

## Belong are seeking new Trustees

### Join us and help shape the future of the new Belong network

#### About Belong – The Cohesion and Integration Network

There has never been a greater need for Belong, the new Cohesion and Integration Network. Report after report has highlighted the growing sense of division in many areas across the UK, and the need to promote better relationships within and between communities. There has been an alarming rise in hate crime and far right activity<sup>1</sup>. Not as dramatic but equally concerning are low levels of social mixing<sup>2</sup>; 44% of Brits have no contact with people from a different ethnicity to them and one in five has no contact with someone from a different class. In an increasingly polarised UK there is an urgent need for action that brings people together.

Belong has been in development since 2017 and was officially registered as a charity in November 2018. Based in Manchester and working across the UK Belong brings organisations and individuals from across different sectors and localities together - to share ideas, knowledge and experience in order to build the capacity, skills and resources for a more cohesive, integrated and peaceful society.

Our founding trustees working with the Chief Executive have built considerable support and momentum for the new network including:

- Support from the UK Government via the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), as the recent Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper made clear: “Government will provide funding to the network to support its development and to enable government departments to access the leadership and best practice resources it will develop.”
- Attracting Manchester City Council as a founding member and the support of the Savannah Wisdom Foundation with set up costs and in-kind support via a part time administrator.
- Being gifted free office space from The Co-op Foundation and Luminate at The Federation, Manchester, from January 2019 for 12 months, plus a package of support as a start-up social organisation with a planned digital presence.
- The development and launch of the Belong digital platform including mapping of integration initiatives, resources and stories of good practice; a one stop shop for cohesion and integration toolkits, guidance and resources.
- Launch of Belong membership packages which offer a range of benefits for members including a place on the Integration map and members directory profiling the work of individual organisations; discounts on events and training packages; access to a dedicated members area where members can connect with other members locally and nationally on areas of mutual interest via our online forums.
- Delivery of our inaugural conference Leading on Integration in Manchester featuring good practice examples, expert presenters and keynote speakers across different sectors. This was followed by a formal launch of the network by Viscount Younger of Leckie, the Minister for Communities and Faith.

More information about our network and our Vision, Mission and Values can be found [here](#).

#### The Role

This is an exciting opportunity. We are recruiting new Trustees to become part of our Belong board who are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of this new Charity and membership organisation.

In your role as Trustee you will act as an ambassador for Belong – The Cohesion and Integration Network and be responsible for ensuring the charity progresses its vision of a more integrated and less divided society.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/State-of-Hate-2018.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://the-challenge.org/cms/uploads/the-british-integration-survey.pdf>

We are looking for Trustees who will be:

- Be enthusiastic ambassadors for the network, willing to promote the cause of integration and cohesion across their own sector and more widely. They will be committed to the vision and mission of the charity and able to leverage their own networks and connections in order to raise the profile of Belong and ensure its longer term sustainability.
- Applicants should have governance knowledge and experience or be willing to acquire it through attendance at induction and training sessions.
- Applicants should have an understanding of their responsibilities as charity trustees and be familiar with the 6 main duties of a charity trustee as set out in the Charity Commission Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved#trustees-6-main-duties>

We are particularly looking for individuals with knowledge, skills or experience in the following areas:

- Legal skills and expertise
- Marketing and communications
- Digital and tech expertise
- High profile professionals with senior leadership experience who are a trusted voice, influencer and opinion former within their own organisation, across their sector and more widely.

And who also bring specific sectoral knowledge, expertise and leadership in any of the following:

- Housing, planning, construction and the built environment
- Education, including higher and further education
- Research, impact and policy development
- Business and corporate sector
- Faith and interfaith sector

Belong value the differences that a diverse Trustee board brings and are committed to inclusivity and accessibility to all. We are committed to recruiting a board that reflects the rich diversity of the UK, and the reach of the new Network both geographically and across sectors. We positively welcome applicants who are from backgrounds, communities and groups that are currently underrepresented in our team.

### **Time Commitment**

The time commitment for a Belong trustee is expected to be 8 days per year.

- The term of a member of the board is three years, after which board members may be re-elected.
- The Board meets at least 6 times a year (bi-monthly board meetings, and an annual strategic review).
- Trustees are expected to plan to attend all meetings. Meetings are usually held in the afternoon in our offices in Manchester.
- In addition to Board Meetings, other contact – usually electronic or by telephone – will be necessary.
- Our trustees also get involved in various roles for the charity acting as an ambassador, spokesperson and expert advisor.

Trustee roles are unpaid; Belong will reimburse you for related expenses such as travel, accommodation and food. The term of the appointment is 3 years.

### **Recruitment Process**

Please send a copy of your CV (no more than two sides) and a short Expression of Interest to our CEO, [jo@belongnetwork.co.uk](mailto:jo@belongnetwork.co.uk) telling us why you are interested in joining the Belong board. The closing date for applications is 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

If you are shortlisted you will be invited to an informal interview with the Chief Executive of the Charity and / or the Chair of Trustees to discuss the role. You are encouraged to use this opportunity to ask any questions and fully understand Belong – The Cohesion and Integration Network and the trustee role. If you are successful you will then be invited to observe a board meeting after which you will be formally recommended for adoption onto the board.