



Swadhinata Trust

Volunteer Specialist Opportunities

Join the Team and Help Us Build the Future of The Swadhinata Trust

The Swadhinata Trust is embarking on a journey of significant growth and transformation. Having recently refreshed our purpose, mission, and brand, we are now ready for our next big leap: transitioning from a grassroots volunteer organisation to a scalable charity with paid staff and expanded reach.

To reach our full potential, we need 'roll-up-your-sleeves' leaders who are eager to help us transform. This isn't just about giving advice from the sidelines; it's about being the engine of our transformation. Whether you are an expert in your field or looking to develop new skills, joining us as a collaborative partner offers a unique opportunity to make a tangible, lasting impact on our journey.

We have flexible opportunities to support our team in the following areas:

- **Strategy & Programmes** (Helping us plan and track our impact)
- **Legal & Governance** (Ensuring we stay safe and compliant)
- **Finance** (Making every penny count)
- **Fundraising & Partnerships** (Finding the resources to help us grow)
- **Operations** (Keeping the 'engine room' running smoothly)
- **Marketing & Communications** (Sharing our story with the world)

Interested? We'd love to have a chat about how your skills can help shape our future. Please get in touch, we can't wait to meet you.

About Us

The Swadhinata Trust is an independent, community based organisation led by research and committed to anti-racist heritage. We work to ensure the representation of British Bengali history and its recognition as an essential part of British history.

Based in Tower Hamlets (the heart of the East End and long recognised as a historic centre of British Bengali heritage and community!) our work extends across London, the UK and abroad, across multiple generations and diverse communities. With over 25 years of expertise, we are the UK's leading organisation in the field of British Bengali history.

Our Purpose

To address the under-representation of British Bengali history ensuring that the contributions and legacies of British Bengalis are accurately represented in, and recognised as an integral part of, wider British history.

Our Vision

To empower people to connect with their historical and cultural roots, see themselves reflected in history through a global majority-led lens and de-colonised history, narratives, and myths, and understand how these histories are relevant in challenging racism and oppression in society today.

Our Mission

Our mission is built on three core pillars that guide everything we do:

1. **Preserve** (The Foundation: Pioneering British Bengali History). We are a leading authority in our field, pioneering original research and documentation to uncover the hidden narratives of British Bengali histories. We ensure the accurate uncovering, preservation, and representation of our heritage, addressing historical absences and challenging dominant narratives by examining the impact of colonialism through a global-majority lens.
2. **Educate** (The Bridge: Awareness, Advocacy, and Expertise). We promote British Bengali history, heritage, and culture as a tool for resisting racism, oppression, and fascism, while celebrating the community's lasting legacy and contributions to the UK.
3. **Empower** (The Future: Creative Activism and Social Change). We use cultural activism and the arts to drive social change, foster community cohesion, and challenge systemic inequality.

Our Vision for Growth

We have big ambitions for the coming years, and we are looking for the leadership skills to help us:

- Professionalise and Scale: Move toward hiring our first paid staff members to increase our capacity.
- Deepen Impact: Implement robust systems to measure and share the social change we drive.
- Build Partnerships: Forge strategic links with national institutions and funders to amplify our voice.

We are building the foundations today for the impact of tomorrow. Your support will be the catalyst that makes this happen.

Our Values

We are a diverse and secular organisation (inclusive of all faiths and none), non-discriminatory and welcoming of people from all backgrounds. We are non-partisan and stand against all forms of oppression, including racism and xenophobia, anti-Muslim hatred, antisemitism, sexism and misogyny, and homophobia.

What's in it for you?

Volunteers are at the heart of the Swadhinata Trust: they keep the vital work of the organisation going. Whether you're looking to support the internal running of the organisation, produce innovative research, or help deliver our events and programmes, there is something for everyone!

- **Boost Your Wellbeing:** improve your mental and physical wellbeing by giving back and finding a sense of purpose, build confidence in a supportive environment, and build lasting relationships within your community.

- **Broaden Your Perspective:** deepen your knowledge on essential parts of overlooked British history, and develop an understanding and stronger connection to local history and community.
- **Make a Lasting Impact:** preserve vital history that would otherwise be lost, help sustain small organisations like ours, support programmes and events that make a positive social impact in the community.
- **Grow Your Skills and Career:** share your existing skills and experience, learn transferable skills, gaining valuable experience and enhancing your CV, and expand your professional network by connecting with others.

How Can You Help

We are looking for both professionals and enthusiasts eager to use their skills to help us transform. Whether you can offer 2 hours a week or 10, your expertise will be a vital part of reaching our big goals. You don't need to be a veteran in your field; we value a 'roll-up-your-sleeves' attitude and a commitment to our mission just as much as a CV.

Strategy and Programme Volunteer

The Goal: Help us turn our big dreams into reality. You will be part of the team that takes our ambitions and builds them into practical, life-changing projects.

