



your voice your rights your choice

Trustee (Fundraising/Business Development)

Recruitment Information Pack



Our vision is a world in which
every person has a voice



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Welcome

Dear candidate

As the Chair of The Advocacy Project, I'm delighted you're interested in joining our Board of Trustees and helping us take this incredible organisation on to its next stage of development.

We're known for our relentless focus on quality and also for the robustness, diversity and inclusivity of our governance. I've always held service user voice, rights and choice close to my heart throughout my career as a clinician, academic and policy maker and so, it's wonderful to be leading an organisation that does this as a matter of course – day in and day out.



I hope you enjoy reading this information pack. If you would like to arrange a conversation with us, please contact Katie Banks, at executiveadmin@advocacyproject.org.uk.

I look forward to meeting you.

Dr Dele Olajide
PhD, FRCPsych. FRSA
Chair of the Board of Trustees

“Working at the Advocacy Project I feel hugely valued as an individual, with my skills being recognised and appreciated, and as such I am given opportunities to develop and use my unique skillset in projects outside my normal role.”

Ealing Advocacy Team

About The Advocacy Project

We help people speak up and make decisions about their health, wellbeing and social care. We're here to make sure people across all ages and care groups can understand their rights, make effective choices about their lives and voice their concerns.

Some of the ways we do this include:

- **advocacy** services that make sure people can express their wishes when decisions are being made about their care or wellbeing
- **user involvement** projects that help organisations improve what they offer by listening to people who use their services
- **local Healthwatch services**, which act as health and social care champions for the areas they serve and give people a direct channel to share their feedback
- **accessible communication** - we specialise in producing easy read documents designed to help organisation communicate with people with learning disabilities.

Our vision

A world in which every person has a voice

Our mission

To enable every person to have their voice heard, uphold their rights and make choices

Our services are independent, confidential, and free to those receiving them. Together, our teams are standing up for essential rights and supporting people to have a say on the issues that matter to them. We're very proud the quality of our work is being recognised more widely. This is an exciting time for us as an organisation – we're bringing new people on board and exploring new ways of doing things. It's part of our plan to reach more people and have an even deeper impact on their lives. We hope you'll join us.

What we care about

We want everyone to be able to make informed choices and active decisions about how they live their lives. By working with people who are vulnerable or excluded, we address the challenges people face having their voices heard. We're committed to being a strong, well-managed and dynamic organisation so we're best-placed to make this happen.

Your role in our future

As Trustee, you will help ensure we deliver on our mission, providing oversight and guidance to make sure The Advocacy Project is sustainable, making the best use of all our assets and meeting all our legal requirements. You will act as an ambassador for the charity promoting the mission, vision and values both internally and externally. Working closely with our CEO and the board, you will play a vital role in influencing the strategic direction for the next five years. You can read our strategy here: [Reports - The Advocacy](#)



Synergy – our speaking up group for people with learning disabilities

Our user council

Our passion is for people to be actively involved in the services they use – and this applies to our organisation as much as any other. We have a council made up of representatives from across all our services. They share feedback and ideas from people who use our services and let us know if we're fulfilling the high standard we aspire to. As well as guiding us to improve what we do, the user council helps us choose the right staff.

Our Board of Trustees

We believe good governance is about genuinely holding ourselves to account for making a positive difference to the people we work with. We are proud of the diversity of our board as it reflects the communities we work in. The expertise our board provide through lived and professional experience means we're properly informed to make the right decisions about what we do.



"The independent, flexible and adaptive way you work, ensures that many and different service users get involved." **Kiran McRobert, Gordon Hospital.**

"I'm particularly interested in how we can leverage the good work we do and extend our reach without losing the effectiveness of the present organisation."

Roger Skipp, Trustee

Making The Advocacy Project an even better place to work is a core objective for the charity. We all strive to create an environment where staff feel supported, know their contribution is valued, and are enabled to do their best work. We are known in the sector for the strength of our learning and development programme. We have monthly online staff briefings where we share news and updates, with different staff members talking about their work. Each quarter all staff are invited to an in-person meeting to build links between teams and share best practice. Our volunteer Trustees will work with the CEO and SLT to develop a new organisational strategy, both supporting and challenging the executive team to enable The Advocacy Project to grow and thrive, and through this, achieve 'a world in which every person has a voice'.

