

Candidate pack for recruitment of three Trustees



Welcome from our Chair

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) is an independent social change organisation working across the UK to support and speed up the transition to a more equitable and just future, free from poverty, where people and planet can flourish. We are based in York, with offices in London, Glasgow and Belfast. The Foundation is also the parent organisation of the JRF group, which includes the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT). JRF Trustees have responsibility for the overall stewardship and good governance of the group as a whole.

Our work is practical – we work with a wide range of partners, supporting tangible approaches and alliances for change, and we propose policy interventions to address the causes and consequences of poverty. We seek to influence those with the power to act now, including Governments, and we help support new propositions that challenge what's possible and that can allow us to imagine different futures that are free from poverty and marginalisation.

Our Trustees have recognised the deep and growing crisis of poverty in all its facets and have consequently agreed a bold new direction for the organisation, building on our founder's original purpose to address not only the symptoms of poverty, but also the processes and structures that perpetuate it. We have therefore set an ambition to support the creation of social and economic systems that give people greater control over the most important parts of their lives, with a more equitable and sustainable distribution of material and social resources. Only then will everyone be able to enjoy dignity, opportunity and hope, and make their fullest contribution to society.

We are now looking to appoint three new Trustees with the skills and commitment to help in achieving this mission and the practical implementation of our new strategy. Alongside the development of our strategic intent, our Board has also been taking steps to ensure that it works in an aligned way with the organisation and is positioned to add real impact through its role, capabilities and perspective. New Trustees can expect to be part of a diverse, high-performing and genuinely committed team of non-executives, working collectively with our uniquely talented leadership team.

JRF is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism and sees these as critical in helping with the achievement of our mission. We welcome applicants from diverse backgrounds and believe that it is important for Trustees to have a connection to the realities of poverty, marginality and powerlessness.

If you believe you can bring the outlook, skills and qualities our Board needs we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Carol Tannahill OBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Our Strategy

Our strategy has three strands:

Shifting the terms of the debate: Our insight, policy and advocacy programmes focus on destabilising dominant systems by shining a light on the ways that they - and the assumptions that underpin them - are increasingly failing people and planet. We propose credible policy ideas that address both immediate needs and deeper system changes, challenging views on what's possible, bridging to new norms and catalysing effective coalitions to make them a reality. The common theme across this work is household economic security; its constituent parts (including the worst forms of poverty and hardship), its dynamics and drivers, and its relationships with the wider political economy.

Supporting and shielding the new: We believe that there are nascent, practical examples of real-world alternatives driving real change now. Whether that be new models for delivering public goods or different operating systems (such as forms of contracts, investment vehicles and governance frameworks) that challenge the economic status quo in favour of a more democratic and equitable approach to the ownership and management of assets, wealth and ideas.

We are therefore making sizeable commitments to resourcing an emerging ecology of organisations working in this vein, through a combination of unrestricted enabling funding, help accessing other important sources of financial, intellectual and relational support, the provision of tools to capture and share insights, and other field building initiatives.

Simultaneously we are committed to creating more benign environmental conditions for this work, by building new institutional capacities and capabilities, creating new resource flows and fostering the mindset shifts needed to mainstream the ideas we want to support and grow.

Building infrastructure for the transition: As a relatively wealthy, independently endowed foundation, we have a responsibility to enable many others who broadly share our aims to advance their efforts. Our Insight Infrastructure programme is designed to simplify and democratise access to high-quality data to shine a light on poverty and insecurity and transform knowledge into meaningful action to combat injustice and inequality.

Cutting across these three strands is our work **thinking differently about how we utilise and invest our endowment**. We are a wealthy organisation, with an endowment worth over £400m - jointly held for the benefit of both JRF and JRHT - and which we have historically invested in a traditional way with the focus on growing its financial value rather than directly on furthering the mission. During 2024, Trustees agreed to adopt a new strategy and move to a fully mission-aligned endowment over time. To make that a reality, in the years ahead, we will be moving the wealth we steward into a new mix of social, impact and transformational investments, better aligned with our mission: investments that will strike a new balance between financial return and contribution to mission, giving greater prioritisation to the latter. We will do this alongside investing significantly more on mission-aligned activity and system-changing work, over and above historic levels.

