

Introduction

The North East Law Centre is a Charity founded in 1978 to give those excluded from the civil justice system by reason of poverty, knowledge, capacity, nationality, residence or language advice, support and representation so that they can be heard. The Centre covers Northumberland, Durham, Tees Valley and Tyne and Wear. It is funded through contracts, grants, and some paid-for work. It is growing and currently has a turnover approaching £850,000, with over 25 full and part time staff. It has supported over 1000 people over the past year.

The centre is currently overseen by 8 Trustees. Their role is to oversee the development and use of the resources of the Centre to the benefit of as many in the North East who need us as possible. While the majority of those the Law Centre serves are from a wide variety of non-white ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and this is reflected in the staff team, the Board is at present all-white. We are committed to becoming more inclusive, and to becoming an actively anti-racist organisation. The Board has undertaken diversity training and is currently developing an action plan to this end. We therefore particularly welcome applicants from people of colour.

Trustee Job Description and Person Specification

PURPOSE AND ROLE

To work with other Trustees to form an effective, accountable governing body which provides leadership for the organisation's activities and performance.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Governance

- To ensure that North East Law Centre complies with its Memorandum and Articles of Association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To contribute to the strategic direction of Newcastle Law Centre, setting overall policy, defining goals and regularly reviewing performance.
- To act in the best interests of North East Law Centre at all times.
- To read Board papers and contribute to discussions
- To attend North East Law Centre board meetings (usually bi-monthly).
- To contribute in other ways to the work of North East Law Centre, depending on the individual's skills, interests, contacts and experience (the Chair to discuss with each Trustee at the outset and review annually).
- To ensure the financial stability of North East Law Centre.

Public Role

- To be an ambassador for North East Law Centre in the wider community.

- To introduce new contacts to the Law Centre from your personal and professional network.
- To attend North East Law Centre's events whenever possible and participate actively, if requested.
- To participate, as appropriate, in the national network of Law Centres, in order to contribute to its development and set the work of North East Law Centre in a wider context.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

- Commitment to the vision, mission and values of North East Law Centre.
- Understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.
- A willingness to take an active part in running North East Law Centre
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team
- Integrity
- Strategic Vision
- Good independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively

DESIRABLE

- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties and responsibilities of trusteeship
- A willingness to sit on sub-committees relevant to skills and experience
- It is desirable to have experience of one or more of the following:
 - the work of charities and voluntary organisations and the issues facing them
 - management of charitable organisations
 - senior management experience
 - fundraising
 - financial management and investment
 - marketing, promotion and public relations
 - legal services
 - human resources management
 - local, regional and central government policy and funding

TERMS

Appointments are for 3 years.

North East Law Centre is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. As such, trustees will be required to be registered as trustees with the charity commission and Directors of the company with Companies House.

This is a voluntary role but reasonable expenses can be claimed.

Application process

Candidates will be required to submit a brief CV and a personal statement to Michael Fawole, Centre Director outlining the contribution that they will make to the Trustee Board. Such applications will be reviewed by the Chair of Trustees, David Slater and appointment will be made by the Trustee Board. Candidates will be invited to meet (virtually at present) with the Chair for an informal 'both ways' discussion to ensure the candidate understands the role and responsibilities of the Trustee Board. They may be invited to visit the Law Centre and/or attend a Trustee Board as an observer to develop their understanding. If there are a number of candidates, we may set up an interview.

Candidates will be asked to confirm in writing any existing or potential conflicts of interest. The Board will also ensure that the person is qualified to act as a Trustee.

Any queries please contact Michael Fawole (e: michael@nelawcentre.co.uk t: 0191 230 4777).