**Background Information**

The Connection at St Martin’s helps around 2750 people a year through a range of services for vulnerable people affected by homelessness. These include: street outreach, practical services such as food, showers and a c/o address, initial assessment and triage, emergency accommodation, in depth housing and benefits advice, joint work with the NHS, immigration advice, a programme of activities to support recovery from crisis and help to get a job. There is also a supported housing service in Clapham for 15 ex-rough sleepers.

The service staff liaise with partner organisations in the borough, in particular St Mungos, The Passage, The West London Mission, Turning Point and the NHS. In addition, there is joint work with Westminster Council, The Metropolitan Police and local businesses to tackle rough sleeping and antisocial behaviour.

85% of our clients are men, 15% women, most are sleeping rough and aged between 25 and 45. Half are from the UK, 30% are from the new EU10 countries (in particular Romania and Poland) and 20% from other countries around the world. More than two thirds have support needs including physical and mental health problems, drug and alcohol issues. Around a third of our clients have been in institutions – mainly prison – but also the care system and the armed forces.

It is important that our staff team are trained, supervised and supported to work with people who have complex needs. The charity also has strong safeguarding, data protection and health and safety measures in place due to the risks associated with this work.

Rough sleeping has risen consecutively for 10 years and over that time has grown in profile as a huge social problem. However, in March 2020 our operating environment changed over the space of a week. A government programme to house all rough sleepers in hotels meant that numbers on the streets plummeted. The Connection ceased almost all normal service activity and began supporting 110 people across two hotels, alongside other remote case work. The charity also worked in partnership with The Passage to provide a meal service for 350 hotel residents every day.

Services are now resuming on site but under very different circumstances. Rough sleeping numbers have halved. The experience has drawn partners closer together, recognising that we can achieve more if we work together. The capacity in the building has also dropped to around one third in order to maintain social distancing measures. This means that The Connection is redesigning service delivery for the short term and considering what changes might also be relevant for the long term.

There are significant opportunities for the charity to develop services and there is a strong interest in doing so away from our traditional site at 12 Adelaide Street. We are keen to avoid the need for vulnerable people to travel into central London and to create help closer to where people live.

Development is likely to include outreach activity, night time interventions, accommodation options and greater partnership with health services. We have also recently secured funding to take forward a Women’s Homelessness development hub for London in partnership with Solas Women’s Aid.

**Vision**

London, like many cities across the world, is an exciting and stimulating place. However for some, it is a place to go when things have gone profoundly wrong and there is nowhere else.

When people are on the edge, homeless, isolated and in despair there must be a place to turn. The Connection at St Martin’s is there to be with people as they overcome that isolation, recover and move on to a meaningful, fulfilling life.

We work with people, not for them, to help them to recognise their strengths and talents, improve their wellbeing, learn new skills and increase their confidence – a process which is vital on their journey towards recovery.

We also recognise the value and expertise our clients can bring to The Connection. This is why we have adopted co-production – including clients in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services – as a fundamental part of our service delivery.

However, this is not enough. The experiences of people on the edge matter. Their story must be told to those in a position of power and influence, so that homelessness, exclusion and isolation are not acceptable features of life in the UK.

**Mission**

The Connection at St. Martin’s empowers those who are on the edges of society to take control of their lives by:

* Providing practical support in an active environment designed to help people to recognise their own strengths, recover from crisis and move on;
* Collaborating with others who share our vision and mission not just in London, but other parts of the UK and the world;
* Sharing our learning with others, to deepen our own understanding and create a more socially just society for those on the margins.

**About the Role**

The Connection's board is responsible for supporting and holding to account the Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team. This includes ensuring appropriate governance of the organisation, overseeing overall strategy, managing strategic risk, monitoring financial performance and interrogating the big strategic choices and high-level decisions about the running of The Connection. The board also acts as guardian of The Connection's mission and values.

The Connections has a passionate and committed Board . We are looking for new board members to strengthen the overall mix of skills across the board, to add to the deep experience and knowledge of the existing board members. We will therefore be considering what candidates bring both individually and collectively with other candidates.

We have three vacancies available on the board.

**Person Specification**

All Board members should bring the following essential skills and values to the role;

Skills:

* Able to operate at a strategic level, bringing insight and interrogation to the development of organisational strategy and taking high-level decisions about the future of the organisation.
* Able to evaluate and manage strategic risk.
* Able to display a commitment to inclusion and diversity.
* Excellent communication skills and an ability to persuade and influence to promote the interests of The Connection.
* Good listening skills and an openness to other views and feedback on own contributions.
* Able to think differently, come up with new ideas and challenge existing thinking.

Values & Ways of Working

* Commitment to The Connection's mission, values, culture and ethos.
* Assist the SLT in building networks of organisations and individuals who can help further the organisation's mission.
* Attend board meetings and away days and collaborate on board decision-making.
* Attend sub-committee / ad hoc meetings as agreed.
* Provide expertise and experience to complement the executive team.

In addition we are looking for Board members who can bring ONE of the following areas of specialism to the Board;

* Fundraising
  + Understanding of fundraising strategy and innovation, including new and dynamic approaches to raising funds for organisations.
  + Understanding of multi-channel fundraising strategy.
* Social Enterprise & Entrepreneurial
  + An individual who has started and scaled up a social enterprise in the UK.
  + A senior leader with commercial experience and has supported an organisation to grow.
* Human Resources
  + Understanding of HR strategy that supports change and new ways of working
  + Innovative HR strategies.
  + Understanding of change management and supporting the culture of an organisation.
* Policy and Advocacy
  + Someone with a good understanding of public policy and advocacy.
  + Experience of working at a think tank would be desirable.

**Time Commitment**

The Board meets at least 6 times a year. There are three sub committees: Finance and

Fundraising; Quality, Policy and Compliance; Remuneration and Nominations. Each meets at least 4 times a year. Trustees are expected to participate in sub committees as well as attending the main board.

**Terms of Appointment**

An offer of appointment will be made once all candidates have been interviewed, and will be subject to satisfactory completion of eligibility checks, including reference checks. If you are offered an appointment you will receive a detailed summary of your main terms and conditions.

**Conflicts of Interest**

All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.

**Questions**

If you would like to find out more about the work of the charity in advance of making an application to become a Trustee, we will be happy to arrange this for you.

**How to Apply**

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of The Connections. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by 23.59 25/10/2020

* A detailed CV setting out your career history with responsibilities and achievements.
* A covering letter (maximum two sides) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the person specification. Please note that the covering letter is an important part of the application.
* Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you (referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.
* Diversity monitoring form - your data will be stored separately from your application and will at no time be connected to you or your application.

**To submit a full application please send your CV and cover letter to: CSTM@inclusiveboards.co.uk**