

Wellbeing, Recovery, Independence

Application Pack for the recruitment of new Trustees

bridgesupport.org

Bridge 86 Ltd

Registered Charity no.(England) 802227. Company Registration no.: 02162224

Registered office: Deepdene House, First Floor 30b Bellegrove Road, Welling, Kent DA16 3PY

Introduction

September 2023

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trustee at Bridge Support. I am delighted that you are considering joining us and appreciate you taking the time to read this Application Pack.

We are looking to appoint new Trustees who will continue to develop Bridge's external relationships, provide excellent support and challenge to the organisation, and be part of our Board of Trustees – to ensure the continued development and success of Bridge both for the clients we support and the staff we employ.

The new Trustees that we would like to appoint should bring senior level knowledge and skills to the Board. We are keen to hear from candidates who can offer the following experience and professional backgrounds:

- Finance and audit
- Legal expertise
- Mental health
- Property and Housing

The Application Pack contains information about Bridge Support and the Board of Trustees. It also sets out the Role Description and Person Specification.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss this opportunity on an informal basis. To do this please contact Debbie Towersey via email on debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org or by phone on 020 8298 9677.

The closing date for the receipt of all applications is 20 October 2023.

I hope that you are excited by this challenge and as such you will be inspired to apply.

With kind regards



George Wilkinson
Chair of Trustees

Important Information for Applicants

Eligibility and Terms

You may not be appointed as a Trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act, unless your disqualification has been waived by the Charity Commission. Reasons for disqualification include if you:

- are disqualified as a company director;
- have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud);
- are an undischarged bankrupt, or have a current composition or arrangement including an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) with your creditors;
- have been removed as a trustee of any charity by the Charity Commission (or the court) because of misconduct or mismanagement; or
- are on the sex offenders' register.

Please note that Bridge will also need to satisfy itself that you meet the 'fit and proper persons' test for the purposes of the Finance Act 2010.

Diversity

Bridge welcomes applications from everyone regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

All appointments will be made on merit, following a fair and transparent process. In line with the Equality Act 2010, however, Bridge may employ positive action where diverse candidates can demonstrate their ability to perform the role equally well.

Expenses

The role of Trustee is on a voluntary basis and is unremunerated but reasonable travel and subsistence expenses necessarily incurred in undertaking the role will also be reimbursed.

Commitment

As a Trustee you must devote sufficient time to ensure satisfactory discharge of your duties and responsibilities.

The Trustee Board meets regularly, both in person at the Charity's office in London and remotely by Zoom. Outside of this, Trustees are expected to actively participate in sub-committee meetings, will need to allow time to read board papers and prepare for meetings, commit to one annual away day, attend the AGM, and one day a year minimum to visit our services in action. There are also staff away days and service milestone events to which Trustees are invited.

Term of Office

This appointment will be for up to 3 years. It may be extended for a further term of 3 years.

Standard of Conduct

As a Trustee you must demonstrate the highest standard of conduct in the performance of your duties. Bridge Support respects and endorses the seven principles of public life promulgated by the Nolan Committee and all Trustees are expected to perform their duties in accordance with them. The seven principles are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

You will be required to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of Board business and also declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies.

These will be published in the Trustees annual report with details of all Board members' expenses.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your declarations and independence remain in place during your term of office.

Induction and Training

Your induction and any training plan will be developed with you so that it is bespoke to your needs as a Trustee. It will be a mixture of internally and externally sourced activities.

How your Application will be Processed

The Nominations Committee of the Board of Trustees, supported by the Bridge Executive Team and the Head of Human Resources, will lead on the recruitment of the new Trustees.

The Committee will recommend who should be appointed to the Board of Trustees, and the appointment will be made by Board of Trustees.

How to Apply

Please apply by completing and returning to us the Application Form, from page 8 onwards. There is Guidance on completing the Application Form on pages 18/19.

