

Citizens Advice East End is looking for a new finance trustee

Citizens Advice East End provides independent advice services to people who live, work or study in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham. We are governed and managed locally but with the benefit of being part of the influential national organisation Citizens Advice. We support around 20,000 clients a year and help them with over 64,000 issues, including housing, employment, benefits, utility bills and debt. Last year, we increased income or reduced debt for people using our services by more than £25 million.

We are now looking for a new finance trustee. We want to appoint a candidate who brings a real depth of understanding of finance/accountancy and can help Citizens Advice East End and its trustee board to navigate the challenges of balancing a charity's budget, working with our experienced finance manager to scrutinise Citizens Advice East End's finances and present findings to the trustee board.

The successful candidate would gain valuable experience of senior decision-making, as part of the board of a prominent London charity. Ideally, our new finance trustee would live and/or work in one of our three boroughs.

The deadline for applications is Friday, 30 June 2024 at 23.59.

To apply: please send your CV with a covering letter to james.peters@eastendcab.org.uk. Interviews will be held online in the first two weeks of July, so please let us know if there are any dates when you would not be available. Successful applicants will be invited to the next trustees' meeting.

About Citizens Advice East End

CAEE provides independent advice services to people who live, work or study in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham. These three London boroughs combine areas of affluence with areas of extreme deprivation and their populations have a growing need for advice and assistance with issues such as welfare benefits, debt, housing and financial inclusion.

We help our clients with face-to-face, telephone and online advice services at our main offices in the three boroughs. We supplement this core service with outreach services at GP surgeries, children's centres, housing associations and other local institutions. We support around 20,000 people a year with practical and effective advice to help them in resolving problems that they face. We achieve positive outcomes for our clients and, through our efforts, recover over £25 million of additional income or debt reduction for them each year. Our clients include the poorest in society, frequently with acute physical/mental health issues. Our work often makes a real difference to their lives.

We are constantly challenging prejudice, discrimination and maladministration, in line with the ethos of our parent organisation, Citizens Advice.

We offer high quality advice to our clients, through a team of employed staff and volunteers based in our three London boroughs. We work in partnership with the local councils in those boroughs and under contract with numerous other funders, both locally and nationally.

Over and above our advice, we gather information on the demand for our services and the issues affecting our clients and we use that information for local campaigning on poverty and social exclusion issues. We also feed that information back to Citizens Advice, to help it with national campaigns on, for example, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis or the effects of welfare reforms.

Citizens Advice East End's governance

CAEE is a registered charity (No. 1082193) and a company limited by guarantee (No. 3324794).

It is governed by a trustee board, currently of 13 trustees (maximum is 15).

The trustee meetings are held quarterly in March, June, September and November/December. They are usually on a Wednesday evening from 6.30pm either online or at the offices of Herbert Smith Freehills near Liverpool Street station and last about 3 hours. In addition, there is a separate strategic planning/ business planning session in January/ February and a couple of annual events with staff and volunteers (for Volunteers Week in June, and at Christmas) that trustees are encouraged to attend. All trustees except the Chair are expected to serve on one of the 3 following sub-committees:

- i) Finance and HR - meets quarterly before the main board meeting.
- ii) Governance - meets at least twice a year.
- iii) Remuneration - meets as required.

In addition, many of the trustees are the designated lead on specific issues or areas of operations and liaise with the relevant staff member and can advise other trustees as required. This includes:

- fundraising
- information assurance
- health and safety
- safeguarding
- equalities/diversity
- research and campaigning
- communications.

CAEE: Finance Trustee Role Description

Purpose of the Role

- To support the work of the Board's Finance and HR sub-committee in overseeing the organisation's financial health and HR policies and practices.
- To support staff, volunteers and Trustees to improve financial processes and decision-making across the organisation.

Specific Activities

- To sit on the quarterly Finance and HR sub-committee, supporting the committee's chair in reviewing quarterly accounts and reporting to the full board
- To support the Chief Executive and Head of Finance in executing proper processes and policies in relation to the organisation's finances
- To help the Chief Executive, Head of Finance and board with financial planning, preparing budgets and identifying and offsetting potential financial risks to the organisation
- To assist in the preparation and authorisation of appropriate HR and financial policies for the organisation.

In addition, the person would be expected to undertake the statutory duties of all trustees and contribute to trustee discussions on other issues, including financial management and fundraising, human resources issues, overseeing service developments and ensuring that the charity has good governance.

Key Qualities

The person who holds this post will have:

- The ability and willingness to commit to and work within the aims, principles and policies of the Citizens Advice service.
- A clear idea of the social issues that face people living in inner-City London and have a strong commitment to tackling them.
- Strong accounting and/or treasury background and experience.
- A capacity to take a pro-active role.
- Previous charity experience would be helpful.