We hold the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark. We're a Mindful Employer, and a Disability Confident Employer

Our Values

Last year staff, service users and Trustees worked together to refresh our values agreeing on four key themes which describe the way we work and behave

We are kind

We treat people with respect and kindness and appreciate the unique experiences and viewpoints they bring. By creating an organisation where people listen to and value each other, we are building a community where everyone feels included, welcome, and heard. We try to understand how others feel and respond with kindness and care.

We are honest

We always try to do the right thing. That means being honest, fair and open in everything we do. We empower people to make their own decisions: they can trust and count on us.

We believe

We have strength, determination and passion. We're committed to delivering high quality support and information that makes a difference. We believe in our mission, the people we support, the power of advocacy, user involvement and co-production, and in each other.

We are strong

We're problem solvers who stay positive and flexible. We're committed to giving the best support we can, breaking down barriers and pushing through challenges. We work with energy, creativity and joy to help The Advocacy Project thrive.

Our commitment to Equality, diversity and Inclusion

At The Advocacy Project, our vision is a world in which every person has a voice. That belief sits at the heart of our work. For more than 25 years, we have worked alongside people who are often excluded or marginalised, supporting them to have their voices heard, understand their rights and make choices about their lives.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion has always been a natural extension of this work. If we believe that every person should be heard, respected and able to influence the decisions that affect them, then we must strive to create an organisation where our own people experience the same sense of belonging, respect and opportunity.

EDI is therefore not something separate from our work. It is part of who we are, how we work and how we want to grow.

How we help

Last year (2025-2026), 37,000 people engaged with us or asked us for information, and we provided 1200 people with advocacy. The story below is one example of how we help:



Sophia was in her late 40s with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia for which she needed 24 hour support. For the last 6 years she'd been living at a community hospital which supports adults who have complex and ongoing mental health needs. She'd been living in this type of care home for some 20 years.

Sophia asked for advocacy support to help her get in touch with her children. She explained to her advocate that contact arrangements were directed by a court order and that she desperately wanted to re-establish contact.

The advocate was able to explain to Sophia that now that her children were adults, any court order restrictions about contacting them would have lapsed. The advocate supported Sophia to understand her options - she could self-advocate and talk directly with her responsible clinician and care coordinator or have the advocate act on her behalf.

With support from the clinical team and our advocate, Sophia was reconnected with her children.

Time commitment

The likely time commitment is 5-8 days per year, which typically includes:

- Four in person board meetings of two to three hours each, plus reading papers in advance, these normally start at 4pm during the week.
- One in person board away day
- Online Committee meetings plus preparation
- Email discussions with Trustees and staff between meetings
- Commenting on documents
- Attending staff meetings/events when possible

Our governance

Trustees play a vital role, taking on important legal responsibilities, and working together to lead and help run The Advocacy Project. As a trustee you are in fact the director of the charity and therefore need to demonstrate your suitability via DBS and references and be wholeheartedly committed to the role, The Advocacy Project's vision and work, always acting with utmost integrity. You will be expected to be advocates of our work and to promote the organisation positively and with passion externally.

Effective Trustees will provide challenge for the chief executive and the organisation to make sure the aims are being met appropriately and effectively. They'll treat all stakeholders, including service users and staff, with respect.

Trustees are expected to commit time to studying papers, preparing for and attending meetings, following up on specific tasks with other trustees, liaising with the chief executive or other staff and attending events such as fundraising or advocacy events.