About our Trustees

Our Trustees are the stewards of Joseph Rowntree's vision, legacy, values and principles, and shape how these are put into action today.

Roles and responsibilities include determining strategies, using their expertise and knowledge to advise on new initiatives to deliver the mission and strategic plan, shaping policies, understanding and managing risk (including the risk of not acting), and challenging and supporting the Executive.

We expect our Trustees to uphold, at all times, the six main duties of Trustees set out by the Charity Commission, and more broadly to lead and support the good governance of the organisation in line with the Charity Commission's guidance and expectations.

JRF has a group structure, comprising the JRF social change organisation and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT). JRHT provides housing and care services, predominantly in York, but also in Leeds, Scarborough, and Hartlepool, as well as in an increasing number of other smaller communities in North and East Yorkshire: it currently owns and manages over 2,500 homes with many of these held in mixed tenure schemes. JRHT has its own board, responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operation of the housing trust, with JRF Trustees responsible for agreeing the strategy for the JRF-JRHT group as a whole.

JRF and JRHT have a common history, charitable objectives and endowment, and a number of shared services are provided across the group. Some JRF Trustees are also appointed to the JRHT Board or to sit on one of the two group-wide committees (Audit & Risk and Nominations & Governance).



Our current Trustee team



Professor Carol Tannahill OBE, Chair

Professor Carol Tannahill OBE had a long career in public health and has contributed to many international, national and local public health policy and strategy developments. She was founding Director of the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, a research and development organisation focussed on tackling health inequalities. For seven years until her retirement in September 2021, she was the Chief Social Policy Adviser in Scottish Government.



Terrie Alafat CBE, Trustee and Chair of the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust Board

Terrie retired from the role of Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) at the end of 2019. Before joining CIH in 2015, Terrie was Director of Housing in the then Department for Communities and Local Government, with overall policy responsibility for the supply and management of housing across all tenures, housing growth, homelessness prevention and support.



Saphié Ashtiany, Trustee & Chair of Social Investment Committee

Saphié is an expert in employment and equality law. She is Principal of the boutique consultancy Ashtiany Associates, the Visitor of Harris Manchester College Oxford and a visiting Professorial Fellow at Queen Mary University of London. She is a trustee and Chair of the housing charity The Nationwide Foundation, and also holds trusteeships of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, English Touring Theatre and Friends of St Davids Cathedral.



Anita Bhatia, Trustee and Chair of Investment Committee

Anita was most recently Investment Director at Guy's and St Thomas' Foundation for six years until 2024. Previously, Anita was at Barclays developing impact investment products for the retail and institutional market. Her prior experience includes external fund investments in alternative strategies at AXA Investment Managers. Anita is a Non-Executive Director and Risk Committee Chair at Resonance Ltd, a social impact property fund manager.



Deborah Cadman OBE, Trustee

Deborah has more than 30 years' experience in public services, including as Chief Executive at Birmingham City Council and Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority. She was previously Local Government Advisor to the Ministerial Team at the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, Head of Policy at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council and the Audit Commission's Best Value Service Lead Inspector for the London region.

**Dr Hilary Cottam OBE, Trustee**

Hilary is an internationally acclaimed social entrepreneur working with communities and governments around the world to design collaborative, affordable solutions to big social challenges. Transformation is achieved through an emphasis on human relationships supported by technology. Hilary's current work focuses on the need for a 'fifth social revolution': to enable widespread flourishing in this century as work, society and our economies go through deep structural change.

**Farah Elahi, Trustee**

Farah was previously the Interim Head of Community Engagement at the Greater London Authority (GLA). At the GLA, she led on the Civil Society Strategy and City Hall's work on supporting a thriving sector. Farah's other roles include Research and Policy Analyst at the Runnymede Trust, and the Family and Childcare Trust. Her research has focused on ethnic inequality in London, employment and education.

**Paul Jenkins OBE, Trustee and Chair of Audit and Risk Committee**

Until his retirement in September 2022, Paul Jenkins had worked for over 35 years in senior management and policymaking roles in Central Government, the NHS and the Voluntary Sector. He was Chief Executive of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, and prior to that was Chief Executive of Rethink Mental Illness, where he helped to lead ground-breaking work in improving public attitudes towards mental illness. He has been involved in the implementation of a number of major national initiatives and was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2002 for his role in setting up NHS Direct.

