

Recruitment of Trustees

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Trustee at PILC. We are seeking two enthusiastic and committed individuals to serve on our Board. This is an exciting opportunity to join an ambitious organisation working at the intersection of law, campaigning and social justice. As a Trustee, you will help shape the future of PILC, ensuring that we remain true to our purpose while continuing to deliver meaningful impact for the communities we serve.

We are committed to developing and maintaining a Board that is as inclusive as possible and representative of the communities we work alongside. Therefore, having lived experience in an area of our work would be advantageous. We welcome applicants from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, recognising that a diverse Board strengthens discussion, improves decision-making and helps us better fulfil our mission.

We are particularly interested in applications from individuals who have legal expertise (ideally in the non-profit sector), or expertise in Human Resources or Finance.

In this recruitment pack, you'll find:

- Background information about PILC
- Information on the selection process
- A role description and person specification

To apply, please complete the application form and equality and diversity form found alongside this recruitment pack and return them via email to jobs@pilc.org.uk by **Monday 28 September 2026 at 10am**. Please note that we do not accept CVs.

If you feel unsure about applying, or have any questions, we encourage you to reach out to us via email and we would be happy to answer them.

We are committed to ensuring our recruitment process is accessible to everyone. If you require the application form, or any other materials in a different format, please don't hesitate to contact us at jobs@pilc.org.uk.

Thank you for your interest in the role and we hope to hear from you soon.

Warm regards,

R. Dempster-Johnson

Head of People and Operations

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) was initially set up in 2016 as a project of Lambeth Law Centre and became independent in 2019. PILC has been operating its own Legal Aid Contract since 1 September 2023, enabling the Law Centre to act in Public Law, Claims against Public Authorities and Housing Law cases. PILC is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in England and Wales (No: 1192355).

Mission



The Public Interest Law Centre exists to challenge unlawful state practice and systemic injustice through legal representation, strategic litigation, research and legal education. We specialise in public law, actions against public authorities and public inquiries, bringing cases to court for individuals and grassroots groups who have been treated unfairly.

We hold government and public bodies to account, challenge unlawful policies and practices, and promote access to justice for marginalised individuals and communities. We will not rest until we achieve a fairer and more equitable society.

Strategic Objectives

Our current strategic plan (2024-28) is divided into three parts:

1. *Seeking justice through legal action:* We use the law as a tool in the fight for social change, not as an end in itself. Taking the government and public bodies to court can be a powerful way for communities to demand justice.
2. *Developing PILC's movement lawyering approach:* We put the power of the law into communities and social movements supporting them to fight back.
3. *Consolidating PILC's organisational growth:* We know the best way to deliver on our mission is to have a strong infrastructure for an effective, compliant and sustainable organisation.

Our Approach

PILC is a legal organisation located at the grassroots. This is not a market choice: rather, it is where we come from and where we believe social change begins. This commitment forms the basis of our distinct identity as a Law Centre rooted in communities fighting for social justice.

We work in collaboration with grassroots groups, campaigners and frontline organisations through a legal hub model building capacity through legal education and advocating through strategic legal action across three overlapping priority areas:

- state accountability,
- housing, land and community assets,
- racial justice and migrants' rights.

Most people we support cut across these areas, e.g. domestic abuse survivors – sometimes with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) – seeking housing safety. We build on these cases to develop strategic litigation and challenge wider policies and practices. Taking the government and public bodies to court can be a powerful way for communities to demand justice. We use the law as a tool in the fight for social change rather than an end in itself.

Some of the individuals and communities we work with include:

- Social Justice activists subjected to state surveillance
- Migrants targeted by racist policies and socio-economic discrimination
- Gypsies, Roma and Travellers seeking safe and suitable living conditions
- Council Estate residents at risk of displacement due to regeneration
- Survivors of domestic abuse in housing need
- Local residents defending public services and spaces, e.g. Children's Centres

PILC prides itself in building most of its litigation from issues arising from lived experience or identifying patterns in frontline workers' casework, thereby joining the individual to the strategic. Although strategic litigation is no silver bullet, our approach to movement lawyering connects us to the individuals and communities we defend, making us an integral part of a broader social justice movement.

