

CIVIC POWER FUND TRUSTEE CANDIDATE PACK 2026



Welcome

Across the UK, our communities are struggling, and their rights are under threat. Philanthropy often treats the symptoms of this crisis, but rarely its root cause: the systemic imbalance of power in our society and our democracy.

The Civic Power Fund was founded in 2022 to change that. In an era of rising polarisation, investing in community organising - and building the collective power of citizens to shape their own future - is the most effective way to protect democracy and achieve lasting change.

We are seeking new trustees to guide us through a pivotal transition. Over the past year, our annual budget scaled from £3m to £8m, with grant awards jumping from £1.6m last year to over £6.5m in the first six months of this year alone. We have transitioned from an agile startup into a robust, fully staffed institution managing nine major initiatives - including a multi-million-pound partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund and a 10-member funder collaborative tackling the impact of political violence.

Looking ahead to 2027, we are consolidating this expansion: delivering against our nine core programmes, and embarking on a strategic renewal process for the decade ahead. We are looking for new trustees who share our commitment to people power and subscribe to three core principles:

- **Power is the goal.** Civic power is the capacity of citizens to organise and win systemic change. We are strictly in the business of building power through grantmaking.
- **Organisers require real backing.** Organising is not free. We fund organisers sustainably, equitably, and by taking our lead from movement leaders.
- **Governance serves the mission.** Our board exists to enable execution. We bring together movement builders who volunteer their governance skills so our team can focus on delivering lasting impact.

Transforming how power is built and funded across the UK isn't easy work, but it has never been more urgent. We need bold trustees committed to challenging conventional philanthropy and willing to ask the difficult questions. If this sounds like you, let's talk.

Martha Mackenzi

Executive Director

About Civic Power Fund

The Civic Power Fund is a new fund for grassroots community organising.

Our mission is to build lasting civic power through community organising. This means bringing people who share a problem together to apply pressure on their institutions to act.

By investing in grassroots organising, we can unleash the power of people to improve their lives and their communities and create common cause in pursuit of the social, environmental, and economic justice vital to a flourishing democracy.

At the Civic Power Fund we start with a core belief: too many people cannot achieve their full potential because of who they are or where they are from. Community organising changes this by unleashing the power of people to improve their lives and achieve lasting change.

We are looking for new Trustees who share this belief and understand three things about our approach:

- Civic power is the capacity of citizens to organise to win change. **We are only interested in building power.**
- Organising is how we build power and it is not free. **We fund organisers** – sustainably, equitably and by taking our lead from them.
- Our **governance is there to support the mission.** We are governed by movement builders who volunteer their governance skills so the team can execute against the mission: building lasting civic power through community organising.

With a growing annual grantmaking budget of approximately £6 million, we are in an exciting phase of transformation, growing our partnerships, systems, and impact.

We are serious about doing funding differently and in line with [our values](#). If you are too, we would love to talk.

Our strategy:

You can explore our full strategy and how we work in our latest [Annual Report](#). While providing infrastructure and ecosystem support is central to our mission, we are guided by a simple principle: we only build what organisers tell us is genuinely useful to them.

With **2027 set to be a pivotal year of reviewing and renewing our multi-year strategy**, this is an exciting, formative time to join us and help steer our long-term trajectory.

Our Approach to Governance

We are intentionally building a different norm for what a trustee can be: **bold, valuing strong and trusted relationships, and comfortable with the beautiful uncertainty of grassroots work.**

Joining our board means navigating a distinct dynamic:

