



Recruitment pack

Directors for the Board of the vehicle: voluntary position

Closing date: 10am on 15th February 2024

Summary

London Funders brings people together to build a better future, taking action on what matters to our city and our communities. This year we are embarking on an ambitious new step to take collaboration between funders and communities to the next level, and are looking for people to join us as Directors of a new company for collaboration.

Collaboration across funders and communities has been at the heart of our work over the years. We worked with funders to distribute £4.7m in response to the Grenfell Tower fire, £58.7m through the [London Community Response](#) to covid-19, and now £100m through [Propel](#), an ambitious ten year funding programme. Each one of these collaborations has happened because community groups and funders have come together, pooling their knowledge, funding and experience. All of these approaches have made us even more committed to working together to create lasting change.

However, it's also shown us why it can be difficult to do collaboration at scale, and helped us to see some of the barriers to creating truly collaborative spaces for funders and civil society to design, plan, learn and make funding decisions together.

All of this has been the driving force behind creating an exciting new collaborative space that we are launching this year- 'the vehicle'. The vehicle will be a new charitable company that creates the space which holds 'pooled' money on behalf of multiple cross-sector collaborations. And importantly, it will also be a space where people will come together to design and decide how this money should be used – people with experience across the funding and social justice sectors.

We believe this can be a game changer in the way we fund.

- It will provide a simple and effective way for funders and civil society partners to come together in equal number to collaboratively design and distribute funding.
- It will enable funders in London and beyond to pool funds more easily, overcoming some of the systems, cultures and restrictions that can sometimes hold us back
- It will create opportunities to learn collectively, testing new ways of making grants and taking risks which we cannot take alone.

To help us achieve the ambitions for the vehicle, we are recruiting curious, committed and passionate people from both funding and equity-led organisations to join the vehicle's Board of Directors. You can read more about the role in this job pack, together with details about how to apply. If you would like the job pack in an alternative format, please get in touch with us via email at info@londonfunders.org.uk or phone us on 020 7255 4488. We can also arrange for a member of staff to run through the pack with you and answer any questions you may have.

Background

The new vehicle will provide a simple and effective way for funders and civil society partners to work collaboratively to design and distribute funding. It will enable funders in London and beyond to pool funds, test new ways of making grants, and to make funding decisions collectively and equitably.

An ambition for greater collaboration lies at the heart of the new vehicle. Funders and civil society tell us that they want to work more closely together when designing and distributing funding. One of the reasons for this is that the challenges we face are too big for any funder, charity or community to tackle alone, and collaborating enables us to draw on the strengths and assets of everyone.

But we also hear that in practice, collaboration can be difficult due to the different systems, restrictions and cultures which sometimes hold us back. The vehicle will provide an opportunity to overcome this: offering a way to fund differently and more equitably.

The vehicle will be able to hold 'pooled' money on behalf of multiple cross-sector collaborations. It will create new collaborative resources for designing and distributing this funding. By acting together, funders and civil society partners will be able to take risks they could not take alone, embed more equitable decision making into funding practice, and generate learning that can be taken back into our everyday work.

London Funders has established a subsidiary company which will be accountable for the development and operation of the Vehicle and we're now looking for individuals from funding and civil society organisations to join its Board of Directors. You can find out more about the aims, ambitions and structure of the vehicle in the 'Vehicle FAQs' document.

Appointing a Board of Directors for the Vehicle

We are now working to appoint the vehicle's first Board of Directors.

The Board will bring together Directors from the funding sector and from equity and justice focused civil society organisations in equal number.

- By 'the funding sector', we mean organisations and people who **give or lend** money or other resources to civil society. By 'civil society' we mean organisations and people who **work to support** communities to tackle problems that they face.
- By 'equity and justice' organisations, we mean organisations led by and for marginalised communities, where the organisation is **seeking to address the structural inequalities** that impact on those communities. We define 'led by' as when more than 75% of an organisation's Trustees and more than 50% of staff members are people from the communities that you serve or have lived experience of the issues that you are tackling.

By drawing Directors from both sectors, the Board will benefit from the different experiences, voices and expertise across our communities.

Board of Directors – what will be their role?

