Trustee Candidate Pack

A letter from our Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining our board.

PIP works in the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to achieve their potential, move towards independence, and live a life of their choice.

Established in 1983 by parents wanting more challenging and ambitious support for their children we celebrate 40 years of impact in late 2023. Our history is rich & varied and we have grown from 25 students a decade ago to over 70 students today.

From our custom-adapted centre on Kensal Road, where we moved in 2022, we run four key curriculum areas: Creative and performing arts; Employability, Health & wellbeing, and Independent living skills. Alongside this work we run services like Gig Buddies which supports with adults with learning disabilities to access social events and our SW1 service supporting older adults with learning disabilities.

The organisation is led by a chief executive with deep sector experience, an experienced and settled management team, and a board of eight trustees.

As we complete the renewal of our board we are looking for:

- A Chair Designate to work with the existing Chair for a handover period
- A trustee with good financial skills. As we have a strong internal finance function this trustee would not need to be an accountant.

Over the past year we have been successful in diversifying our board but we continue to look for trustees who can better reflect the communities we support. This means we would particularly welcome applicants from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; people who identify as female; and those with lived experience of learning disabilities or autism either personally, as a parent or carer, or with significant experience in the LD sector.

I hope the following information on PIP captures your interest and would be happy to have an informal discussion to explain the opportunity further.

Yours sincerely, John Leach Chair







Who we are:

PIP works in the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster communities to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to achieve their potential, move towards independence, and live a life of their choice.

With 26 staff and a Board of 8, we work to empower over 70 adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism every year to achieve their potential, move towards independence and live a life of their choice. We believe our staff and volunteers are our greatest asset and we are investing in expanding our team by around 25% in the next 12 months to deliver an ambitious strategy, meet service demand and ensure our colleagues have the capacity to offer the quality of service we're known for in our community.

Our approach is student-led with our curriculum and each student's timetable the result of a collaborative approach with students, families, and social workers. Student goals can vary widely from learning to cook a meal to securing part-time work, to having friends through to exhibiting their creativity. Each student at PiP is referred by our Local Authority partners and with a waiting list of over 40 students we are confident we offer a top-tier service.

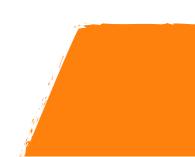
Financially we are stable with strong financial reserves and an income mix circa 66% commissioned services and 33% philanthropic partnerships. From this position of strength we plan to invest in the team, new services and projects to expand our provision and secure more impact in our community.

Why we need you:

PiP's board is keen to expand to bring in new skillsets, a diversity of views, and to better represent those we support. We are keen to appoint two trustees, one to take over as Chair and help guide PiP through a period of continued growth and one to be our finance lead (but not treasurer) on the board who is supported by a strong internal team which has overseen a solid financial track record in recent years.

Our board has a mixture of experience of levels so prior trustee or board experience is not a requirement.





Who we support and why:

At PiP, our focus is on teaching and learning life skills; we therefore refer to our service users as students. PiP students range in age from 18 to 91 and our average student is around 34 years old.

PiP students have a range of learning disabilities including Down's Syndrome, Fragile X, Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC), dual diagnosis with mental health problems and/or physical health conditions such as Diabetes and Epilepsy.

PiP's team deliver person-centred support to each of our students to identify their strengths, interests and passions. We support them and their families/carers to maximise opportunities in their community through signposting and working in partnership with like-minded organisations.

Structural inequalities in society mean that people with learning disabilities are not always recognised for their skills and talents and given the opportunity to live independent lives. With your skills and talents , we want to change that making sure that every PiP student has a voice and can make their own choices about their own lives.

We are keen for our students to always have a voice, inside and outside of PiP. To support this we have our advocacy sessions and every week our students have a student's meeting with their own agenda where they can express their views on PiP and ask about anything like new staff, our leisure programmes, or fundraising. Every year our students elect student representatives to elevate their views to senior management and our board. Our current representatives are Shardonnay & Rashedul.



Our Board

Each Board member serves for three years and is able to serve two terms. You will be serving alongside the following trustees (links to LinkedIn and PiP profiles for further information):

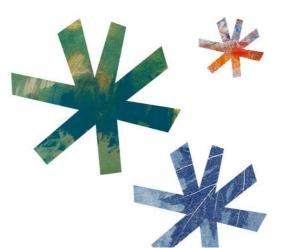
Chair of Trustees: John Leach Trustee: Mark Barrie - strategy and risk specialist Trustee: Patrick Brown - organisational development and talent management Trustee: Terri Cash - outreach, engagement, and community specialist Trustee: Theresa Ekendu - HR and organisational development leader Trustee: Tilly Lang - legal, governance, and data protection expert Trustee: Dan Wakerley - technology entrepreneur Trustee: Judy Wilcox - our local community expert & representative

We believe that widening the skills and experience of PiP's board we will be in an even better position to ensure that every student will be consulted, listened to, and supported to achieve their goals.

What we're looking for

As a trustee board we value the diversity and breadth of experience and skills each of our trustees brings to our work. Because of this we have very few key requirements of potential candidates:

- A commitment to PiP and its objectives
- Good, independent judgement
- Strategic vision
- A willingness to speak their mind
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as a Trustee
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team
- An ability to think creatively



Role description

Our board of trustees works together to ensure PiP's work is effective, sustainable and accountable by exercising good governance and following all necessary policies and procedures.

In addition to your statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This will involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

After serving the board for a number of years, the current Chair will be stepping down within the next 9 months and we are looking for one candidate to take on the Chair role within that time frame.

Trustees' main duties

- Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Comply with your charity's governing document and the law
- Act in your charity's best interests
- Ensure your charity is accountable
- Manage your charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill

You can learn more about the role through getting in touch and more on being a trustee through the Charity Commission's <u>Essential Trustee guide</u>





What's in it for you?

You will be joining a friendly board with a variety of skills whilst having an opportunity to showcase your skills and learn new ones.

You will gain immense satisfaction from a role in which you will contribute to our mission to combat social inequalities and their effect on people with learning disabilities. Your involvement will mean we can ensure that every PiP student has a voice and can make their own choices about their own lives.

The trustees have overall control of the governance of PiP. They are ultimately responsible for the charity, although the day-to-day running of it is delegated to the Senior Management Team.

Time commitment

- Board meetings take place 5-6 times per year (approx every 10-12 weeks)
- Each meeting is normally 2 hours long
- You will be expected to read papers in advance (approx 2-3 hours as a guide)
- Meetings will be in person. Attending remotely will be possible.
- Outside of board meetings trustees bring their skills and experience to supporting staff on particular projects alongside attending PiP events

Other details

- Trustees are appointed for renewable terms of three years.
- The position is voluntary, unpaid, and non-executive.
- Reasonable expenses such as travel expenses will be paid.



Next steps

If you are interested in joining PiP and our mission to support adults with learning disabilities and autism to reach their potential and thrive, please contact our chair John Leach at John.Leach@piponline.org.uk emailing your CV/LinkedIn profile, along with a cover letter detailing why you are interested in joining PiP, how your skills and experience would add value to the board and any other relevant information.

Once shortlisted, we want to get to know you and give you the opportunity to get to know PiP really well too.

Our process will involve:

- Informal telephone call with John Leach, Chair of Trustees.
- Opportunity to visit PiP to meet staff, students, and Denise Largin, CEO.
- Opportunities for informal conversations with exiting and current Board members.
- A formal interview.
- Opportunity to shadow a Board meeting in the Autumn.
- Candidates will need to agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service check and make an annual declaration of eligibility and interests.

Closing date for applications: 30th September 2023

