



Public
Law
Project

Information pack

Finance Trustee

June 2024





This role offers an exciting opportunity to join Public Law Project's (PLP) Board in a key governance and leadership role, providing expertise and insight on financial matters.

The role of "Finance Trustee" is an informal title designed to attract the interest of and be accessible to people with a high level of finance skills who might not necessarily have previous experience of the charity sector or at Board level.

As a PLP trustee you will be part of the governance of the charity that successfully challenged the prorogation of Parliament, helped survivors whose assets are controlled by their abuser to access legal aid, and are currently representing the lead case opposing the Government's Rwanda deportation scheme. You will ensure we are able to continue this important work by ensuring the best management of the resources at our disposal.

You will play a crucial role in ensuring PLP operates within a framework of good governance and financial stability. The PLP Trustee Board consists of the Chair and up to 12 total members. As a Board member, you and our other trustees take on responsibility for overall governance of our organisation, including the financial health and oversight of our strategic direction. The Board delegates core governance functions to sub-committees including the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARCOM), Fundraising Committee and the Personnel Committee.

The purpose of FARCOM is to provide scrutiny and oversight of policies, processes and practice relating to finance and risk. The Chair of FARCOM leads the committee and ensures it fulfils this overall purpose. The duties of a traditional treasurer are held by the Chair of FARCOM.

We envisage you joining as one of four trustee members of FARCOM. You will provide recent, relevant financial expertise to FARCOM and its Chair in order that the responsibilities of the committee and of the treasurer role are fulfilled. We anticipate that your role will in turn benefit from the guidance and support of the Chair of FARCOM.

To be the successful candidate, you will have financial management experience (highly likely but not required to be a qualified accountant). You will bring financial expertise and experience to PLP's activities. You will be able to confidently communicate financial issues to non-finance experts including other board and committee members. You will be an independent, strategic and creative thinker with a strong commitment to collaborative working and PLP's values.

This role is voluntary and unpaid, and reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

PLP is an equal opportunities and Disability Confident Committed employer, and we place a high value on diversity. We are proud of our strong diversity right across the organisation and at all levels of seniority. We have significant numbers of staff and trustees who come from underprivileged or minoritised backgrounds (including people of colour, women, LGBTQ+ people, disabled people, and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds). Whether you are part of all or none of these groups, you will be welcomed at PLP. We are keen for our Board to be reflective of our beneficiary groups, which include those with lived experience as users of asylum, welfare, and legal aid systems, and experience of migration and discrimination; we particularly invite your application if this is your experience.



About Public Law Project

We are researchers, lawyers, trainers and public law policy experts. The aim of all of our work is to make sure that state decision-making is fair and lawful and anyone can hold the state to account.

For over 30 years we have represented and supported people marginalised through poverty, discrimination or disadvantage when they have been affected by unlawful state decision-making.

- Our specialist lawyers represent individuals, campaign groups and charities, often in high profile, high stakes, public interest litigation.
- Our researchers work in partnership with the UK's leading academic institutions. We provide evidence in support of public law, access to justice and the rule of law to inquiries and we work with decision makers to increase understanding of public law.
- Our events team runs a national programme of conferences and training for practitioners and those working with marginalised and disadvantaged groups, providing thought-leadership, expertise and insight to organisations and individuals who share our goals.

Vision, Mission & Values

Our **vision**

A world in which the state acts fairly and lawfully

Our **vision** is achieved by our **mission**

We improve public decision-making

We empower people to understand and apply the law

We increase access to justice

Our **values** underpin all our work

Equality

Integrity

Expertise

Teamwork



Application Process

To apply, please send a CV and covering letter (max 2 sides A4) explaining why you wish to become a trustee at PLP and the skills and experience that you would bring to the role. Please ensure that your covering letter addresses the criteria of the person specification, as applications will be shortlisted against these criteria.