If you require any help or any additional advice about the role, the application, or any part of the process please contact Debbie Towersey at debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org or on 020 8298 9677.

Further Information

Further information on Bridge is set out in this Application Pack and can also be found on Bridge's website at www.bridgesupport.org and in the Trustees' Annual Report for 2021/22.

Timetable

Deadline for applications:

Midnight on Friday 20 October 2023

Applicants can expect to be contacted by:

17 November 2023

Interviews will be held on:

30 November and 1 December 2023

Applicants can expect the process to be completed by:

22 December 2023

Bridge Support

About Bridge Support

Bridging the gap between in-patient mental health services and independent living, Bridge offers cost-effective, proven pathways to support people with long-term mental health conditions in the community.

From a small charitable organisation established in 1986, we have grown into the main provider of mental health services in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and we expanded into Essex in 2019. In 2022 we were successful in bidding for an increased number of supported accommodation services in North East and West Essex. We then bid successfully in July 2023 to provide more services in Mid and South Essex. This will mean we will be managing the whole mental health pathway for high, medium and low support in Essex. Elsewhere, we bid for and opened a Complex Needs Pilot service in Kingston in Southwest London in February 2023. In the year ended 31 March 2023, our income was £5.1M and our budgeted income for this current year is £8.1M.

Our projects include a number of hostels (forensic step-down, high-level 24 hour support, and medium support), low-level flexible support in the community, and a non NHS model recovery college. We also collaborate with a number of other providers on particular projects.

We presently employ some 200 staff across our services and working with partners including the NHS, Integrated Care Boards, and local authorities we currently help over 2,000 people a year with mental health problems.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for the governance and management of Bridge. As such it owns the strategic direction for Bridge, including its vision, aims and strategies.

It guides Bridge to achieve its aims in the most efficient and effective manner consistent with its organisational values and approach, providing leadership, guidance and support, and constructive challenge to the Executive Team of Bridge.

The present Trustees are George Wilkinson (Chair), Beez Fédia (Vice Chair), Dave Baldock, Debbie Okutubo, Sarah Boundy, and Nicola Williams.

The Opportunity

This is a very exciting time to join the Bridge Board of Trustees. During the last year we have secured two new contracts that will see us as the sole provider of supported living services for people with enduring mental ill health in Essex. In addition, we hope that our Kingston 24hr Complex Needs Initial Pilot Service will be extended, and we are in advanced discussions with Commissioners in both South London and in Essex for new services.

Bridge understands the complexity of providing mental health services that serve the needs of the individual in a health care system under pressure due to increasing demand and shrinking budgets.

We firmly believe that the flexible pathways we provide – across varied support needs, ranging from low-level flexible support to high-level 24-hour support – helps people who no longer need to be in hospital navigate their way back to living independently within the community.

Role Description and Person Specification



To help us increase our impact and strengthen our Board of Trustees, we are recruiting new people to join the Board.

The Board is open to those who have not previously been trustees or non-executive directors before, but individuals will need to be able to show they understand and appreciate the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of charity trustees.

Role Description

Bridge Support seeks Trustees who will provide challenge and support on a wide variety of strategic issues and contribute to the effective strategic leadership of the Charity by:

- ensuring that Bridge has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction, and is focused on achieving these;
- taking responsibility for monitoring the performance of Bridge and for its corporate values, behaviour and reputation;
- ensuring that Bridge complies with all legal and regulatory requirements;
- acting as guardians of Bridge's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application;
- ensuring that Bridge's governance is of the highest possible standard; and
- working in partnership with other Trustees, the Chief Executive and the Executive Team, and other staff as appropriate.

Person specification

Essential criteria

The successful applicants will:

- bring a commitment to the organisation and its strategic vision and objectives alongside a strong willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a Trustee;
- understand the role of a trustee and appreciate the boundaries between a trustee and an executive role;
- understand the principles and practice of corporate governance; and
- have strong communication skills and be able to offer challenge and support in a constructive and straightforward manner.

