



Foundation

Candidate Pack  
for Trustee





# Welcome

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee for the Co-op Foundation. We are a different sort of funder which we celebrate; working closely with communities, we've listened to the voices of young people and are using our learning to shape our vision and are working with others across the sector to create meaningful change and impact.

We are proud to be pioneering new and progressive ways to do philanthropy, by giving the power of decision making directly to young people who are experts by virtue of their experience. For the Co-op Foundation, giving away power is a bold and radical way to make philanthropy more co-operative. It is our ambition to influence the wider funding sector by the example of our practice, to enable philanthropy to become more co-operative and longstanding power balances to be addressed.

We want to bring different ways of thinking to the Board. That means bringing on board people from a wider range of backgrounds and cultures who can share their experiences, challenge us to think differently and help us shift the dynamic within the grant giving community.

We're looking for someone who shares our passion to make positive change and impact and who understands the issues relevant to our communities and interested in individuals who can help us create connections with younger communities and/or who have lived experience in line with our community programmes. You do not need to have previous trustee experience, although you will need to be able to demonstrate you understand the role of a Board and the Foundation in respect to its grant making. Wherever you are now, you will share our deep commitment to creating strength within our communities and to making things better for everyone.

We have a job to do as a board, but our meetings are friendly, stimulating and informal in atmosphere. We want people with insight who can help inform debate and ensure that the decisions we are making on are on track and taking account of contemporary views and trends. All trustees make a thorough personal contribution, show that they have their finger on the pulse and are willing to share their insights.

If you want to create change within your community, are inspired by our mission and are ready to encourage new ways of thinking, we very much hope to hear from you.

Board of Trustees  
The Co-op Foundation



# Who we are

*The Co-op Foundation is a funder with a co-operative difference. We care deeply about how our funding can empower people and we trust our partners to do what matters most. By building relationships, by being honest and open, by learning and by accepting appropriate risk, we will support our partners to make an even greater impact tackling inequality and strengthening communities.*

Our vision is of strong communities, where people work co-operatively to make things better.

Our mission is to help disadvantaged communities overcome their challenges by putting co-operative values into practice. We aim to stimulate and strengthen community action that connects and empowers people so they can work together to make things better.

We have three goals:

- we champion young people's ability to contribute positively to their communities and help to strengthen their sense of belonging.
- we're investing in disadvantaged communities' capacity to overcome their social, economic or environmental challenges.
- we're building our reputation as a trusted charity with a co-operative difference, uniting with others to make a sustainable difference in communities.

Our values

<https://www.coopfoundation.org.uk/about-us/values/>

Our strategy

<https://www.coopfoundation.org.uk/strategy-2022-27/>

Our impact

You can watch our Impact Report video by clicking this link [here](#)





# Meet our Board

The Board is comprised of eight trustees and led by the Chair, Jamie Ward-Smith. The role of the Board is to govern the organisation, set strategy and provide overall direction to achieve its aims. There are two sub committees (Finance, Audit & Risk and Colleague Wellbeing) which new trustees are also encouraged to join. Our Board includes Co-op colleagues, elected Co-op National Council Members and externally recruited charity sector experts.



Outgoing Chair, **Jamie Ward-Smith MBE**. A social entrepreneur known for innovation in volunteerism and digital transformation, Jamie is a passionate advocate for how technology can enable community change. Jamie co-founded Do-it.org, the UK's first digital volunteering service, which they ran for nine years. Jamie is currently Founder at Charity Hall of Fame, the UK's first Hall of Fame for civil society which honours and preserves the stories of our community changemakers. Previous roles leading Community Participation policy and funding at the Home Office, and Marketing & Communications Director for online youth advice charity, The Mix. Jamie is also a Trustee of the mental health housing charity, Just and the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF).



Vice Chair, **Sharon Jones**. With more than 15 years' experience in grant making, Sharon is a passionate advocate for investing in people's potential to build strong, vibrant communities. As former Head of Funding at the National Lottery Community Fund, she developed innovative programmes and managed a network of local teams across England. She has actively worked with other funders to address societal issues such as complex safeguarding and youth unemployment. Sharon now runs her own company continuing to support the growth of social value organisations, with a particular focus on using sport for change, and is a Trustee of the Greater Manchester Mayor's Charity.

Sharon, what inspired you to become a Trustee of Co-op Foundation?

*I had worked in the trusts and foundation world for many years and was always struck by the impact and reputation that the Co-op Foundation had in the sector. For a relatively small foundation it really held a strong place and kudos, particularly in its work on youth loneliness. Being a corporate charity, hosted by a business with strong values of co-operation and supporting communities, was also very attractive to me.*

What do you enjoy about / feel you get from the work?

*As a trustee of a very forward-thinking foundation means that I get to realise my ambition to change the way grant making operates in general. There are often huge power dynamics at play between those 'with the money' and those 'that receive the money', and the Co-op Foundation has successfully ventured into more participatory approaches, sharing power with those we're here to support. I love that about the Foundation. The staff team is also amazing and hugely talented!*

What surprised you about it, or what didn't you expect?

