

**Information pack**

**New Trustees**

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For an informal discussion contact

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or call 020 7828 3855/07968 556164

For background information on the Toynbee Hall please go to

[www.toynbeehall.org.uk](http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk)

**About Toynbee Hall**

Toynbee Hall is one of the longest-running organisations in East London dedicated to fighting poverty. For over a century, it has been a steady source of free legal advice and support for young and older people through the arts, education and welfare services. For over 100 years it has engaged different waves of people who have settled in the area, it has fought the scourge of debt, and it has used its learning to help shape the welfare state.

People and communities are at the heart of everything we do at Toynbee Hall. They shape our services, challenging us to improve quality. They help us build our evidence base, co-create new ways of addressing challenges; and are supported to speak to power, offering ideas and insights at a city and national level that will break the patterns of poverty.

East London needs organisations like Toynbee Hall, to build strengths, voice and collective endeavour to ensure everyone can take advantage of what the capital and its communities have to offer.

This is an exciting time for Toynbee Hall. The team is about to return to its lovingly restored historic home, which will be the heart of an exciting, open and dynamic space for the whole community – and will generate revenues to allow us to innovate and extend our offer. The journey to get to this point has been challenging, and will continue to create pressures and tough choices but by remaining true to our vision, we are confident that we and the community around us will see the real benefits emerging very soon.

As part of this renewal, we have recruited a new Chief Executive, to build on the strong legacy of what went before. And now we are seeking up to 6 trustees to join the Board over the next 2 years, as longstanding trustees near retirement.

**Why we need new Trustees**

At the heart of Toynbee Hall, we need a strong, committed Board leading our ambition.  We need people who can stretch the organisation to be the best it can be, support the staff and volunteer team to become radically engaged with our community, and lead strategy that can target the underlying causes of poverty, not just the symptoms. We also need to be sustainable, relevant and have an authentic relationship with the community. In order to achieve this we aim to have a trustee board that reflects the local community, so we especially want to hear from candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds and ethnic groups and younger potential Trustees. Experience of the community is really important to either lived or because your work is brings you here.

As it is really important to us that we attract a range of Trustees we will offer a full induction programme, and mentoring, for people who have the qualities and skills we are looking for. You don’t need to have experience of being a trustee: these are skills which can be developed, so please don’t let a lack of experience put you off from applying.

More about the qualities we seek are set out below.

**The time commitment to be a Trustee**

Each Board member serves for a three-year term. This will then be reviewed by the Board with a maximum nine-year term. The essential role and responsibilities of a Toynbee Hall Board member is to ensure that Toynbee Hall pursues its objectives in support of its mission to challenge the causes and impacts of poverty**.**

Board members will need to commit about 2 days per month to Toynbee Hall. Some of this time will be attending Board meetings, involvement in time-limited working parties, helping us build our networks and income base and attending events. Meetings take place at Toynbee Hall’s home in Commercial Street, E1.

**Personal qualities, experience and skills we are looking for**

All Board members must be people of high integrity with good, independent judgement, an ability to think creatively, and a willingness to speak their mind. Above all, they should model our values: open, bold and enquiring.

We want our trustees to:

* Bring wisdom to the Board, by which we mean the ability to think strategically and creatively about the challenges and opportunities, to identify clear action in the midst of multiple perspectives and disciplines.
* Support and guide our Chief Executive and his talented, passionate and committed team so that they remain focused on achieving the best outcomes for the community around us.
* Deepen our relevance to that community, by bringing experience from living in, working in or indeed studying East London; and to
* Fight for a different future for East London. We want trustees who put the interests of East London first, and see in Toynbee Hall as a crucial opportunity to serve those interests.

**The rewards**

The challenges are many and interesting and the Board takes its work seriously and are committed. In return for this the rewards an opportunities are significant and your work would:-

* Be part of a leadership group which continuously seeks to improve and be more effective.
* Contribute to making a real difference to the life of the East End and further afield.
* Bring you into a creative and visionary team of people and could be an opportunity to grow your experience of strategy and policy setting.
* Enable you to work as part of team that values listening, collaborating and making decisions together.
* Be closely involved with the annual budget setting and overall financial well being of the organisation.

**Person specification**

Board members are active ambassadors for Toynbee Hall This means attending and supporting events and taking opportunities to promote and develop the work of Toynbee Hall through networks and contacts.

The Board needs skills, experience and knowledge in the following areas:

* Understanding of the needs of inner city communities with local knowledge of Tower Hamlets and more broadly East London. A personal connection to the borough or local area would be a real advantage. And as part of this we are actively seeking Trustees whose backgrounds reflect the wide diversity of our local community.
* Commercial and enterprise: one of the most exciting things about the next phase of our development will be the re-establishment of an enterprise function, generating key revenues from commercial activities. We need our Board to guide and oversee this, so are keen to find candidates with a social enterprise or related commercial background.
* Social action: we will be broadening our work with communities, acting as a catalyst to inspire positive activities across culture, campaigning, social justice and education. Knowledge and expertise at Governance level will be important to us meeting our aims in this area.
* Influencing and learning: key to our success will be our ability to influence real change. Our team are very skilled and well connected particularly around financial health; but trustee input and oversight for this agenda – to broaden our horizons and deepen impact – is needed.
* Finance: even though our turnover is less than £10m, we are nevertheless a complex organisation financially. Our Finance Committee provide robust scrutiny and our Finance Team are strong and well led – but we are losing at least one Trustee with deep knowledge of charity accounting and financial governance, so are looking to replace these key skills in at least one of our new Trustees.

Above all you need to have a perspective, knowledge, ideas and commitment to tackling poverty and inequality in East London and beyond, and be willing to use these to help Toynbee Hall in its future.

**Next steps and what to expect**

If you would like an informal discussion about these roles then please contact Allyson Davies (contact details on title page).

If you would like to put yourself forward as a potential trustee please write a letter to Julian Corner (Chair of Trustees) outlining your interest and explaining what you think you would bring to the trustee role. Please keep this letter to two sides of A4 at most. Email your letter, along with your CV, to Allyson Davies, ([ToynbeeHall@allysondavies-consultant.com](mailto:ToynbeeHall@allysondavies-consultant.com)) Or, if you prefer, you could send us your expression of interest in any other creative way that gets across your background, interest and what you would bring. This could take the form of a video, or an instagram, a poem, story, or any other creative expression you would like to use. Please contact Allyson to arrange this.

We are open to receiving expressions of interest until the end of August for the initial recruitment process but we are also open to receiving expressions of interest in the autumn if that suits your timing better. Once we have reviewed your expression of interest Allyson will let you know whether we can take your offer forward.

The next step will be an informal meeting or telephone call with Allyson.

Following this we will invite a small number of people to meet with some trustees. There will be a chance to talk to members of the staff team too, as well as to attend part of a board meeting. This will take place on the **26th September** for the initial process. We will arrange a later date for potential trustees who express an interest in the autumn.

This may seem like a long process but given the level of contribution that trustees make we think it’s important that both potential trustees and the team here feel that there is a positive match of values, a complementary skills set and a sense that we can all work well together.