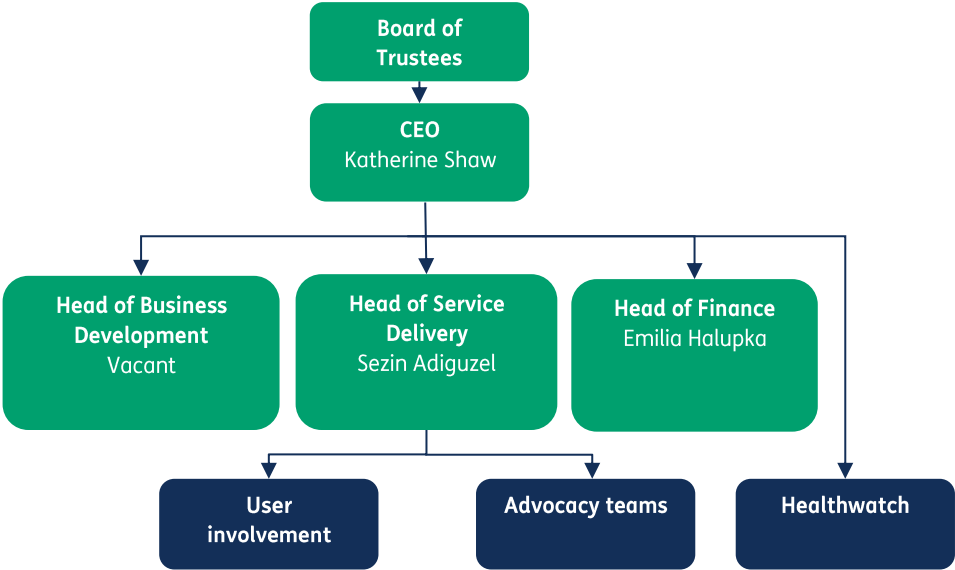
Papers and subjects discussed can often be complex so the ability to read, understand and discuss more complicated subjects and to feel confident in making decisions based on this understanding is critical.

The role of a Trustee is an important one, but research shows that Trustees often share similar backgrounds and opinions.

To avoid a narrow agenda and decisions going unchallenged, greater diversity is vital. In an effort to increase the diversity – and effectiveness – of trusts, the NCVO invited us to work with them to make their Trustee guide more accessible.

You can read more about the roles and responsibilities of being a Trustee here [Charity trustee: what's involved \(CC3a\) - GOV.UK](#)

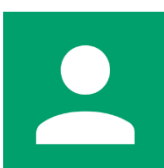
Who's who



Board of Trustees

				
Chair Dele Olajide	Treasurer Pankaj Shah	Rachel Gonzaga		
				
Roger Skipp	Lived Experience Trustee (Vacancy)	Rachel Hutchings	Jayesh Patel	Vacant

Senior Leadership Team

			
Katherine Shaw CEO	Sezin Adiguzel Head of Service Delivery	Vacant Head of Business Development	Emilia Halupka Head of Finance

A selection of Trustee stories

Jayesh Patel



“As a new Trustee, I’m still very much getting to grips with things, but the staff at The Advocacy Project have been great and I’m delighted to be working alongside such a dedicated group of people. For me, working with people is the best thing about any role.”

What experience do you bring to The Advocacy Project?

I’m an enthusiastic chartered management accountant with a unique breadth of experience that spans more than 17 years in various finance, policy and strategy roles across Whitehall Departments and Local Government. I’ve had the privilege of dealing with lots of people including the most senior elected officials and executive board members. Throughout my career I’ve built a history of delivering successful projects and providing valuable advice to assist in strategic level decision making. In my current role I manage a team of Finance Business Partners.

What do you like about being on the Board of Trustees?

I wanted to volunteer and develop my professional experience – a Trustee role is the perfect opportunity to do both of those things. I looked at a number of different charities to apply to when I was seeking a role. The Advocacy Project stood out as a worthwhile cause, and what really attracted me to it are the case studies on this website showcasing just some of the valuable work. As a new Trustee, I’m still very much getting to grips with things, but the staff at The Advocacy Project have been great and I’m delighted to be working alongside such a dedicated group of people. For me, working with people is the best thing about any role.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy running, cooking, watching films and visiting places with my partner. I also have a mounting number of DIY projects that I’m trying to slowly navigate my way through.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about becoming a Trustee?

It’s a great way to build up knowledge, skills and experience and work alongside people from a range of different backgrounds and disciplines. It’s really a win-win situation – you’re volunteering but also growing yourself.

Rachel Hutchings



Rachel has over ten years' experience within healthcare policy, research and advocacy. She is currently a Fellow at the Nuffield Trust where she undertakes qualitative research and policy analysis across a range of topics including health inequalities, digital inclusion and social care.

Rachel has a particular interest in involving people with lived experience in her work. She has a BA in Law from the University of Oxford and a Master's in International Human Rights Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies, where her research focused on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and Mental Capacity Act.