We'd love help with:

- Planning the Journey: Helping us draft clear project plans and timelines.
- Tracking our Progress: Helping us collect information to see how well our projects are doing.
- Organising Teams: Assisting with the coordination of different tasks to keep everything running on time.

What you bring:

- An organised mind and a love for "getting things done."
- Experience in project management or a strong interest in how charities run.
- The ability to see the steps needed to reach a big goal.

Legal and Governance Volunteer

The Goal: Help us stay safe and sound. You'll support the team in ensuring we operate with integrity and stay up-to-date with all the "must-haves" of running a charity.

We'd love help with:

- Keeping us Current: Helping us review and update our internal policies and guidelines.
- Research: Looking into specific charity regulations or data protection (GDPR) questions.
- Organising Governance: Supporting the Board with paperwork and ensuring our records are in top shape.

What you bring:

- A legal or administrative background (or you're currently studying in these fields).
- A keen eye for detail and a love for clear, fair rules.
- The ability to take complex information and make it easy for the team to follow.

Finance Volunteer

The Goal: Help us make every penny count. You will support our financial health, ensuring our resources are tracked carefully to maximise our impact.

We'd love help with:

- Day-to-Day Finances: Helping with book-keeping, tracking receipts, or updating our accounts.
- Reporting: Assisting in the creation of simple spreadsheets that show our spending.
- Grant Support: Helping us pull together the numbers needed for our funding reports.

What you bring:

- Comfort with numbers and basic accounting or book-keeping knowledge.
- Proficiency in Excel or a willingness to learn cloud accounting tools.
- A reliable and transparent approach to handling information.

Operations Volunteer

The Goal: You are the engine room! You'll help ensure our day-to-day systems, from IT to HR, are smooth and supportive.

We'd love help with:

- Daily Support: Helping with office admin, logistics, or coordinating meetings.
- Improving Systems: Assisting with our CRM (database) or helping the team get the most out of our tech.
- People Support: Helping with the "welcome" process for new staff or volunteers.

What you bring:

- A proactive, "can-do" attitude and a knack for multitasking.
- Great people skills and an organised approach to busy days.
- Tech-savviness (or a quick ability to learn new software).

Fundraising and Partnerships Volunteer

The Goal: Help us build the relationships that fuel our work. You'll be part of the team that finds the resources we need to grow.

We'd love help with:

- Researching Opportunities: Finding new grants, trusts, or local businesses who might want to partner with us.
- Drafting Bids: Helping us write compelling stories and applications for funding.
- Relationship Building: Supporting our communications with current donors to keep them updated on our success.

What you bring:

- A gift for storytelling and clear, persuasive writing.
- A friendly, professional manner and a love for networking.
- Persistence and a "hunter" mindset for finding new opportunities.

Marketing and Communications Volunteer

The Goal: Help us share our story with the world. You'll be a creative voice for the Trust, helping our message reach and inspire action.

We'd love help with:

- Digital Content: Creating engaging posts for social media, newsletters, or our website.
- Designing Materials: Helping us make flyers, posters, or digital graphics that look great.
- Campaigning: Assisting with the launch of new campaigns to celebrate our impact.

What you bring:

- A creative eye and a knack for writing content that people want to read.
- Familiarity with social media or design tools (like Canva or Mailchimp).

- A passion for sharing the history and stories of the British Bengali community.

Location

London / Hybrid. Many tasks can be done remotely, though we love meeting in person for key events.

Time Commitment

- **Ongoing Support:** We know you're busy! These roles are designed to be flexible. We'll work with you to find a rhythm that fits your schedule, whether that's a few hours on a weekend or a regular morning each week.
- **Monthly Board Meetings:** these are primarily for our Trustees, but we occasionally invite our Specialist Volunteers to join as guests to share their progress or expertise. There is no regular commitment to attend (Tuesday evenings, 6-7pm).
- **Annual General Meeting (AGM):** One key in-person event per year.
- **The "Heart" of the Role:** Beyond the meetings, we'd love for you to join us at our events, projects, and programmes. It's a wonderful way to see our impact in action and help advocate for the vital work we do.

Compensation

These are rewarding, unpaid Volunteer roles.

Application process

1. **Say Hello:** Send us a CV and a short cover letter via CharityJob/Reach Volunteering portal. We'd love to know:
 - a. Which role and skill areas excite you most?
 - b. What draws you to the Swadhinata Trust?
 - c. What you hope to contribute and what you'd like to gain from the experience.
2. **Welcome Chat:** We'll review applications and invite you for a coffee or video call to say hello, hear about your interests, and find the best way for you to get involved.

We are building a team that reflects the diverse communities we serve. We especially welcome applications from Bengali, Black, Asian, or other Global Majority backgrounds, as well as those with lived experience of migration or a deep connection to Tower Hamlets.

Closing date

We are recruiting on an ongoing basis and will close positions as they are filled. We encourage you to reach out sooner rather than later, we can't wait to hear from you!