



RECRUITMENT OF CHAIR OF TRUSTEE BOARD

Voluntary/Unpaid Role

Hackney Migrant Centre (HMC) is seeking to recruit a Chair to support our work and ensure financial and organisational stability as we implement our newly developed Strategic Plan for 2025-2028. Our current Chair is stepping down at the end of her three-year term. We have recently appointed a new Vice-Chair, an experienced Treasurer in post for over a year, and our CEO has now been in post for over 18 months, providing continuity and stability in leadership. This is an opportunity for someone with previous Board experience to coordinate and lead the Board of Trustees and make an important contribution to the work of this well-respected local charity at a crucial time in its development.

HMC was established in 2007 to provide advice and support to migrants to help them overcome problems with their immigration status and in accessing services. We welcome all migrants, regardless of immigration status or nationality. With the help of a team of professional advisors and volunteers, we deliver immigration, housing and welfare advice and provide a range of holistic advocacy and support services in a community setting. We work to support visitors to address urgent problems they are facing, and address long term challenges relating to insecure immigration status, homelessness and destitution.

As the external environment for migrants has become increasingly challenging and funding pressures have intensified, we have had to review and adapt the scope of our work. Over the past two years, the staff team has reduced to a team of five, with most roles being part-time. We now have an annual budget of just over £300,000 and are in the process of reviewing what we can realistically achieve, as well as how we can become more resilient and financially sustainable.

We welcome applications from people from a range of backgrounds and experience who would be happy to take up this exciting challenge. We are particularly keen to recruit trustees from historically under-represented communities, those with lived experience of migration and/or the UK's hostile immigration environment.

If you would like to be considered, please email our Interim Chair, Daniel, at daniel@hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk, attaching a CV and a brief statement (no more than two sides of A4) outlining why you are interested in the role and what you could bring to. You are welcome to contact Daniel if you would like to discuss this informally before applying.

See the job description below for further details and for more information about HMC visit www.hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to receiving your application!



WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN OUR NEW CHAIR

All HMC trustees must have:

- An understanding of the issues facing migrants and refugees and a commitment to migrants' rights
- A commitment to the aims of HMC and to its visitors
- Time to take an active role in the trustee board
- Integrity and commitment to working for the good of HMC and its visitors
- Willingness to speak their mind and to evaluate decisions critically
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team for the good of HMC.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of being a trustee.
- A demonstrable commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles and anti-racist practice

In addition, the **Chair** should have:

- The ability and willingness to coordinate and lead the trustee board.
- Knowledge and experience of charity management and governance, as an employee, trustee or volunteer, in order to support the CEO in leading the organisation
- Experience of planning and chairing meetings – experience of chairing a trustee board would be an advantage, though not essential
- Understanding of the refugee and migrant sector and the issues facing voluntary organisations.
- Excellent communication skills, including tact, diplomacy and an inclusive approach to decision-making
- Confidence in public speaking and an ability to represent the organisation at events and meetings with external stakeholders and supporters
- The ability to commit sufficient time to the role. We estimate **three days per month**, although at times an additional time commitment may be required.

We are particularly interested in applicants with:

- Lived or learned experience of migration to the UK; and/or
- Previous experience chairing a board of trustees; and/or
- Senior management experience, as the Chair provides supervision and support to the CEO.



TRUSTEE CHAIR JOB DESCRIPTION

The role of Chair

The Chair of the trustee board is the 'public face' of the Hackney Migrant Centre's (HMC's) trustees; the main channel of communication with staff; and responsible for chairing and managing board meetings and, with the secretary, ensuring that decisions are implemented and actions followed up.

The Chair has the general responsibilities of a trustee to ensure the financial sustainability of HMC and that it is carrying out its work for the public benefit in line with its charitable objects. Decisions affecting the running of HMC and its finances will be taken by the board as a whole, either at the board meeting or if urgent via email. The Chair does not have individual decision-making responsibility or power (but does have a deciding vote at board meetings).

