to lead their best lives.
- We promote equity and inclusion for all Disabled people.
- We work together to ensure services meet all Disabled people's needs and recognise our diverse lived experiences.
- We combat intersectional discrimination, prejudice and ignorance against individuals, and challenge systemic barriers.

Our Values

- Inclusive – We value diversity and strive to create inclusive spaces where all individuals feel welcomed, respected, and valued, fostering a culture of belonging for everyone.
- Human Rights – We uphold and promote the fundamental dignity, equality, and rights of all individuals, ensuring that everyone is treated with fairness, respect and justice.
- Social Model of Disability – We recognise that the barriers in society, not individual impairments, hinder full participation, and we strive to create environments that empower everyone.
- User-Led – We are committed to being guided by the voices, experiences, and leadership of people with disabilities, ensuring their perspectives shape and drive everything we do.
- Accessible – We prioritise accessibility, ensuring that our services, communications, and spaces are usable and welcoming to everyone, and encourage others to do the same

Introduction

Message from Alan Drew, Chair of Trustees

Welcome to Real. It is an exciting time for us as we look ahead to deliver our new strategy. We are seeking to appoint additional Non-Executive board members to help us continue our work to empower Disabled people to have real choices.



All our trustees help shape the charity's future strategy, enabling it to evolve and thrive. As part of our ongoing development, we are strengthening our board and welcome both new and experienced trustees.

We are looking to broaden the skills and expertise on our Board and are seeking applications from those with expertise in one or more of the following areas: Finance/Accountancy, Charity and Voluntary Sector, Fundraising, and HR/Staff development.

As a D/deaf and Disabled People's organisation, Real is user led and the majority of our staff and board identify as Disabled. We actively encourage applications from those with lived experience of being Disabled, D/deaf or living with a long term health condition.

We are actively seeking applications from people who are currently underrepresented on our board, including Black, Asian and ethnically diverse people, Disabled people, social economic disadvantaged people, and LGBTQ+ people.

Full training and ongoing support will be given to all new board members, helping you to develop your governance skills and contribute to the mission and vision of Real.

We do hope you will consider being part of Real and help us go forward into the next phase of our ambitious plans as we strive to create a world without barriers where Disabled and D/deaf people are respected and empowered, and experience equity

Alan Drew, Chair of Trustees

About Us

Real is a D/deaf and Disabled People's Organisation based in Tower Hamlets.

We exist to champion the rights and aspirations of D/deaf and Disabled people. At Real, we do this through:

- **Real Support:** Helping people access their rights, challenge discrimination, and navigate services through our free and independent advocacy and advice services.

- **Co-production:** Making sure services are designed and delivered in ways that are fully inclusive, and creating spaces where Disabled people can connect and share experiences.
- **Campaigning and Policy Work:** Fighting for disability rights and ensuring Disabled people's voices are heard.
- **Research:** Gathering evidence on what needs to change, so we can drive meaningful improvements that work in practice.
- **Training:** Sharing our expertise through tailored training for businesses, public bodies, and other organisations.

The organisation is governed by a non-executive Board of Trustees and led by the Chief Executive, supported by a senior management team. We have a team of 10 employees.

How are we different?

Unlike many disability charities, we don't just work for D/deaf and Disabled people – we are run by D/deaf and Disabled people. This makes us uniquely placed to understand and respond to the real challenges and barriers they face.

Trustee Role

Being a Trustee is about ensuring that the charity has strong governance and that Real meets its charitable objectives. Trusteeship is a voluntary unpaid role, although travel and other out of pocket expenses will be paid when necessary.

The board works closely with Real's Chief Executive, taking a strategic overview of the organisation.

This means attending Board meetings every 8 weeks, supporting particular strands of work or staff members defined by your skill specialism, and from time to time going to key events.

These may include launches, fundraising or training events, and an annual strategy away day.

Ideally our Trustees will either live, work or study in the Tower Hamlets borough, although we can accept applications from outside of the borough. If you have appropriate skills and expertise, we want to hear from you!

The majority of our Board meetings are held online and occasionally we meet in person in Tower Hamlets.

Trustees are elected for an initial period of three years, which can be renewed for two further three-year periods. This means you will have time to really get to know the organisation and share in its development.

For more information and to get a feel for who you would be working with, please do visit our website, or reach out to our CEO, Ellen Kennedy, who will be happy to talk with you.

We have a rolling programme of Trustee recruitment, and we are always looking to expand the diversity and skillset of our board.

Who Are We Looking For?

We are looking to appoint new Trustees with the following expertise and experience:

- Finance/Accountancy – to fulfil the role of Treasurer
- Charity and Voluntary Sector
- Fundraising
- HR/Staff development.

You must have:

- A commitment to the values and principles of the charity, including the promotion of equity and diversity
- Sufficient time and commitment to fulfil the role

Ideally you will have:

- Lived experience of being Disabled, D/deaf, or living with a long term health condition.
- A personal connection with Tower Hamlets, either as a resident, or by working or studying in the local area.
- An appreciation, interest and understanding of the work that we deliver.

How to Apply

We want to keep the application process simple and accessible. We don't have an application form.

Instead, please:

1. Send us your CV
2. Write a short statement (no more than 2 sides of A4), or record a short video or audio (no more than 10 minutes) explaining your interest in becoming a Trustee and how your experience meets our requirements.

Your statement should cover:

- Which of our priority areas your experience relates to:
Finance/Accountancy,
Fundraising
HR/People Management and Development
Charity/Voluntary Sector experience.
- Your relevant experience, skills and knowledge, including examples of the responsibilities you have held and the contribution you have made.
- How you could use this experience to support and challenge Real's Board and senior leadership team and contribute to the organisation's development.
- Why you are interested in Real and our work, and how your values align with our user-led approach.

You do not need to have previous experience as a Trustee. We will provide training and support to help you develop your governance knowledge.

Please note: We are specifically looking for applicants who can demonstrate relevant experience in at least one of the four priority areas above. Applications that do not demonstrate experience in one or more of these areas are unlikely to be shortlisted.

- **The deadline for applications is: October 9th**
- **Interviews: Will be arranged with candidates**

Once applications are assessed, we will contact you via email to let you know if you have been invited to an interview.

We are committed to accessibility and inclusion. If you require any adjustments or support such as BSL interpretation, during the application or interview process, please let us know and we will be happy to support you.

If you have any questions about being a Trustee of Real, please contact CEO, Ellen Kennedy, via email ellen.kennedy@real.org.uk

Thanks for your interest in Real.

REAL Trustee – Role Description

Our trustees play a vital role in making sure that Real achieves its core purpose. They oversee the overall management and administration of the charity.

They also ensure that Real has a clear strategy and that our work and goals are in line with our vision.

Just as importantly, they support and challenge the executive team to enable us to grow and thrive, and through this, make the arts a more welcoming and accessible place.

Board members have a collective responsibility. This means that trustees always act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties:

- Support and provide advice on Real's purpose, vision, goals and activities.
- Review and approve operational strategies and policies, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee financial plans and budgets and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- Ensure that key risks are identified, monitored and controlled effectively.
- Review and approve financial statements.
- Provide support and challenge to the CEO and senior leadership team in the exercise of their delegated authority and affairs.
- Keep abreast of changes in Real's operating environment.
- Contribute to regular reviews of our governance.
- Attend Board meetings, adequately prepared to contribute to discussions.
- Use independent judgement, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect Real's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests.

- Contribute to the broader promotion of Real's objects, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, knowledge and contacts.

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.