**David Lunts, Trustee**

David is the CEO of the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation in West London. Until January 2021 he was the Executive Director for Housing and Land at the GLA. His earlier roles included London director at the Homes and Communities Agency, director of Urban Policy at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the early 2000s and a leading role in housing and regeneration at Manchester City Council during the 1990s.

**Gillian Russell, Trustee**

Gillian is a senior advisory partner at Deloitte. She sits on the Government and Public Sector Industry and Risk Advisory Service Line Executives and leads Deloitte's work in the education sector. An experienced finance and governance professional (FCA) with extensive experience of operating at board and executive level in a range of public, private and not for profit organisations, she is especially passionate about improving public services to citizens and has a particular interest in the role of education in fostering social mobility and inclusion.

**Professor Jo Swaffield, Trustee**

Jo is Professor of Economics and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Southampton. Prior to joining the University of Southampton, Jo was Professor of Economics in the Department of Economics & Related Studies, University of York and Head of Department (2015- 2021). Her main areas of research interest are labour economics and applied microeconometrics, focusing on the UK labour market on issues such as the gender wage gap, in-work poverty and low wages (including the minimum wage and the Living Wage).

**Kené Umeasiegbu, Trustee**

Kené is currently Campaigns Director at Tesco, where he leads the company's public and stakeholder engagement on key societal issues including climate change, food waste, plastics and food sourcing. Kené is an experienced sustainability leader, and in addition to the UK, he has worked in Brazil, Estonia, the Netherlands, and Nigeria, championing the positive role that private enterprise and effective public policy can play in addressing inequality.



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Recruitment of three Trustees - Joseph Rowntree Foundation



Main responsibilities of the Trustee role

- Provide effective leadership of JRF in service of its mission to support and speed up the transition to a more equitable and just future, free from poverty, where people and planet can flourish, ensuring that the mission is the priority and driver for the business.
- Set JRF and wider Group direction and strategy in line with its mission, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place for it to meet its objectives.
- Ensure that JRF works ethically at all times and in line with its values, upholding the highest standards of good governance.
- Actively participate in JRF meetings and activities in an inclusive and respectful manner and in accordance with our commitment to equality, inclusivity and anti-racism.
- Ensure stakeholder views are heard at Trustee level and within the organisation, particularly the views of those with lived experience of poverty and marginalisation.
- Ensure an ongoing focus on achieving impact and supporting learning, including through reviewing organisational and executive performance.
- Contribute to Trustees working effectively together and with the Chair to provide guidance, support and challenge to the executive team.
- Approve operational strategies and policies and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Have oversight of JRF's financial plans and budgets, monitor and evaluate progress, and ensure that JRF at all times demonstrates effective financial governance and oversight.
- Have oversight of and responsibility for JRF's investment strategy, including ensuring that it directly supports the delivery of the organisation's mission.
- Ensure that an effective corporate governance, risk management and control environment is in place and operating effectively, and that all legal and regulatory obligations (including those under charity and company law) are understood and met.
- Carry out statutory duties including approving JRF's annual report and accounts and agreeing an appropriate statement for inclusion in the annual report on the effectiveness of the organisation's systems for risk management and internal control.
- Use independent judgement, acting lawfully and in good faith, to promote and protect JRF's interests, to the exclusion of your own personal and/or any third-party interests.
- Contribute to the broader promotion of JRF's mission, aims and reputation by applying your skills, expertise, and knowledge.

Who we are looking for

We are looking for three new Trustees who can bring specific types of skills, experience, and knowledge to strengthen the composition of our Board as experienced Trustees reach the end of their tenure. It is important to us that our Trustees include a broad range of backgrounds and experiences, and that they can direct these in support of our mission and strategy.

Knowledge and experience

- At least one of the following is essential to be considered for appointment:
 - substantial direct or indirect experience of poverty, inequality or marginalisation
 - experience of working close to the ground with a knowledge of the priorities, ambitions and concerns of the types of grass-roots organisation that JRF supports through its programmes (this may include, for example, knowledge of place-based working, effective engagement with pioneers and movement-builders, and insight into the broader principles of partnership development)
 - experience in and knowledge of wider innovations and emerging ideas (including, potentially, of international practice) in relation to reducing inequality and achieving social impact, with the ability to translate that in support of JRF's mission.
- You will bring an understanding of the legal duties and responsibilities of Trustees.
- Experience of the effective operation of charity or company boards is useful although not strictly essential.