For Board members drawn from the funding sector and from equity and justice focused civil society organisations, this is an opportunity to be at the heart of developing new equitable and collaborative funding and decision-making practice, and to influence wider change across the funding ecosystem.

Board members will meet bi-monthly for at least the first year to develop this exciting new initiative. We would expect meetings to be around two-three hours, and would fix times for these based on the availability of the Directors appointed.

The Board will engage with some of the UK's most innovative collaborations. Directors will decide which pooled funds the vehicle will support, and contribute to the development of new collaborative approaches. Directors will also play a key role in drawing out and sharing the learning generated through these pooled funds to transform how funding works more widely.

Whilst the vehicle will be holding funds for grant-making, the Directors won't be making grant decisions. For each pooled fund, the Directors will appoint a Funding Committee – with the same commitment to drawing together expertise from both the funding and equity and justice sectors.

This is an exciting new development, so the Board of Directors will be key to establishing and growing the vehicle's work. We will be looking to them to help us explore new ways of doing things, so an ambitious approach, with an understanding of what it takes to navigate uncertainty, will be important.

The Directors will be expected to act in accordance with the agreed principles for the governance of the vehicle:

- *Enabling* – creating a different space where partners can work together outside existing power dynamics and where new things can happen outside of existing rules and structures.
- *Independent* – collaborative and collective decision making, balancing what we all bring to the table and what we need to do together to meet the needs of Londoners.
- *Equitable* – governance and decision making reflect partners of all sizes and the diversity of London itself, valuing different contributions and resources (money, knowledge, networks & reach).
- *Inclusive* – open and transparent processes support our accountability to each other and to London's communities.
- *Evolving* – an agile approach embedded from the start, flexing to the context within which we operate and the issues we are seeking to address, and adapting in order to best enable transformational change over the long term.

Role Description

As an independent Director you will undertake a range of duties to support the vehicle Board:

1. Statutory duties of a Director

- To ensure that the Company complies with its governing document, company law and other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that the Company pursues its objects as defined in its governing document.
- To ensure the Company uses its resources in pursuance of its objects, protecting and managing the assets of the Company, including overseeing pooled funds that the Company is holding on behalf of funder collaborations, ensuring the proper investment and distribution of the funds.

- To contribute actively to the Board in giving strategic direction to the Company, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To provide strategic support to the Company - receiving assurance that expected objectives, targets and legal obligations are being supported by appropriate activity and structures.
- To oversee and ensure the effective and efficient administration of the Company.
- To oversee and ensure the financial stability of the Company.
- To oversee and ensure delivery of contractual and regulatory obligations.
- To report on all of the above to the parent organisation, London Funders.
- To safeguard the good name and principles of the Company and of the parent organisation, London Funders.

2. Developing the Vehicle

The first Directors of the Vehicle will lead its development and growth

- Establishing a culture and approach that is collaborative and equitable
- Acting as ambassadors for the Vehicle, identifying, developing and managing strong relationships with (potential) partner organisations
- Developing the services to be offered along with the organisational resources and capabilities to deliver
- Putting in place a framework for identifying and assessing opportunities to hold pooled funds

3. Delivery of the Vehicle's work

- Considering requests from collaborations wishing to pool funds, and decide which the Vehicle will support.
- Appointing appropriate Funding Committees for each pooled fund, that will design programmes and processes and take grant decisions. Directors will need to ensure that Funding Committees include a balance of funders involved in the specific collaboration, equity and justice partners and other partners, for example, specialists in the area or issue being funded, or with lived experience in the communities being targeted.
- Entering into staffing contracts and secondment agreements with partners relevant to each collaboration, to ensure that each collaboration has the support that it needs. Again, Directors will ensure that the staffing for collaborations is a balance of people with funding experience and experience from the communities benefiting from the funding.
- Commissioning and appointing other delivery partners, for example, on learning and evaluation, or technical development and support, that will enable the delivery of the collaborations and generate learning and tools for future use.

4. Other duties:

In addition to the above statutory duties, each board member should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Directors reach sound decisions. All Directors will need to have a good understanding of civil society and its relationships with statutory partners, the public and other stakeholders, commit to scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, and engaging in collaborative and collective decision making.

Who are we looking for?