Additional criteria

The successful applicants will bring expertise in one of the following areas:

- Finance and audit: applicants will be qualified accountants, bringing strategic and operational finance experience (for example, having worked as a CFO, FD or equivalent). Those with exposure to an organisation of similar size to Bridge Support would be particularly interesting. This Trustee will be able to use their background to oversee financial matters for the Charity and provide constructive advice and relevant support to the Finance Director and Chief Executive. This individual will be well-placed to move into the role of Chair of the Audit and Finance Sub-Committee in late 2024.
- Legal expertise: applicants will be qualified lawyers from private practice or with in-house experience, who also bring leadership experience. Expertise and/or experience in charity law and/or mental health law is not essential but desirable.
- Mental health: applicants will be mental health professionals and practitioners, particularly those with experience in primary and community mental health care, or people with lived experience in adult mental health.
- Property and Housing: applicants will have local authority/voluntary agency property and/or housing experience, whether at frontline, operational or management level.

Outside of these specific skills, senior-level candidates with other professional backgrounds beyond those described above, who bring a commitment to the work of Bridge would also be of keen interest to the Board.

Application Form

Please read the 'Guidance on completing the Application Form' on pages 18/19 of the Application Pack which should help you complete this Application Form.

Part 1: Your personal details

Surname

Forenames

Title

Home address

Postcode

Home contacts

Phone

Mobile

Email

Part 2: Previous posts

Have you held any other chair, trustee or non executive positions in the past 3 years?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details:

Board

Post

Dates

Part 3: Conflicts of interests

Do you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of the Charity and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed?

Please note: Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated

No Yes

If yes, please give details:

Part 4: References

Referee 1

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel. No.

E-mail

How do you know him/her?

Referee 2

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel. No.

E-mail

How do you know him/her?

Please note: Any offer will be subject to Bridge Support receiving satisfactory references.

We will only take up references if we propose to offer you the role, which will be after any interview.

Part 5: Enhanced DBS Check and Right to Work Check

Please be aware: Taking up an appointment at Bridge Support is conditional on a satisfactory Enhanced Police Check via the Disclosure and Barring Service. A DBS application form will be supplied only if we propose to offer you the role, which will be after any interview.

Any appointment is also conditional and subject to proof of your right to remain and work in the United Kingdom in accordance with current and ongoing legislation.

Part 6.1: Evidence that you have the expertise required to be a Trustee

Please give specific evidence of your expertise and experience to show how you meet the requirements of the Role Description and Person Specification in Section 4 of the Application Pack.

You must complete sections 1 to 10. Please restrict your responses to no more than 250 words on each section.

Section 1: Please complete this section

Can you tell us a bit about your background and what attracted you to this role? Why Bridge Support? And why now?

Section 2: Please complete this section

What personal qualities do you think make a really good trustee? and which personal qualities do you feel you would bring to the role?

Section 3: Please complete this section

What experience of collective leadership do you have (either as a board member, or otherwise)?
What role did you play in the team?

Section 4: Please complete this section

Can you describe a time where you have contributed to a challenging meeting or a group discussion?
What approach did you take? How effective was it? How do you deal with any conflict?

Section 5: Please complete this section

Based on your understanding of Bridge Support and the role of Trustee, what do you see as being the biggest risks and opportunities facing our organisation? What role do you see the Trustees having in facing those challenges and opportunities?

Section 6: Please complete this section

Have you had any previous interest in, worked or supported in, mental health or related areas?

Section 7: Please complete this section

How would you deal with this scenario: the CEO presents an option to the board that you really like, but that the rest of the board think it is too risky and want to reject it? Please talk us through how you might deal with that situation.