Skills and abilities

Our Trustees will have the ability to:

- build and sustain good working relationships with fellow Trustees and senior staff;
- think strategically and creatively to consider and apply different approaches to challenges we may face, and engage critically with the work of JRF;
- analyse proposals and examine their wider consequences;
- use information technology confidently including during Board meetings and be willing to communicate and share information electronically, and
- communicate effectively and demonstrate good listening skills.

Style and personal attributes

We are looking for Trustees who:

- are committed to the mission and strategy of JRF and JRHT;
- are interested in the role of JRF – both our emerging work on grassroots movement building and regenerative futures, and our longer-established research, policy and advocacy work;
- will offer some challenge and be open to challenge in a way that is constructive and collaborative;
- will serve effectively as a member of our Trustee Board and sub-committees and have the availability to participate fully, and
- have integrity and a personal commitment to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism.

We are committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism and see these as critical in helping us to achieve our mission. As part of this we believe that a wide diversity of views, skills, and experience will help generate better ideas, and lead to better decision making and, as such, we particularly welcome applicants from minoritised backgrounds.

We also believe that it is important that Trustees have a connection to the reality of poverty, marginality or powerlessness. This might include direct lived experience of poverty, inequality or marginality, or through living in a community characterised by poverty or social and economic exclusion. It could also include working in or experience of the systems that perpetuate unequal power dynamics, poverty and inequality, or through being involved in work to directly change these systems.

And as an organisation that is proudly rooted in York and the surrounding region, but with national and international reach, we are keen to ensure that some of our new Trustees are based in, and have a commitment to, York or the wider region, whilst also ensuring a good geographical spread of Trustees from across the UK.



Terms of appointment

Time Commitment

The minimum time commitment is two to three days a quarter.

- There will be a minimum of four JRF Trustee meetings a year, and it is a requirement that Trustees attend at least three of these.
- There is also an annual Trustee development day which all Trustees attend.
- Trustees will be expected to be a member of – or to Chair – at least one of the sub-committees, which will also meet at least four times a year. Some Trustees are also members of the JRHT Board.
- Trustees may also be asked to participate in events which promote JRF's work or to attend Trustee working groups on specific topics.

Remuneration

Trustees are not remunerated but we commit to payment of reasonable expenses, and to providing learning and development opportunities.

Location

We are based in York, with offices in London, Glasgow and Belfast. In-person Trustee and committee meetings are usually held in York or London. Trustees are drawn from across the UK.

Term of Appointment

Trustees are appointed for a three-year term of office, renewable for two further terms (on mutual agreement and subject to board decision by Trustees) to a maximum of nine years.

Annual Review and Trustee support

- Trustees are invited to observe a board meeting after their appointment has been confirmed ahead of formally joining the board.
- Annual review meetings are held with the Chair of Trustees to give Trustees the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their experience of trusteeship and to identify any areas where development may be needed. Trustees will also have regular, informal conversations with the Chair throughout the year.
- We provide direct support to Trustees through our governance team based in the Chief Executive's Office.
- New Trustees are also paired with an experienced Trustee to act as 'buddy' to support them as they join JRF.

Disqualifications

We are politically independent and our continued success as a major influencer depends on our Trustees being able to demonstrate political impartiality. Applicants who are either serving or former politicians or who have a connection to a political party (e.g. through standing for election or working as an adviser) will be asked to demonstrate how they will uphold JRF's impartiality if appointed.

Applications will not be considered from people who:

- are disqualified under the Charities Act 2011 from acting as a charity trustee or are prohibited by law from being a director of a company
- have been convicted of an indictable offence which is not, or cannot be, spent
- are disqualified from acting as an officer of a registered housing provider under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

How to apply

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/jrf-three-trustees/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for the role and describes the specific experience you can bring to the appointment.

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.

Deadline for applications is **Monday 7th July 2025**.

Recruitment timetable

Closing date:	Monday 7th July 2025
Preliminary interviews:	w/c 21st & 28th July 2025, and early August 2025
Final Panel interviews:	Monday 8th September 2025 (York) Thursday 11th / Friday 12th September 2025 (London)

