



Welcome to Stepping Stones



Trustee Recruitment Pack



Join us and help support a small charity working with adults with learning disabilities

Trustee Recruitment Pack: December 2023

Application deadline: Open

Thank you for your interest in Stepping Stones.

We are looking for new trustees to join our purpose driven and welcoming Board of Trustees in our work to enhance the lives of adults with learning disabilities through music, art, dance, drama, cooking and gardening.

This is an exciting time to join us, with opportunities to contribute and to help shape our future.

We want a Board that reflects our community and welcome as wide a range of applicants as possible. We're keen to hear from anyone who feels they can contribute through their skills, interest or experience, either professional or personal. We welcome those who have no experience of being a trustee and will provide induction and support. Commitment and enthusiasm is more important.

This recruitment pack contains information about our work, history and how we run ourselves, including what's involved in being a trustee, plus how to go about applying.



About Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones was established in 1997 in response to a lack of provision for activities for adults with learning disabilities in the local area. Originally operating as part of St Faith's Youth and Community Centre, we became an independent and registered charity in 2005. The majority of people attending the weekly classes have moderate and severe learning disabilities.

We aim to provide activities which can broaden the horizons of people who can easily be overlooked by society. We know that everyone has talents to share, confidence to gain and joy to be had.

Our Mission and Impact

Our mission is to provide life enhancing and meaningful activities by working with, listening to, and learning from adults with learning disabilities.

You can read more about the impact we make by reading our latest [annual report](#)

Our Activities

We run classes between Tuesday and Friday each week at St. Faith's Community Centre. Our timetable includes music, art, drama, dance, cooking, and exercise.



Each session includes meaningful, engaging and life enhancing activities. When service users attend our classes, they have the opportunity to learn new skills and share experiences with others. They can make new friends, express themselves freely and have fun. We have space for over 100 people each week across at least 9 different classes.

To read more about our classes you can visit our website <https://steppingstoneslearning.org.uk/classes/>.

We are fortunate to have a plot at a community allotment in Nunhead. This green space provides us the opportunity to run gardening activities in a peaceful outdoor location.

In addition, we also work in partnership with other organisations to widen our reach. This has included working with a local college and other day centre services to provide community activities for their students and service users. We have also provided offsite activities in residential homes and in collaboration with other charities.

Our people

Our fantastic Operations Manager is responsible for the day to day running of Stepping Stones and ensures that the classes run smoothly and safely. They are also responsible for fundraising, liaising with the local authority (Southwark), and supporting and managing tutors while working closely with the Trustees.

Stepping Stones is very lucky to have a small group of committed and talented tutors who lead activities and sessions. More recently activities have also been aided by support workers and by great volunteers.

The Board of Trustees oversees the running and future direction of Stepping Stones, working with the Operations Manager, and reporting annually to the Charity Commission to show we have carried out our duties. We have six trustees at the moment, (including an Expert by Experience) and we would like to recruit up to three more. We have a Chair and Treasurer. There are ad hoc opportunities for trustees to become involved in projects and working groups.

Our funding

Our current funding comes from a range of charitable trusts and from the London Borough of Southwark as well as a small contribution from service users. One funder recently said of Stepping Stones “ we can see what a difference your commitment, complete respect for, and empathy with, your clients, careful and prudent planning and imagination makes to your clients.... we feel privileged to support Stepping Stones. We’re looking forward to continuing the relationship.”

Our future

We are an organisation that is forward looking, making and taking opportunities to develop the service. For example, during the pandemic and lockdown, we had to completely redesign how we deliver services and know that we will continue to face challenges, which we will face creatively and optimistically. We welcome new ideas and approaches to help achieve this.

Trustee Person Specification

All Trustees: What we are looking for in all our Trustees

Being a Trustee is a voluntary role and therefore the positions are unpaid. Reasonable expenses are paid.

Trustees must be over 18 years old and able to be a Trustee of a charity. For example, some unspent convictions mean that you cannot be a trustee. [Please click for further info.](#)

We are committed to equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all individuals. We strongly encourage applications from the Black, racially minoritized and other under-represented communities, and people with experience of learning disability – either personally, professionally, as a carer or a volunteer. This will help us increase the range of thoughts and opinions when making decisions.