What experience do you bring to The Advocacy Project?

I've worked in the charity sector for almost ten years always within healthcare policy, research and advocacy. I started by managing a helpline where I provided people with information and support around healthcare rights, before moving to the Alzheimer's Society where I led policy and campaigns work on the Mental Capacity Act, human rights and end of life care. In my current role at the Nuffield Trust, my focus is on building a strong evidence base for improving healthcare in the UK and developing impactful recommendations for how to improve access to care, and address health inequalities.

What are you most looking forward to about joining the Board?

The work the Advocacy Project does is so important and I'm looking forward to supporting the organisation to think about how to continue to deliver on its objectives. There's a huge range of work and I'm really excited to learn more about the variety of projects. This is also my first Trustee role so I'm keen to learn as much as I can from my fellow Trustees about how to do it most effectively.

What do you do in your spare time?

I'm a member of a cycling club and really enjoy exploring new places on my bike. I've also recently started gardening and growing my own fruit and veg – only partially successfully so far!

Rachel Gonzaga



“Don’t worry if you feel your skill set and experience aren’t 100% within the remit of a charity. If you choose a charity with a cause you feel passionate about, the role will be very rewarding, you will be motivated to learn more about them and the space they work in, and your different perspective will be appreciated.”

What experience do you bring to The Advocacy Project?

“I’m a healthcare communications and patient advocacy consultant with experience spanning senior agency roles, pharmaceutical in-house communications and health charity communications.

In my time in agency, I worked across communications and government affairs, and led their patient advocacy practice. Before this, I held global and UK communications roles at a global pharmaceutical company, which included overseeing internal and external communications as their UK Communications Director.

I started my career in the press office for a large UK medical research charity, where I developed a passion for campaigning and creating change to improve the lives of patients by telling their stories. I love using my science background to translate complicated concepts into plain English.”

What do you like about being on the Board of Trustees?

“I know how challenging it can be to see things from an outsider’s perspective when you are embedded in an organisation, especially when you’re working for a charity that is trying to achieve a lot with limited resources. I love the idea of being able to help bring a fresh, outside perspective to help solve problems and challenge decisions, with contributions that are grounded in my experience.

The Advocacy Project is an incredible charity helping to give a voice to people who can’t easily speak up for themselves, and they do this through many different routes. I’ve enjoyed learning about the range of projects the charity works on, and I like the fact that the staff and board truly reflect the diversity of the communities the charity serves.”

What we are looking for

We are seeking a new Trustee with a business development or fundraising background to join our board. As our business development Trustee, you will chair the business development committee and provide expert support to our Head of Business Development. You should have passion and expertise in raising funds ideally in a charity however transferrable commercial experience is also welcomed. We want people willing to bring energy, enthusiasm, fresh ideas and commitment to the board and who can help us deliver our 5-year strategy while bringing your own expertise.

The role of Trustee represents a fantastic opportunity for anyone who wants to be part of an organisation with a mission to support people with learning disabilities, people with mental health issues or older people to say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need.

As well as embracing our aims and values we welcome people with a range of lived and professional experience, to compliment the skills we currently have we are specifically seeking people with experience in business development role or those with a legal background.

Personal qualities should include

- Excellent communication
- strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills
- good judgement, tact and diplomacy
- Able to ask probing questions and hold management to account
- a commitment to equality and diversity and inclusion.
- Commitment and understanding of safeguarding.
- Commitment to the mission and values of The Advocacy Project,

We actively welcome those with lived experience of mental health or learning disability services .

Ideally, our new Trustees will come with an understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship. However previous experience of being a Trustee is not essential.

How to apply

Please submit the following to executiveadmin@advocacyproject.org.uk:

- Comprehensive CV or extended biography
- Supporting statement addressing the points in the person specification
- List of any other directorships or trusteeships you currently hold (if not listed in your CV)
- Name and phone number for two referees (we won't contact them without your permission)

Please let us know if you have any accessibility needs should you be called for interview.

If you have any questions, please contact executiveadmin@advocacyproject.org.uk

The Advocacy Project is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably-qualified candidates. We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or age. All applications will be considered solely on