- **Valuing and Supporting Different Ways of Making Change Happen** - Community Organising is central to all the work we support. However, our groups have different visions of the future. Some imagine a world transformed whereas some want to seek change within existing systems. We explicitly want a board that holds a healthy balance of these perspectives. We need trustees who bring varied viewpoints so our governance is as dynamic and reflective as the organisers on the ground.
- **Protecting the Fund, Empowering the Team** - As a Civic Power Fund Trustee, you are an essential steward of our long-term institutional health, fiduciary integrity, and regulatory standing. Trustees do not micromanage individual frontline grants, our staff team holds the relationships and community trust with the people and groups we fund - our board governs at the strategic level. Your role is to hold the big picture: providing supportive challenge, safeguarding our charitable mission, and ensuring robust governance so our team can make bold, compliant funding decisions without unnecessary bureaucratic bottlenecks.
- **Finance as an Enabling Force and Safeguard:** We view sound financial management, compliance, and internal controls as the essential protective infrastructure that allows our movement work to thrive safely. Our new Finance Trustee will partner closely with the Finance Director to ensure we balance our agility and trust-based practices with strict regulatory compliance, intelligent risk management, and long-term financial resilience.
- **Independence is Key:** We are governed entirely by movement builders and do not have any Civic Power Fund funders on our Board. This is vital to the independence of the work.

Our Board works collaboratively alongside the Chair, Executive Director, and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). Together, we ensure robust governance, sustainable financial stewardship, and clear strategic direction - always in service of shifting power to grassroots movements.

Our Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We work to dismantle the barriers to racial, economic, gender and LGBTQ+ justice that are standing in the way of full democratic participation and we foster representation and liberation through all our work.

We are committed to listening to, learning from and following the lead of the communities, groups and individuals doing the work.

For these opportunities we are particularly keen to hear from people who experience marginalisation and minoritisation or who are often excluded from decision-making roles. For example, people of colour; people from working class backgrounds; people from LGBTQ+ and migrant communities; care experienced young people; and disabled people.

We are committed to inclusive working practices, so during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for childcare whilst you are at interviews where these take place in person.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have a sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a guaranteed first stage interview for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.
- Sharing interview questions in advance.

We understand that Trustees do not come fully formed and we offer a tailored induction and ongoing onboarding process which allows time for new Trustees to become conversant in the aims and work of the fund and familiar with its financial model.

For those new to charity governance, more information on the role and responsibilities of trustees can be found in the Charity Commission's guide [The Essential Trustee](#).

If there is anything else you're concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.

About the Opportunities

As the Civic Power Fund continues to grow in scale, capability, and impact, we are looking for two new Trustees who can offer strategic oversight, supportive challenge, and values-led guidance to help shape our next chapter.

To ensure our governance both reflects the movements we serve and holds the robust expertise needed to support them effectively, we are seeking individuals who bring lived experience, technical skill, or strategic perspective in **one or more** of the following areas:

- **People, Culture and Operational Scaling (P. 07)**
- **Finance (P. 08)**

Across both roles we are looking for someone who has:

- A deep affinity with our values and commitment to shifting power to groups traditionally excluded from it.
- The time and energy to dedicate to this responsibility.
- The lived experience, movement connection, or professional expertise needed to guide our strategic vision.





About the People, Culture and Operational Scaling Role

We are looking for someone who has:

- Experience developing care-centred, anti-oppressive people practices (e.g., progressive HR frameworks, values-aligned recruitment, staff wellbeing, and organisational development).
- Experience guiding values-led or movement organisations through growth, balancing efficiency and operational rigour with relational, trust-based principles.

Experience and Qualities

Essential

- Ability to think strategically and big-picture, bringing constructive, supportive challenge to the table.
- An eagerness to learn the foundations of charity governance without letting traditional bureaucracy stifle your values.
- Comfort with risk, nuance, community organising approaches to social change.
- A deep commitment to participatory frameworks and an eagerness to listen to voices that disagree with your own.

Desirable

- Experience supporting, volunteering with, or working directly within a participatory, community-led, or grassroots organising space.
- Familiarity with how fast-growing funding ecosystems and non-profits navigate changing landscapes.
- Lived or working experience of the systemic barriers faced by the communities the Civic Power Fund aims to resource.

About the Finance Trustee Role

As the Civic Power Fund continues to grow in scale, capability, and impact, we are looking for a new Finance Trustee who can offer strategic financial oversight, robust financial scrutiny, constructive challenge, and values-led guidance to help shape our next chapter.

The Finance Trustee plays a crucial leadership role on our Board, acting as a trusted sounding board and critical friend to the Chair, Executive Director, and Director of Finance and Governance. Together, you will ensure our rapid growth is backed by sound financial planning, intelligent risk management, and statutory excellence—anchoring our financial health so we can sustainably shift power to grassroots movements.