We will be appointing ten Directors in this recruitment (an entirely new Board) – these will be from the funding sector and from equity and justice focused civil society organisations in equal number. The first Board of Directors will have staggered terms of service (for one, two or three years initially) so that a rotation of Directors is built into the Board.

It is our ambition that the Board of Directors reflects the diversity of London. We encourage applications from all communities who bring both/either lived and learned experience. We welcome people with interests – from funders who may use the vehicle to pool funds and from civil society organisations who may benefit from those funds. We will manage conflicts of interest carefully and appropriately, and have established systems and processes for doing this from our work supporting collaborations over recent years.

Most importantly, we are looking for individuals who are committed to the vision of the vehicle and the agreed principles for its governance.

We will be looking for a mix of the following skills, knowledge and experience.

The expertise and knowledge that individual Directors will bring (note, no single Director needs to have all of these!)
An understanding of funding and the role that funders can play in delivering change
Working effectively to champion equity and challenge injustice
Managing and investing funds
Effective grant-making
An understanding of structural inequalities and the role that civil society organisations can play in bringing about change
Engagement, outreach, participation and power
Skills and approaches for all Directors
Commitment to good governance
Confident and robust decision making skills
Developing and growing an effective organisation
Understanding and managing an appropriate approach to risk
Working in a collaborative environment to achieve change
Ability to think independently
Strong communication skills, including being comfortable with debate and constructive challenge
Track record of building partnerships with others at different levels and across different sectors
A commitment to creating and contributing to a learning culture

The support that we can offer you

The Board will be convened and supported by an experienced team from London Funders, who will work closely with the first Board of Directors to develop the vehicle. The support will include:

- Thorough induction on the developments to date
- A process to develop clear shared ambitions, values and strategy for the years ahead.
- Training and skills development, in response to needs identified by the Board. For example, to ensure everyone has a common understanding of current practice and thinking in the funding and equity and justice spaces
- A core staff team will manage the operations, finances and reporting on behalf of the Directors, and provide the secretariat for meetings
- For pooled funds, an appropriate delivery team of staff will be seconded to the vehicle, managed by the vehicle's core team.

Directors of the Board are unpaid positions.

We will provide all practical support to enable Directors to participate, which could include: expenses for attending meetings, interpreter and translated materials, any access equipment that is required.

How to apply

The Directors will be recommended to the London Funders Board of Trustees by an independent Nominations Committee (made up of people with expertise in equity and justice issues affecting London's communities, and people from the funding sector), who will manage the process of recruitment and assessment.

We want the recruitment process to be accessible and welcoming, so if there are any adaptations you need, or you have questions about applying or the interview process please contact us on info@londonfunders.org.uk or by phone on 020 7255 4488.

To apply, please send a copy of your CV and a short letter (no more than 2 sides of A4) outlining why you wish to join the Board of Directors and what you will bring to the role. We also ask all applicants to complete a monitoring form to help us ensure that we're reaching the full diversity of London's communities.

You need to email this to Jessica.Allsop@londonfunders.org.uk before **10am on 15th February**. After this time the Nominations Committee will review all the applications received against the person specification points above, and will be inviting shortlisted candidates for a discussion with members of the committee. They will then make recommendations for appointment in March, after which we will be able to tell everyone the outcome of their application.

Should you be appointed, we will be hosting an introductory session for all members of the Board of Directors on either 17 or 18 April 2024, 9am-1pm. This will be held in person in central London.

About London Funders

We're at the heart of a great network of over 170 member organisations, focused on funding in London. This includes every local authority in London, City Hall, independent Trusts and Foundations, businesses, social investment organisations, housing associations and more. Together, our members invest hundreds of millions of pounds every year in civil society through all aspects of London's life, from arts through to welfare, so that people across our communities can live better lives. We're the place where funders come together to connect and collaborate, where ideas are generated and acted on, and where people work to ensure that resources are channelled to the right places.

London Funders has worked with members of all types and sizes, alongside equity focused civil society organisations, to establish the need for, vision, and governance of the vehicle. The vehicle has been established as a wholly owned subsidiary of London Funders.

You can find out more about London Funders on the website at www.londonfunders.org.uk.