Section 8: Please complete this section

As a Trustee Board, we meet regularly, both in person at the Charity's office in London and remotely by Zoom. Outside of this, Trustees are expected to actively participate in sub-committee meetings, will need to allow time to read board papers and prepare for meetings; commit to one annual away day, attend the AGM, and one day a year minimum to visit our services in action. Are you comfortable with this time commitment? Is any of this likely to cause you difficulty? Is there anything we could do to make the commitment more manageable for you?

Section 9: Please complete this section

What, if any, training, support or development do you feel you may need to fulfil this role to the best of your abilities?

Section 10: Please complete this section

Do you have any questions for us?

Part 6.2: C.V.

Please include a brief, up to date CV (no more than 2 sides of A4) outlining your employment history, any relevant voluntary work, public service or other experience, together with any relevant professional, academic or vocational qualifications. Your CV will be used to assist the assessment of your expertise.

Part 7: Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information in this form is complete and correct.

I further confirm that I have considered and understood the criteria for disqualification from appointment (which are set out on page 3 of the Application pack) and that I do not fall within any of the descriptions of persons specified in those criteria.

I understand that if I am appointed and the information I have provided is subsequently found to be untrue then my appointment as a Trustee of Bridge Support may be terminated.

Name

Date

Please now complete the monitoring/diversity information on the following pages and then email your completed form, together with your CV, to: debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org

Closing date: Midnight, Friday 20 October 2023

Monitoring Information

Bridge Support recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and therefore welcome applications from all sections of the community.

In addition and in accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy, under the Equality Act 2010, Bridge Support is required to demonstrate that its recruitment processes are fair and that it does not discriminate directly or indirectly against or disadvantage anyone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment status, marriage, or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

To assess how successful our policy is, we would be grateful if you would complete the questions on the following sections of the application form. We have asked for your name to enable us to monitor applications at shortlisting and appointment, as well as the application stage.

All information is treated in confidence and will not be seen by the panel involved in the appointment. This section of the form will be detached from your application, stored separately, and used only to provide statistics for monitoring purposes. There is no obligation on you to provide information. All applicants will be treated the same whether or not they provide this information. In this way, Bridge Support can check that it is complying with the Equality Act 2010. Thank you for your assistance.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Monitoring Form

Please state your name

1. Gender assigned at birth

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

2. Which of the following best reflects how you would describe your gender identity?

Male

Female

In another way

If you would like to, please say how you describe your gender identity

Prefer not to say

3. Does your gender identity align with the gender assigned to you at birth?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

4. Age

5. Marital status

Married (different sex)

Married (same sex)

Civil partner

Single

Other

Prefer not to say

6. What is your sexual orientation?

- Bi/bisexual
- Gay/lesbian
- Heterosexual/straight
- Other term
- Prefer not to say

7. Do you have any disabilities?

- Yes
- No

This information is used only for monitoring purposes. If you believe you may be disabled and may need any reasonable adjustments to be made in the recruitment and selection process or as part of your Trustee role, please discuss this with Debbie Towersey at debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org or on 0208 298 9677.

8. Ethnic origin

(Relates to a sense of identity/belonging on the basis of race/culture, not place of birth or citizenship.)

I would describe myself as (choose ONE section from A to E, and then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background):

A White:

- British
- English
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Northern Irish
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Prefer not to say
- Other White background, please specify:

B Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups:

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Prefer not to say

Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please specify:

C Asian, Asian British:

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Prefer not to say

Other Asian background, please specify:

D Black, African, Caribbean, Black British:

African

Caribbean

Prefer not to say

Other Black, African, Caribbean background, please specify:

E Other ethnic group:

Arab

Prefer not to say

Other ethnic group, please specify:

9. Religion or belief

No religion or belief

Buddhist

Christian

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Prefer not to say

Other, please specify:

Where did you see this post advertised?

Data protection: Bridge Support treats personal data collected for reviewing equality of opportunity in recruitment, selection and, if relevant, appointment to the role in accordance with its data protection policy / policy on processing special categories of personal data.

Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing is provided in Bridge Support's privacy notice.