*There's a couple of things that I didn't expect but that pleasantly surprised me. 1) Just how agile and 'up for it' the foundation has been in evolving to a really progressive funder that is leading the way in the how it works with young people. The Future Communities Collective was our first foray into participatory grant making and has generated lots of learning. 2) Working on a board that is so diverse with young trustees is an absolute delight - it's unusual to see that in the UK foundation world.*



Treasurer, **Jane Waters** is a qualified accountant with more than 20 years' experience in the Financial Services sector. Jane has been a Co-op colleague for just over seven years. She was firstly responsible for financial and statutory reporting for the underwriting business and more recently as Head of Finance, Risk & Governance for the Insurance distribution business. She has regulatory Board-level responsibility for Finance and Risk reporting. Jane is a passionate advocate for young people, having provided mentoring support to teenage girls through a Manchester charity and ongoing careers guidance for school leavers.



Trustee, **Hope Levy-Shepherd** is co-founder and director of the [Black British City Group](#), a social enterprise connecting junior professionals in the UK with opportunities to volunteer and make a positive community impact in local charities, schools and small businesses. She is also a solicitor at Linklaters LLP, specialising in corporate mergers and acquisitions and has been recognised as a Yahoo EMPOWER Top 100 Future Leader in 2021. She was also a highly commended rising star in the 2019 UK Diversity Legal Awards. Hope brings with her a passion for Co-op Foundation's vision of bringing people together and building strong communities.

So, Hope, what inspired you to become Trustee of Co-op Foundation?

*I have always been passionate about maximising opportunities for young people and community building – for me, becoming a Trustee was a fulfilling way to further align my personal values with positive action. As a young person with no background in grant-making, I really wanted to join the Board of a funder with a bold and dynamic approach to participatory grant making.*

What do you enjoy about / feel you get from the work?

*I love having the opportunity to see what our work does to empower young people in our communities. Another highlight is being able to work collaboratively with a fantastic team to achieve that impact, and I am proud that we are not afraid to have challenging conversations to help us reach the right decisions.*

What surprised you about it, or what didn't you expect?

*I underestimated how important it is to have a Trustee Board with such a broad range of experiences. Each Trustee brings a uniquely valuable skillset and perspective to the table - whether that be as an experienced grant maker, member of the Co-op business or fellow charity founder.*



Trustee, **George Imafidon MBE**. George Imafidon is the CEO of Motivez, supporting thousands of young people aged 14 – 25 to access jobs in STEM and become change-makers. He is also a Performance Engineer with Sir Lewis Hamilton's racing team, and Board Member at The Hamilton Commission improving diversity in STEM and motorsport. As a First Class engineering graduate from University College London (UCL), George is passionate about building products and programmes that improve lives and communities. Over the past five years, he has worked across engineering, technology, consulting, and finance with firms such as Google, Rolls-Royce, William Blair, and McKinsey & Company. As a diversity champion, George leads the #AB1Million campaign raising £1 million for the Amos Bursary to ensure talented men of African and Caribbean descent have the opportunity to excel in education and beyond. George was awarded an MBE for services to engineering, technology and young people in 2023.



Trustee, **Mahalia Flasz**, Mahalia is a Portfolio Insight Analyst for Co-op's Property team, having started her Co-op journey at the Newcastle University Students' Union franchise store while studying for a Masters in Environmental Geoscience. Mahalia has a huge passion for community and is a Member of the Co-op Young Members Group. Here, she champions young voices and inspires a movement of young people to co-operate for a fairer world. Through this role, Mahalia has a seat on Co-op's National Members' Council, representing the Young Members' Group and young voices. She advocates for diversity and inclusion and is part of the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group for the Council.



Outgoing Trustee **Sheila Jane Malley**. Sheila Jane was Director of Grant Making and Policy for BBC Children in Need until 2016. She has served on Boards of numerous other funders and is currently a Trustee of Rosa, the fund for women and girls. An advocate of community development approaches that bring people together to generate solutions to local needs, she has applied this perspective to her extensive grant making experience, both in Northern Ireland (where she lives) and across the UK.



**Peter Batt** is Managing Director of Nisa, which was acquired by Co-op in 2018. He's worked in retail since 1993, starting out his career as a Graduate Trainee at Sainsburys. In 2015, he made the move to Co-op to become the Divisional Managing Director. He was recently presented with the Retail Week Diversity Champion Silver Award. Alongside his retail career, Peter has spent time as a trustee at Saint Francis Hospice (2015-2022) and sat on the Enterprise Co-operative Trust Board. He was also involved in the Million Pound Mile for MIND, raising more than £1million for the charity. Peter lives in Shalford, in North Essex. He is married to Sam and has two children, Oliver, 13 and Alexandra 11. Peter enjoys watching all sports, 80s music and going to the theatre.





# Role Profile

Reporting to

The Board Chair

## Overall purpose

The Trustees are the governing body of the Foundation and are, collectively and personally, ultimately responsible for all the Foundation's activities. As well as being Trustees they are also the unpaid Directors of the charitable company Co-operative Community Investment Foundation.

As the Foundation is the charitable Foundation of the Co-operative Group, all Trustees are required to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Foundation are closely aligned with the values and principles of the Co-operative Group.

