

Trusteeships - Information for applicants

Universify Education is seeking new trustees who are passionate about supporting young people to realise their potential regardless of background. The new trusteeships will help the charity to safeguard its young people, maintain high quality impact evaluation, and sustainably scale our work to support more young people.

About Universify

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Universify's vision is to support young people to realise their potential regardless of their background.

We do this by working with young people from non-selective state schools to gain the skills, knowledge, and belief to make an informed decision about their future, fulfil their potential, and to increase their social mobility by increasing access to future opportunities, including university.



WHAT WE DO

We run intensive, year-long programmes starting in Year 10 to support young people to achieve their full potential by raising personal and academic aspirations, improving attainment at GCSE, and creating a sense of connection with Higher Education to help challenge the belief that 'university isn't for people like me'.

Our programmes consist of three core elements:

1. Week-long university summer residential or day visits
2. Monthly, remote coaching with a Universify volunteer
3. GCSE revision residential or day visits in Easter of Year 11

We partner with c.45 non-selective schools across England and the programme is free for students.

Universify participants complete our programme with the grades, aspirations, and belief to make a more informed decision about university and their futures. Research shows our participants are more likely to apply successfully to top universities, and in the short-term, the programme benefits their attainment at GCSE, which is essential to accessing future opportunities.

"During the Universify programme, I remember sitting amongst my smart classmates with so much potential, feeling like an imposter. Programmes like Universify have been able to show me that I can aspire to more if I don't limit myself with doubt."

Georgia, Universify alumna and volunteer, who studied at the University of York

OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Since our first programme in 2016 we have worked with over 1200 young people.

To create systemic change and improve educational equality we need to work with more young people.

Long-term, our aspiration is to build partnerships with more universities to expand our programme spaces. Core to expansion is diversifying our income to sustainably grow our programme, while maintaining the programme's integrity, so we can support as many young people to fulfil their potential as possible.

OUR TEAM

Universify is run by a head office team of five staff, who prepare and deliver the programme each year, recruiting universities, students, schools, volunteers and tutors. Additionally, the head office team work to sustainably scale the programme through fundraising activities to fund Universify's work and building partnerships with more host university and university college partners.

A team of c.40 volunteers deliver the residentials and coaching, with ongoing training and support in coaching and safeguarding from the Universify head office team.

OUR BOARD

Our board of trustees oversees the development of Universify's strategy. Our board includes representatives from our key stakeholders such as a former lead teacher at a partner school and an admissions tutor at Oxford University. The board is supported by a student council formed of alumni who have completed the Universify programme and are regularly consulted to help us shape our strategy. A representative from the council attends board meetings.

For more information about Universify and our achievements so far please see our [website](#) and [impact report](#).



Trusteeships

We are recruiting for **three new trustees** to fulfil the following areas of expertise: partnership connections; impact evaluation experience; and current safeguarding practice. There is the option for one of these positions to act as the **Vice Chair** for the board.

Trustees share ultimate responsibility for governing the charity and directing how it is managed and run. Trustees ensure that what we do best supports our beneficiaries. You can find out more about trusteeships [here](#).

KEY PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSIFY TRUSTEESHIPS

- Trustees have a strong commitment to addressing educational disadvantage and support Universify's mission
- Trustees provide governance rather than operational support to the charity
- There is a diversity of backgrounds across the board of trustees
- There is a maximum of 12 trustees (limit reviewed annually)
- Trusteeships are reviewed every 12 months
- Universify provides clear, up-front duties and expectations of trustees
- Universify commits to ensuring trustee meetings are planned well, run to time and to agenda

What we're looking for

Between our three new trustees, we are looking to bring a range of skills to the board, particularly around partnership connections, impact evaluation, and current safeguarding practice. We are looking for applicants who have experience across one or more of the following areas:

- Strong connections to corporates with CSR or ESG strategies aligned with Universify's mission and/or a broad network across a range of potential supporters
- Significant experience (5-7+ years) of impact evaluation within the charity sector or similar relevant experience and a strong understanding of evaluation methods used in education settings
- Significant experience (5-7+ years) of child safeguarding in a professional capacity within the charity or education sectors, or similar relevant experience
- Strong connections to university access and outreach teams and/or local authorities and virtual schools
- Connections to or experience of scaling medium to large education and youth charities

We are also looking for candidates to strengthen the board in one or more of the areas outlined below.

- Insight through lived experience of issues our beneficiaries face and/or who have experienced barriers to Higher Education because of their background
- Experience working in a large charity or sustainably scaling a charity
- Experience managing comms and marketing strategies
- Good knowledge and understanding of the experiences of young people today
- Connections to funding and educational networks in our key regions: the South West, North West, Oxfordshire and London

REQUIREMENTS

- Commitment to our mission and vision
- Willingness to be an ambassador of the charity raising awareness of our work

- Contribute knowledge and expertise to developing and achieving our strategic objectives

TRUSTEES' DUTIES

- Act as stewards of Universify so that the charity can most fully deliver on its mission. Trustees will consider issues of strategic importance at quarterly meetings
- Quarterly meetings will cover operational progress, finance, strategic plans, management performance and beneficiary feedback.
- Attend at least 75% of the quarterly Trustees meetings that will be held in Oxford or London and accessible remotely (reasonable transport expenses will be reimbursed), having read any briefings which will be circulated 7 days prior to the meeting date.
- Trustees are encouraged to provide support to the board and executive team related to their area of expertise.

WHAT SUPPORT IS PROVIDED?

We want to make joining the board as smooth and welcoming as possible and are eager to work out the best support for individuals to join the board.

All trustees are invited to observe a board meeting and, depending on the time of year, the programme. As part of the induction process they will meet the Chair and CEO to learn more about the charity and its strategy and identify what support a new trustee may need to fulfil their role. This could include training to support a new trustee in fulfilling their role or a buddy from the board.

PRACTICAL DETAILS

- The role is voluntary, but we will cover reasonable travel expenses to and from meetings
- Time commitment – minimum of 3 days a year
 - Trustees need to be able to attend quarterly 2-hour board meetings. These are held in Oxford or London, and in-person attendance is encouraged. The option to join remotely can be facilitated if needed.
 - Trustees need to be able to read board papers in preparation for meetings
 - 1-day annual strategy session
 - Trustees may be required to attend ad hoc meetings for time sensitive decisions or provide written input on these decisions
- Prior to joining the board there will be an induction as outlined above
- Trustee indemnity insurance is in place

Recruitment Process

We will be running interviews on a rolling basis.

Interviews will be an opportunity to explore your motivations, experience and whether Universify is a good fit for you. Initial interviews will be with the Chair and CEO. There will be a second round involving a more informal follow up call with at least two other trustees to find out more about Universify, meet members of the board and ask any questions you may have.

HOW TO APPLY

Please send a CV and cover email with the subject 'Universify Trustee application' to info@universifyeducation.com. In the covering email please include what experience you would bring to the board and what your motivations are for applying.

Please note, Universify Education is committed to safeguarding and protecting children. We check references and undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to ensure all board members are suitable to work with children.

Please note that all personal information submitted will be treated in accordance with our data protection policy.

QUESTIONS

We want all potential candidates and volunteers to feel supported and listened to at Universify. We are always happy to discuss any questions, adjustments to the application process or role that you may require. For more information, please email info@universifyeducation.com.