We are looking for someone who has:

- A drive to shift resources to frontline communities by reimagining how practical, compliant finance systems can back social change.
- Strong financial literacy and leadership.

Specific Financial Expertise Required

Essential

- Proven track record of senior financial leadership and strategic oversight (such as FD, or equivalent experience)—a formal accountancy qualification (e.g. ACA, ACCA, CIMA) is welcome, but practical expertise is what matters most.
- Experience of strategic financial oversight, budgeting, and scenario planning within a charity, social enterprise, or values-led organisation.
- Working knowledge of charity finance governance, compliance, and reporting frameworks (e.g., The Charity Governance Code, The Charities SORP and Charity Commission for England and Wales' guidance on, reserves policies, and internal controls etc).
- Ability to translate complex financial data, risk, and management accounts into accessible, actionable insights for non-specialist trustees and staff.
- Commitment to participatory, relational, and values-led approaches to resourcing movements.

Desirable

- Understanding of grant-making finances, pooled funds, restricted vs. unrestricted funding, or fiscal hosting models.
- Experience liaising with external auditors or leading an Independent Examination / Audit process.
- Experience guiding financial strategy through an organisational **scale-up or transition phase** with diverse income streams.
- Familiarity with ethical banking policies, progressive reserves management, or movement-aligned investment strategies.

Additional Information

Time commitment:

Approximately 10 days a year, including Board Meetings and taking part in some meetings and events.

We expect that trustees will spend, on average, 2 days every quarter on Civic Power Fund duties (including preparing for and attending board meetings, strategy sessions, and occasional check-ins).

Location:

Most Board Meetings take place online, but we ask trustees to attend two face-to-face strategy meetings once a year.

Terms of appointment:

Terms are for three years, with the potential for expansion by a further three years.

This is a volunteer role and is unremunerated, though all reasonable travel, care, and operational expenses incurred while carrying out trustee duties will be fully and promptly compensated.

Conflict of Interest:

To protect the autonomy of our decision-making and maintain clear governance boundaries as a pooled fund, **we cannot consider applications from individuals currently employed by active or potential Civic Power Fund funders.**

We warmly welcome candidates with experience in wider philanthropy, trust-based funding, or international foundations (e.g. US or European entities) where no direct funding relationship with CPF exists. If you are unsure whether your current affiliation presents a conflict, please reach out for an informal, confidential check before applying.

How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of Civic Power Fund. If you wish to apply for one of these roles, please supply the following by **11:59 on 15/11/2026**:

- A detailed CV setting out your career history including responsibilities and achievements.
- A cover letter (maximum two sides of A4) highlighting your suitability for the role for which you are applying and how you meet the person specification. Please note that your cover letter is an important part of your application and will be assessed.
- 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.

[Please consider filling out our diversity monitoring form.](#) The information provided to us is confidential, stored securely and separately from your application, and is only used to ensure we are meeting our obligations for equal opportunities under the Equality Act 2010.

Please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities to apply online or send your CV and cover letter to CPF@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

Assessment steps

Interviews will take place online during the **week commencing 7th December**.

Following this, we would love to invite final prospective candidates to an informal conversation with the Chair and team the following week, **commencing 14th December** but given the time of year, we appreciate this might not be possible.

Induction will begin in January and we hope that successful candidates will be able to join our first board meeting of 2027 on 9th March.

If you have any questions after reading this pack, please email CPF@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0203 963 8802.

INCLUSIVE BOARDS

About Us

Inclusive Boards is the UK's leading board diversity practice. We have worked alongside over 300 organisations to provide support with Board recruitment, development and governance reviews. We strive to be at the forefront of equity and diversity, and believe that everyone should be represented at Board level. Additionally, we also provide bespoke training sessions on a variety of subjects including personal branding, inclusive recruitment practices and board structures and governance as well as delivering leadership development programmes for underrepresented leaders across a range of sectors.

Contact us today

To improve diversity on your Board please don't hesitate to contact us via hello@inclusiveboards.co.uk.

To join a Board, sign up to become a candidate via our website and be notified of the latest opportunities as and when they become available.



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