We are open-minded with a strong commitment to diversity and opportunity and are looking for Trustees who share these values.

We are looking for people who want to make a contribution by helping to steer Stepping Stones thoughtfully and energetically, contributing their views and expertise.

We are looking for people who can work well as part of a small team and understand what is practical with one part time employee and a small charity

It would be helpful if you were familiar with Southwark /Lambeth either through home or work, but it is not essential.

Specifically: We are particularly looking for trustees who have one or more of the following interest and skills.

Digital and IT. Experience of delivering online events or providing digital services/education

Understanding what current and future service users need. Interest in service user engagement and assessing need.

Knowledge of living with a learning disability. This can be as a person living with a learning disability, supporting someone with a learning disability or professionally.

Administrative support. Assisting communication by keeping meetings and discussions on track

Fund raising. Interest and experience in small charity fundraising

Trustee Job Description

Oversight

- Make sure that Stepping Stones is following the charity's aims and objectives.
- Contribute actively to monitoring what Stepping Stones is providing and planning for the future.
- Be collectively responsible for the actions of the organisation. Stepping Stones is a Charitable Incorporate Organisation (CIO). This means that the legal responsibility of the charity, and any contracts it enters into, rests with Stepping Stones and not with individual trustees. (Please see here for more information on [CIO status](#))
- Agree annual budgets and review and approve annual audited accounts and the annual report required by the Charity Commission

Responsibilities

- Contribute to Board discussions, using your skills, experience and knowledge
- Ensure that Stepping Stones is managed efficiently
- Keep informed about the work of Stepping Stones and issues that affect its work
- Commitment to using your skills and knowledge to support Stepping Stones to make decisions and take actions to benefit service users
- Be familiar with the policies of Stepping Stones and contribute to their development
- Be part of the positive reputation of Stepping Stones

Your commitment

Meetings. 4 - 5 meetings per year - currently held in the evening between 6.30 – 8pm. Usually held at St Faiths Centre, SE24 (nearest stations North Dulwich and Herne Hill) or online. We will be flexible to ensure access to all Trustees. Board papers are sent in advance and it is important to come to the meetings having read the papers as your thoughts and opinions will contribute to the decisions made. Depending on your particular interest, there may be other meetings or conversations to lead or progress activities, and these will be made ad hoc as needed.

Events. There is a lovely annual event in July to showcase Stepping Stones and give our service users the floor to entertain us, our funders, supporters, family and friends.

Induction will be provided. Meetings with the Operation Manager and Chair will be arranged and an externally provided short new trustee course is available. The trustees are friendly and helpful and will support new trustees as they settle in.

Term. Trustees serve a term of three years. They can then be re-appointed.

Opportunities

Being a charity trustee is an exciting challenge, giving the opportunity to develop more skills, use the skills you have and join a welcoming group of people with similar aims. You can contribute to your local community and learn more about it; you can gain experience and skills that may help in other parts of your life, such as employment and you can help shape a small, local organisation which does good and needs support to ensure it is there in the future for those people who need it.

Process and timescale for recruiting new Trustees

Before you apply

We will invite you to visit us at the centre to see our services in action. We are very happy to answer any questions or queries you have in advance of applying. Please contact info@steppingstoneslearning.org.uk

Application deadline is Open

There is a short application form for you to fill in and send with a short CV by email to info@steppingstoneslearning.org.uk. We also have a confidential Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form (optional and not part of the application). The Chair and other trustees will review applications. You will be asked to provide **two suitable references** (not family members) from people who know you well.

Meeting you

Suitable applicants will be invited to meet the Chair and another trustee for an informal discussion. If successful, applicants will be made an offer

Next steps

For successful applicants who decide to take up the offer, there will be an invitation to the next Trustee meeting as an observer. The Board will then vote on the applicant joining the charity as a Trustee. Stepping Stones is committed to using the Disclosure and Barring Service checks to ensure that we safeguard those we support.

Further information. You can read more about the work of Stepping Stones online at www.steppingstoneslearning.org.uk, email info@steppingstoneslearning.org.uk or call 07950 612914 with any enquiries.