



Trustee vacancies

Likewise provides support and care to those living with mental ill health, social isolation, homelessness and drug abuse. Our approach is based on the principles of acceptance and belonging, continual and active learning, genuine human relationships, and practical support. We have a unique workplace culture that allows these principles to flourish at the frontline, and as a result are able to support our clients make the changes in their lives that matter to them.

Over the last few years, our current Trustees have been highly supportive as we have experimented with and developed our approach, values, and organisational culture, being the critical yet encouraging friend we have needed. Having shored up this way of working and evaluated its impact, we are now ready for our next stage: we want to grow significantly in order to achieve financial independence and be an exemplar of low-cost, high-quality, and genuinely person-centred care. Alongside our outgoing Trustees, we recognise the value of building a new board that can help us with this growth and ultimately influence a social care sector in desperate need of change. Our new Director, being recruited in January, will be taking on much of this load, but new Trustees will be valuable friends offering insight, fresh perspectives, and varied expertise to help us achieve our goals. They have the opportunity to be part of an organisation ahead of the curve in terms of working practices and person-centered support, to experience our genuinely values-led culture, and to contribute towards something with real potency.

This is not a traditional Trustee role in that we believe power works best when it is transparent, allowing for information to flow freely between levels and creating a genuine sense of shared purpose. We think our Trustees have as much to learn from our approach and culture as we have from them, and this learning is key to our success. As such, we are looking for guidance and oversight as part of a mutual community of learners rather than from the top-down, and staff and stakeholder contribution to Board meetings will be the norm. As we are making a full change to the Board and recruiting at least three new trustees, this is an opportunity to consider the balance between service provision and community ownership, we are looking to re-imagine the capacity and potential of what a Board of Trustees can do. At this initial stage we hope to meet six evenings a year at our Swiss Cottage Likewise Hub, but this may change depending on who we recruit and what they want to offer.

We are looking for a diversity of experience and skills that can support our ambitions. Whether marketing, finance, policy, research, journalism, business, or anything else you think you can offer, we want to hear from you. Lived experience of any of the issues we work with will be considered, but we also actively seek people from outside of the sector – we recognise the value of all voices and avoid categorising people by problem-based identities. Most important to us is that you support our mission and our values.

To contribute towards this, we would want the Trustee to shape their own role just as a staff member would - we recognise that getting the best out of you means working with your individual strengths. Like a staff member, though, there are distinct and important parameters and expectations for this role:

To understand and work according to our values

Our values – learning, doing and belonging – are at the heart of our work. It is important that Trustees take the time to examine and consider our values in their decision-making processes. This is not always easy, and all of us at Likewise grapple with them from time-to-time, but the willingness to do such grappling is essential to keeping us person-centred and aware of our own power.

To be willing to reflect on your own feelings and motivations

All of us here spend a lot of time picking apart what we feel and how it influences our actions in order to enhance our decision-making and keep us person-centred. A willingness to be reflective and open is essential to operating as part of our culture.

To hold us to account as a critical friend

We are very active with our questioning and challenging of each other, using our values as accountability mechanisms. As a Trustee, you have the opportunity to provide a supportive but external perspective on this, highlighting areas you think we might be missing or where we could improve. This is done in the spirit of a community rather than a hierarchy – we expect you to speak your mind but doing this through a mutual relationship is a far more effective way of bringing positive change. We are an organisation in which leadership comes from all levels, and we are actively exploring ways of embedding our community-led approach into the Board.

To attend our Board meetings alongside our staff members

We will be having approximately six Board meetings a year. Attendance will be expected at all of these. The frequency and structure of these meetings will be evaluated continually, but financial oversight, strategic goals, frontline work and cultural strength and shape will all be considered and discussed. Meetings will be attended by our two Directors and any other staff who want to attend. We will also invite partners, funders, clients and other stakeholders to meetings where relevant, providing what we hope will be a richer and more fruitful experience for everyone involved.

To contribute your skills, expertise and networks

At this key point in our growth we would like our Board members to take advantage of opportunities to contribute further to our work with their own assets. This could be anything from community links to accounting acumen or communications nous – we are open to hearing what you can provide. More generally, we are looking for people to offer advice, reflection and a critical eye over our plans and movement towards financial sustainability.

To contribute to our enjoyment of our work

We are serious about what we do and take the time to reflect about how to do it as best we can. However, we combine this with an enjoyable and playful space in order to think openly and creatively about our work. We would like our Trustees to be able to be comfortable in and contribute towards such a space in order for our experiences to be both productive and enjoyable.

If this appeals to you, please send a CV and Cover Letter (1,000 words max) to sam.kammerling@likewise.org.uk explaining:

1. Why you're interested in this position
2. What you think you could offer Likewise
3. What you think Likewise could offer you

Following the receipt of this we will let you know if you are being considered for the role. The recruitment process will then consist of a presentation and an interview with our team at a date we will arrange with you. We hope to have a first meeting with all our new Trustees by January 2020 at the latest.

If you have any further questions about any of our work, please contact Sam on the email given above.