

Directors for the Board of the Collaboration Circle (Equity and Justice organisations)

Voluntary position

Closing date: 28 May at midday (12pm)

Summary

Collaboration Circle is a subsidiary company of London Funders, the cross-sector membership network for funders and investors in London's civil society.

Its ambition is to create change through a more equitable and collaborative funding system. It's been set up to make it easier to pool money across different geographies and boundaries, and enable funders and civil society to share decision making, learn together, and rethink how we achieve change.

It is being overseen by a Board of Directors drawn in equal number from the funding community and civil society organisations focussed on equity and justice.

We are now looking to fill two Director positions, both from equity and justice organisations.

Why is it needed?

Funders and civil society tell us that they want to work more closely together when designing and distributing funding. 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 us all.

But we also hear that in practice, this can be difficult due to the different systems, restrictions and cultures which often hold us back. The Collaboration Circle offers a new space to make our ambition for joint action a reality. It opens out a range of opportunities to do funding differently and more equitably, and overcome some of the long-standing challenges which currently can inhibit collaboration.

The Collaboration Circle builds on many examples of collaboration – from the funder response to the Grenfell Tower Fire, to the [London Community Response](#) programme during covid-19, to the £100m ten-year [Propel](#) partnership. It also draws on some inspiring

examples of pooled funds from across the UK and globally, where funders have been able to act in ways that would be too risky for them to do alone.

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.

We believe Collaboration Circle 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, make decisions on, and distribute funding.
- It will enable funders in across the UK 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.

You can read more about the Collaboration Circle [on our website](#), and watch our short animation telling you more about our ambitions for this new space. On the website, you can also meet [the existing Directors](#) and read about why they've got involved:

"I consider Collaboration Circle to be one of the most exciting initiatives in the sector at the current time...it has the potential to shape the nature of the relationship between funders and civil society for the long term and have a significant impact on issues that really matter. I am honoured to be sitting amongst such a committed group of fellow Directors charged with the responsibility of bringing this bold ambition to life" - Director of Collaboration Circle

We now have **two vacancies for curious, committed and passionate people from equity-led organisations** to join the Collaboration Circle 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@collaborationcircle.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.

Appointing Directors for the Collaboration Circle

The Board is constituted of 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 benefits from the different experiences, voices and expertise across our communities.

We have **two positions** open to join the Board of Directors, **both for equity and justice organisations**.

Board of Directors – what's your role?

For Board members this is an opportunity to be at the heart of establishing new equitable and collaborative funding and decision-making practice, and to influence wider change across the funding ecosystem.

The Board is currently meeting every two months, with meetings lasting two hours and alternating between in-person (central London) and online.

The Board will engage with some of the UK's most innovative collaborations. Directors will decide which pooled funds the Collaboration Circle will host, 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 Collaboration Circle 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 Collaboration Circles 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 Collaboration Circle:

- **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 Collaboration Circle

As we enter into our second year, the Directors of the Collaboration Circle will continue to lead its development and growth

- Establishing a culture and approach that is collaborative and equitable
- Acting as ambassadors for the Collaboration Circle, 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

3. Delivery of the Collaboration Circle's work

- Considering requests from collaborations wishing to pool funds, and decide which the Collaboration Circle 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 **two Directors** in this recruitment – these will be from the **equity and justice focused civil society organisations**. The 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 our communities. We encourage applications from all communities who bring both/either lived and learned experience. We welcome people with interests 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.

Our current Directors have completed their first annual [Diversity audit which you can view here](#). We are particularly interested to receive applications from; people from racially minoritised backgrounds, people who represent the Women's sector and/or working in racial justice and/or people who work outside of London.

We believe that a diverse Board brings a wealth of perspectives and experiences that drive innovation and success. We welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, particularly those from underrepresented groups as shown in our audit. We are particularly interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and inclusivity of our workplace.

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.

Knowledge and Skills

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 is supported by an experienced team, seconded from London Funders. The support includes:

- Thorough induction on the developments to date
- 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 from funders and appropriate civil society organisations.

Directors of the Board are unpaid.

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@collaborationcircle.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 the UK's communities.

You need to email this to info@collaborationcircle.org.uk before **28 May at midday (12pm)**. 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 mid-July, after which we will be able to tell everyone the outcome of their application.