I hereby give my consent to Bridge Support processing the data supplied in this form for the purpose of quality, diversity and inclusion monitoring in recruitment and selection, and if relevant, appointment to the role.

I acknowledge that my application will be treated the same whether or not I complete this form. I understand that I may withdraw my consent to the processing of this data at any time by notifying Sarah Baxter, Head of Human Resources at sarah.baxter@bridgesupport.org.

Applicant's signature:

Date:

Guidance on Completing the Application Form

Please read the following Guidance carefully as the decision to shortlist you for interview will be based solely on the information you provide in your Application Form.

If you have a disability or you need assistance in completing the Form, please contact Debbie Towersey by email on debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org or by phone on 020 8298 9677.

Completing the Application Form

Read the Application Form carefully before you complete it.

Conflicts of interest

Trustees must avoid putting themselves in a position where their duty to Bridge conflicts with their personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body.

Further a Trustee must not receive any benefit from Bridge unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in Bridge's interests; this also includes anyone who is financially connected to the Trustee, such as a partner, dependent child or business partner. Trustees must declare any conflict or potential conflict of interest.

References

We will only take up references if we propose to offer you the role, which will be after any interview. We require two references.

Your referees should provide an assessment of your suitability for this post. References from friends or family members are NOT acceptable.

We will not be able to confirm an appointment unless we have received references satisfactory to the Board of Trustees.

Enhanced DBS and Right to Work Check

Any appointment at Bridge Support is conditional on a satisfactory Enhanced Police Check via the Disclosure and Barring Service. A DBS application form will be supplied only if we propose to offer you the role, which will be after any interview.

Any appointment is also conditional and subject to proof of your right to remain and work in the United Kingdom in accordance with current and ongoing legislation.

Evidence that you have the expertise required to be a Trustee

Use this part of the Form to tell us why you have applied for the role and how you are suitable for it. You will need the Role Description and Person Specification to help you to complete this section. Please keep them as you may need to refer to them if selected for interview.

Declaration

All applicants must complete and sign the Declaration set out in Part 7 of the Application Form. In it you confirm that all the information you have provided in the Application Form is complete and correct.

Monitoring Information

We would be grateful if you would complete and return this part of the Application Form. It is to help us monitor the effectiveness of our equal opportunities policy.

The information that you give us will be separated from your application form and will be treated in confidence.

If you believe you may be disabled and may need any reasonable adjustments to be made in the recruitment and selection process, or as part of your Trustee role, please discuss with Debbie Towersey at debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org or on 0208 298 9677.

The Interview Process

The interview panel is normally made up of 2 to 4 Trustees who will be asking questions related to the role and your application. The panel keeps a record of their assessment of each candidate so that the reasons for their decisions are clear, consistent and objective.

Feedback on Unsuccessful Applications

Should you not be successful with your application after interview, we offer a positive feedback service. If you wish to take advantage of this, please contact debbie.towersey@bridgesupport.org.

The Data Protection Statement

Information from this application may be processed by us for purposes permitted under the General Data Protection Regulation. Individuals have, on written request, the right of access to personal data held about them. Bridge treats personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy.

Information about how your data is used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Bridge's privacy notice.

By signing your Application Form you are giving us your permission to process your data, which we will do confidentially. Should you be successful in getting the role we will include the information you have provided in your Trustee file.

Returning your Application Form

Please return your completed Application Form to the email address quoted on the covering letter sent to you with your Application Pack. You may also send it by post.

Applications received after the closing date will not be considered.

Should you be selected for interview, you will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date. Unfortunately we are not able to contact unsuccessful applicants. Unless we contact you within a month of the closing date, please assume that you have not been shortlisted.

If you are unable to attend the interview dates detailed on page 4 of the Pack, please ensure you tell us at the time you apply.

Finally, please retain your Application Pack. The information we have sent you will help you should you be invited to interview.

We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your interest in Bridge Support.