Our work

State Accountability

- We have recently represented 12 organisations across various modules of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry covering interrelated issues relating to survivors of domestic abuse, racialised communities and migrants, outsourced workers and privatised social care and health services.
- We represent a number of individuals, groups and organisation in the Undercover Policing Inquiry, including Youth Against Racism in Europe, a former Labour MP, Troops Out movement, the Stop the War coalition and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).
- We also have several cases supporting Palestine Solidarity in the UK and holding the British state to account for its complicity in the genocide in Gaza.

Housing, Land and Community Assets

Our work in this area is wide ranging and include existing and developing projects:

- [supporting survivors of domestic abuse access safety through adequate housing](#);
- our [gentrification project](#), which mainly supports council estate residents facing demolition and displacement as well as supporting market traders facing eviction through planning and environmental law;
- [defending Gypsies & Travellers pursuing a nomadic way of life](#) through legal representation in housing and planning;
- [keep public land in public hands](#) through the defence of open spaces in London.

Racial Justice and Migrants' Rights

As successive governments introduce ever more regressive, headline grabbing, anti-migrant laws and policies, we recognise that many are also suffering because of entrenched systems and policies

designed to limit belonging and freedoms for migrants. Our work largely seeks to address these long-standing structures and the root causes of injustice which trap migrants in poverty and exclusion, often for decades.

We are working closely with grassroots groups and frontline partners towards:

- dismantling racist Hostile Environment policies, which affect migrants' ability to live in dignity;
- addressing barriers to settlement in the UK, which trap people in the grip of the Home Office; and
- ensuring that access to socio-economic and work-based rights are not determined by immigration status.

Our People

Board Members

PILC's Board is made up of 6 trustees who have a broad range of professional expertise, lived experience and perspectives. Together, they provide strategic oversight, ensure strong governance and help shape the organisation's future while remaining true to its values.

Senior Management Team

PILC is co-led by Jean Demars (Director), who oversees strategic, operational, and financial management, and Helen Mowatt (Legal Director), who leads on all legal matters, including inquiries work, casework management, litigation strategy, and Legal Aid contract oversight. They are supported by Ross Dempster-Johnson (Head of People and Operations), completing the Senior Management Team. PILC currently employs 22 staff members and works with a small number of consultants.

Quality Standards

The Law Centre is accredited by the Law Society's Lexcel Quality Mark and certified under the Cyber Essentials Plus scheme, which protects against common cyber threats. Both accreditations are subject to an annual technical assessment.

Registrations and memberships

PILC is registered with the Solicitors Regulation Authority and the Law Society. We are also members of the Law Centres Network.

SELECTION PROCESS

Shortlisting

We will shortlist applicants for interview based solely on the information provided within the application form. We do not use AI to shortlist applications.

When reviewing applications, we will be looking for evidence that you have:

- Submitted a completed application form by the deadline: **Monday 28 September 2026 at 10 am.**
- Clearly explained why you are interested in becoming a Trustee and what skills, knowledge and experience you would bring to the Board.

Interviews will be offered to applicants who most closely demonstrate the skills, experience, and behaviours required for the role.

Interviews

Interviews will take place online during the week commencing **Monday 12 October 2026 and Monday 19 October 2026.**

The interview will be a structured panel interview, with questions linked directly to the Person Specification. This helps ensure the process is fair, consistent, and focused on what matters most for the role.

There will also be time for you to ask questions about the role, the Board, and the organisation.

A Two-Way Conversation

We want the interview to feel like a conversation, not an interrogation. It is a two-way process: you are also deciding whether this role and organisation are right for you.

You are welcome to:

- Add anything you feel your application didn't capture
- Use phrases such as *"I didn't get a chance to mention..."*
- Ask honest questions about the role, Board, or expectations

We genuinely want you to feel informed and empowered throughout the process.