We welcome applications from individuals regardless of age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation. Applicants are required to complete our equality monitoring form. This will be anonymised and stored separately from your application.

Please send your application to hr@publiclawproject.org.uk.

If you would like an informal discussion about your application, including with one of our existing trustees, or have any questions about the role please contact Alice Wood a.wood@publiclawproject.org.uk

We anticipate running a “rolling recruitment” for this role meaning applications will be accepted until a candidate is identified for the role.

The deadline to ensure your application is considered is **9am Monday 8 July**

We expect to close the process to new applications by **9am Monday 22 July**.

Time Commitment

We expect Trustees to be willing and able to commit around one day per month to trustee duties.

Trustees must regularly attend and prepare for PLP Board meetings. These take place every quarter on Wednesday evenings in Central London and online. Meetings last approximately 3 hours. There are also optional opportunities to get to know other board members and PLP throughout the year.

You will also be required to attend the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, which meets quarterly ahead of each Board meeting.



Role Description

Purpose of the role

The PLP Trustee Board consists of the Chair, and up to 12 total members. Board members act both as charitable trustees and directors of PLP, which is a company limited by guarantee as well as a registered charity.

Board members are responsible for overall governance of the organisation, including oversight of its strategic direction and financial management. The role is voluntary and unpaid, although reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Trustees play a crucial role in ensuring that PLP operates within a framework of good governance and financial stability.

Key responsibilities of the “Finance Trustee”:

- Bringing financial expertise, contacts and experience to PLP’s activities when relevant.
- Providing guidance to the Board and Executive on the financial stewardship of the organisation.
- Reviewing and scrutinising budgets, management accounts, annual financial statements, and long-term forecasts.
- Liaise with our external audit partner and the Chief Operating Officer to ensure statutory audits are conducted effectively and findings are implemented.
- Overseeing the effectiveness of internal control systems and the reserves policy to ensure robustness and PLP’s financial health.
- To attend the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and provide it with the finance expertise it needs to fulfil its role providing scrutiny and oversight.
- Support the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee in their role as Treasurer.
- Ensure the Board takes collective responsibility for PLP’s financial health, drawing any major concerns to the attention of the Chair, Board, CEO and COO.

Key responsibilities of individual trustees:

- Attending quarterly Board meetings and helping the Board reach sound decisions, using knowledge or experience that might assist.
- Preparing for Board and Committee meetings by reading in advance any papers that have been circulated.
- Between Board meetings, responding to email from PLP staff or other Board members on an occasional basis as required.
- Following through decisions and undertaking actions as agreed at Board meetings.
- Where opportunities arise, raising awareness of PLP through external networking.

Key collective responsibilities of the Board:

- Ensuring that PLP operates within the terms of its Constitution, and complies with charity law, company law and other relevant legal requirements.



- Giving strategic direction to PLP, setting overall policy and the broad objectives of its business plan.
- Ensuring that PLP applies its financial resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives as defined in its Constitution.
- Ensuring the financial stability of the organisation, including by making sure that adequate procedures are in place for financial management and the organisation remains solvent.
- Ensuring that PLP complies with its legal responsibilities as an employer and overseeing the recruitment of senior staff members.



Person Specification:

Essential – role specific

- Financial management experience, likely to be a qualified accountant with a recognised professional body (e.g. ACA, ACCA, CIMA).
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to impart financial and risk information effectively to a non-expert audience, including the Board, staff team and other stakeholders.
- Ability to recommend difficult and demanding decisions to the Board.
- Understanding of financial, legal and regulatory requirements.

Essential – trustee

- Ability to think strategically and creatively.
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team.
- Commitment to the PLP's aim; and to its values.
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal responsibilities of trusteeship and of its role.
- Independent judgment and willingness to speak honestly and openly.
- Understanding of, and commitment to, equal opportunities.
- Ability and willingness to give sufficient time to fulfilling the role of trustee.