The specific duties of the Chair include the following:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Leading the board in setting the charity's vision, mission, values, and overall strategy.
- **Governance and Compliance:** Ensuring the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, and all other relevant legal and regulatory requirements (e.g. Charity Commission and Companies House).
- **Board Effectiveness:** Providing inclusive leadership to the board, ensuring all trustees fulfil their duties, fostering a positive culture, managing conflicts of interest, and leading board recruitment and performance reviews.
- **Chairing Meetings:** Planning and leading effective, well-run board meetings and AGMs, ensuring productive discussions, clear decision-making, and that agreed actions are implemented in a timely manner.
- **Relationship with the CEO:** Acting as a key link between the board and staff, providing support and constructive challenge to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and leading the CEO's annual performance appraisal and recruitment process.
- **Financial Oversight:** Working with the treasurer and board to ensure the charity's financial stability, review the annual budget, and manage resources responsibly.
- **Trustee Development:** Support the development of the board of trustees by ensuring high quality induction, onboarding, review and training opportunities are available.
- **Ambassadorial Role:** Acting as a figurehead and spokesperson for the charity, representing its interests and values to external stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the public.



Other specific duties

- Act as a signatory on the charity's bank accounts and approve payments where required.
- Sign contracts and approve transactions where relevant.
- Respond to urgent issues raised by the CEO.
- Ensure, with other trustees, that effective succession planning takes place.
- Visit HMC's offices and attend the advice service (on specific occasions).

The specific duties attached to the Chair's role may change and/or be taken on by another trustee by agreement of the board as a whole. Any duty may be taken on by the vice chair temporarily (if the chair is absent) or permanently (by agreement between the Chair and Vice-Chair).

BEING A TRUSTEE OF HACKNEY MIGRANT CENTRE

The trustees of Hackney Migrant Centre play a vital role in the organisation. They are responsible for ensuring that its services are maintained and developed for the benefit of its visitors, in line with HNMC's ethos and objectives.

HMC staff are responsible for the day-to-day running of HMC's services but trustees work closely with staff in discussing and deciding on policy issues, staffing developments and campaigning, overseeing finance and fundraising to ensure that the organisation is sustainable and in monitoring the impact of HMC's services. We welcome trustees from a variety of backgrounds to ensure that a broad range of skills and experience are represented. Trustees are encouraged to gain first-hand experience of the work of HMC by volunteering at the advice service at least once per year, and attending HMC events.

The Charity Commission

Hackney Migrant Centre is a charity registered with the **Charity Commission**. This places specific legal obligations on trustees. The Charity Commission states that the six main duties of trustees are to:

1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
2. Comply with your charity's governing document and the law
3. Act in your charity's best interests
4. Manage your charity's resources responsibly
5. Act with reasonable care and skill
6. Ensure your charity is accountable

Further details at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved>



Trustees as Company Directors

Hackney Migrant Centre is also a charitable company limited by guarantee. This means that trustees are company directors for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006. Directors must comply with statutory filing and reporting obligations to Companies House and must meet the seven general duties, including:

1. The duty to act within powers
2. The duty to promote the success of the company
3. The duty to exercise independent judgment
4. The duty to exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
5. The duty to avoid conflicts of interest
6. The duty not to accept benefits from third parties
7. The duty to declare interests in proposed transactions or arrangements

These duties apply alongside trustees' duties under charity law.

What are Trustees of Hackney Migrant Centre are expected to do?

All trustees are expected to attend the ordinary trustees' meetings as well as other meetings and events where possible/appropriate. The main activities which HMC trustees are involved in are:

- **Ordinary trustee meetings.** These are the major decision-making forum for trustees. They are held in the evenings roughly every six weeks and generally last around two hours. They are split between in-person and online meeting. The CEO, and other staff where relevant, also attend. There are also additional special meetings when necessary.
- **Annual trustee awayday.** We organise an annual awayday which takes place normally for half a day, at a local venue.
- **Annual Christmas and summer party.** This is a public event to publicise HMC's activity during the year, generally with a specific theme and invited speakers. Supporters, partners and funders are invited.
- **Sub-committee meetings.** We currently have **Finance and Fundraising** and **Employment sub-committees**. These meet roughly every three months, or as necessary and are generally online. They include some trustees and relevant staff members. Any decisions/proposals are reported to the full board for discussion/approval.
- **Appointments and interview panels.** One or more trustees normally sit on panels for the appointment of new staff. Members of the employment subcommittee are also involved in drawing up job descriptions in consultation with staff.
- **Other events.** HMC organises or supports a number of other fundraising, campaigning and social events. Trustees are encouraged to participate where possible and may take a role in organising events, in collaboration with staff and volunteers.