Adjustments and Accessibility

We are committed to making our recruitment process inclusive. If you require any reasonable adjustments at any stage, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

Communication and Outcomes

We will contact all applicants by email after the closing date to confirm whether their application has progressed to the interview stage.

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide individual feedback to applicants who are not shortlisted for interview.

Applicants who are shortlisted will be contacted by email as soon as possible after the closing date, once the panel has completed the shortlisting process.

Following the interviews, all applicants will be informed of the outcome. Applicants who are not appointed at interview stage are welcome to request feedback, which we will be happy to provide.

Applicants who are offered the position, are warmly invited to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 11 November 2026 from 6-8pm where they will have the opportunity to meet all trustees and members of staff.

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JOB REFERENCE: PILC/7/2026



ROLE DESCRIPTION

As a member of the Board of Trustees, you will oversee the strategic direction, governance and financial sustainability of the organisation. You will help ensure that PILC has a clear strategy, that its resources are used effectively, and that its activities remain aligned with its charitable objectives and values. You will also provide constructive support and challenge to the Senior Management Team, helping the organisation to develop, grow and achieve its mission.

Trustees have collective responsibility for the governance of the charity. This means that decisions are made collectively by the Board and trustees share responsibility for those decisions, always acting in the best interests of PILC.

Please note that this is a voluntary position, but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed. The time commitment for this role is approximately 8-10 days per annum. The Board meets online on the 3rd Monday of every other month from 6-8pm and trustees are required to attend with their cameras on. All Board papers are circulated usually 2 weeks ahead of the meeting.

Duties

As a Trustee, you will be expected to:

- Attend bi-monthly Board meetings (held remotely), having read the papers in advance and being prepared to contribute constructively to discussion and decision-making.
- Attend the annual Board away day and Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- Support, promote and provide advice on PILC's charitable purpose, vision, values and strategic objectives.
- Approve operational strategies, policies, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee PILC's financial sustainability by reviewing and approving budgets, PILC's financial statements and monitoring and evaluating financial performance.
- Ensure that the charity is well governed, effectively managed and compliant with its legal and regulatory obligations.
- Support the effective management of risk and ensure that appropriate systems of internal control are in place.
- Provide appropriate support, constructive challenge and accountability to the Director in the exercise of their delegated authority.
- Keep informed about developments affecting PILC, the non-profit legal sector and the wider operating environment.
- Contribute to the regular review and continuous improvement of the Board's effectiveness and governance arrangements.
- Exercise independent judgement, act with reasonable care and skill, and always act in good faith in the best interests of PILC's, managing any actual or potential conflicts of interest appropriately.
- Act as an ambassador for PILC, promoting its work and using your skills, knowledge, experience and networks to support the organisation where appropriate.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Trustee

	Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Method of assessment
1.	Willingness and ability to understand and accept the responsibilities and legal duties of a trustee and to act in the best interests of the organisation.	✓		Application / Interview
2.	Commitment and enthusiasm for our vision and mission.	✓		Application / Interview
3.	Ability to think strategically, exercise sound independent and contribute effectively to collective decision-making as a member of the Board.	✓		Interview
4.	Basic digital literacy, including the ability (or willingness to learn) to use Microsoft 365 applications such as Word, Excel and Teams. Training will be provided where needed.	✓		Application / Interview
5.	Good communication and interpersonal skills, with a willingness to participate constructively in discussion and respectfully challenge where appropriate.	✓		Application / Interview
6.	A strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and an understanding of their importance in governance and decision-making.	✓		Application / Interview
7.	Willingness to lead in accordance with PILC's values.	✓		Application / Interview
8.	Commitment to the Nolan Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.	✓		Application / Interview
9.	Expertise in non-profit legal, Human Resources, or Finance.		✓	Application / Interview
10.	Previous experience as a trustee or governor.		✓	Application
11.	An understanding of the challenges facing legal aid providers or organisations working for social justice.		✓	Application / Interview