Desirable

- Experience of charity finances and regulatory requirements.
- Understanding of fundraising from grant-making organisations, corporate fundraising bodies, and/or individual donors.



Climate Emergency Statement

PLP acknowledges the ongoing climate emergency, unequivocally caused principally by human activities, and the need for immediate action.[1]

The climate crisis disproportionately impacts the most marginalised in society, whom PLP exists to serve, and so PLP has a particular duty to minimise our impact on the climate and environment.

PLP commits to the following actions:

1. Establishing a programme firstly to reduce and then offset our carbon emissions wherever possible, including employee commuting, business travel, energy use, and homeworking. We aim to reduce our carbon emissions by half over the next 5 years.
2. Using our voice to advocate for change, particularly through Finance & Ops relationship with suppliers and providers.
3. Considering the climate emergency and climate justice when developing our next strategy, including a commitment to support the efforts of established actors in this space.

[1] [AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023 — IPCC](#)

Privacy notice

When you apply to be a PLP trustee we will need to collect information about you including your CV and contact details so that we can assess your suitability for the role and inform you about the progress of your application.

Your records will be kept securely whilst we consider your application. If your application is unsuccessful, we will keep your data until 6 months after the decision was made.

If appointed, your personal information will be processed for the purposes of enabling PLP to comply with our legal obligations, including compliance with Company and Charity law and regulations. It will be held electronically in a restricted folder accessible only to senior staff and HR. It may be shared with other trustees and external bodies as necessary for these purposes. The Charity Commission and Companies House both routinely publish certain personal data on their websites. Your full name, appointment dates, and bio will be retained permanently by PLP and processed for our legitimate interest in keeping for historical purposes. All other information will be retained for six years after you cease to be a trustee.

If you opt to provide equal opportunity data to PLP this will be anonymised and retained only as long as is necessary to record the recruitment decision against the anonymised data and no longer than six months.

We do not share recruitment information with third parties.



Equality statement of intent

As an employer, PLP will treat all employees and job applicants equally and fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against them. This also applies to volunteers, interns and anyone undertaking work experience with PLP. Our commitment to equal treatment extends to arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion and transfers, grievance and disciplinary procedures, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress code, references, work allocation and any other employment related activities. Specifically, PLP will endeavour to ensure that:

- i. Whenever practical, we will recruit and maintain a workforce which broadly reflects the diversity of the community in which we operate and serve. We will ensure that the style and content of our job adverts and recruitment materials convey this commitment, and always includes the statement that "The Public Law Project is an equal opportunity employer".
- ii. Subject to cost, we will ensure that job opportunities are advertised widely and to diverse audiences. Where appropriate, PLP will take positive action measures to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are under-represented in our workforce.
- iii. We treat all job applicants equally and fairly and do not unlawfully discriminate against them. We do this by ensuring that we operate an open and fair recruitment process, and making decisions using selection criteria which do not discriminate.
- iv. We will take every possible step to ensure that employees and volunteers are treated fairly, with the aim of creating a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that is free of discrimination and promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.
- v. We recognise our continuing responsibility to develop the potential of all employees, removing any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents progression or full contribution to the organisation's performance. We will ensure that selection for promotion, training or other benefit is free from discrimination of any kind and is based on the employee's experience and abilities and the needs of the job.
- vi. We will make clear to all employees, volunteers and trustees that anyone who works for PLP in any capacity is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, and that unlawful discrimination, intimidation, harassment and victimisation are disciplinary offences which will not be tolerated by the organisation and may lead to disciplinary action. We will provide clear and accessible procedures allowing allegations of such conduct to be promptly and sensitively investigated.
- vii. We will provide flexibility to employees in relation to work requirements that may significantly impact on their personal needs and responsibilities and we will seek, as far as possible, to foster a culture that ensures an appropriate work – life balance. We also aim to be aware of days of cultural or religious significance that employees may wish to observe in an appropriate manner.