Trustees are responsible for providing appropriate oversight, governance and strategic leadership to the Foundation in the pursuit of its charitable purposes. Trustees should scrutinise the performance of the management in meeting agreed goals and objectives and monitor the reporting of performance. They should satisfy themselves as to the integrity of financial and other information, and that systems of risk management are robust and defensible.



## Main duties and responsibilities

### Values

- Upholding the charitable aims of the Foundation and ensuring that they are reflected in Board and Committee discussions and decisions and promoted throughout the Foundation's work.

### Relationships

- Providing vision to the Foundation allowing it to develop and capitalise on its distinctive position as a charitable organisation
- Develop an understanding of the Management Framework arrangement between the Co-op Group and the Foundation
- Building and maintaining close relations between the Foundation, its member (the Co-operative Group), the Co-operative Group's 'Community & Membership Participation Team' and its stakeholders to promote the work of the Foundation
- Working with partner organisations to ensure the effective delivery of projects and services.

### Strategy & Performance

- Analysing and contributing positively to the strategic development of the Foundation and any other material and significant issues facing the organisation
- Establishing clear objectives to deliver the agreed plans and strategy and regularly review performance against those objectives
- Ensuring an effective programme of critical evaluation for Foundation projects
- Ensuring the effective implementation of Board decisions by the Foundation CEO and holding them to account for the effective management and delivery of the organisation's strategic aims and objectives
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Foundation.

### Stewardship

- Ensuring that the Foundation complies with its constitution, charity law, company law and any other applicable legislation and regulations;
- Maintaining the financial viability of the Foundation and ensuring the best use of financial and other resources in pursuit of the charitable objects, including ensuring the proper investment of funds
- Ensuring that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and that the Board is kept fully informed through timely and relevant information
- Participating in the appointment of the Foundation CEO and other staff, as appropriate
- With the assistance of the Secretary, promoting the highest standards of corporate governance in compliance with regulatory requirements and best practice, where appropriate.

### Board Activities

- Participating fully in the work of the Board, ensuring the corporate responsibility of the Board of Directors.
- Participating in any Board induction, training and evaluation identified as an individual and as part of the Board
- Working with other Trustees on the annual performance evaluation of the Chair, as required
- Undergoing an individual and Board performance appraisal, and attending any additional training highlighted as a result of the evaluation process.
- Uphold the highest standards of integrity and probity
- Safeguarding the good name and reputation of the Foundation.



# The Person

In your application, please tell us what you can bring to the role against Part One below. The skills and qualities set out under Part Two will be discussed later on with selected candidates.

## Part One: Knowledge and Experience

We are looking for people who:

- offer good knowledge and understanding of the charity sector and issues relevant to the Foundation's work, including grant-making
- offer their insight into, and experience of, youth led social action / youth projects or other relevant community engagement activity
- an understanding of what the Co-op Foundation is aiming to achieve, and its main priorities, is essential.

### *Desirable*

- Understand the non-executive role of the Trustee, and the role of the Board in a corporate trust or foundation
- Knowledge and understanding of overseeing budgeting and financial performance
- Good understanding of Corporate Social Responsibility.

## Part Two: Skills and Qualities

All applicants will need to show us:

- strategic thinking skills and sound judgement. You'll see the bigger picture
- that you can offer a contemporary view and are connected with, and understand how to engage with, youth communities
- a willingness to consider detailed information ahead of meetings, so you can participate fully in discussion
- your leadership qualities – you may have demonstrated these in another group or community setting where you've influenced change or changed people's minds
- that you're a team player who likes working with other people
- you're willing to share your own views and thoughts, and know when to do it
- that you want to deepen your understanding of the mission and values of the organisation and are committed to representing The Co-op Foundation and its work effectively as a trustee and supporter of the charity.





# Terms of Appointment

## Terms

The Trustee will be appointed to serve for a period of one term (up to three years), after which, if re-appointed as a Trustee they will be eligible to be re-appointed for a further 3-year term.

## Remuneration

The role of Trustee is a voluntary role and therefore unpaid, however, the Charity will reimburse all out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred by the post holder during the course of their duties. The Trustee will be appointed to serve for a period of one term (up to three years), after which, if re-appointed as a Trustee they will be eligible to be re-appointed for a further 3-year term.

## Location

Flexible, with travel to Manchester required at least twice a year

## Time commitment

This role requires around 1 day per month, which includes quarterly Board meetings and one full-day strategy session per year, dedicated to strategic planning, held in Manchester.

The Trustee will be expected to attend:

- Sessions agreed as part of a personalised induction plan;
- A minimum of 4 board meetings a year for three hours held virtually by Teams or In-person;
- One full-day strategy session per year, dedicated to strategic planning, held in Manchester.





# How to Apply

We hope you will consider making an application. To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/coop-trustee/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A supporting statement (no more than two sides) that sets out why you think this role is the right move for you and how you meet the knowledge and experience criteria.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Closing date Friday 27th September 2024

Preliminary interviews w/c 7th October 2024

Final Panel interviews w/c 14th October 2024

