



Lay trustee recruitment pack

September 2026



Welcome from the Chair of the Board

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Lay Trustee at Roehampton Students' Union.

RSU is the representative voice of students at the University of Roehampton. We're part of a diverse, vibrant, and supportive community, and everything we do is built around our mission to make student life better at Roehampton.

Politically, the Union is led by students through our Sabbatical Officers. Our Chief Executive, under the direction of the Board of Trustees, oversees day-to-day management.

The Board is where strategy is set, decisions are scrutinised, and the organisation is held accountable.

We are on an exciting journey to grow our impact, and we want experienced, values driven leaders at the heart of it.

We are currently recruiting for two Lay Trustees to join our Board: one with a background in finance, and one with expertise in human resources.

Both roles are critical as we deliver our new five-year strategy, Foundations for the Future, and continue a period of real organisational momentum.

You won't just observe, you'll help shape the decisions and governance that affect thousands of students.

It's a genuinely rewarding role, and one that offers a real insight into the unique world of Students' Unions and Higher Education in the UK.

We hope you'll apply.

Kshiteej Nimbalkar

President Community and Chair of the Board of Trustees



Application

Applications close at **17:00** on **Friday 6 November 2026**. Shortlisting will take place during the week commencing **9 November**, with interviews the week commencing **23 November 2026**. We anticipate the first Board meeting for successful candidates will be **15 December 2026**.

To apply, please complete our online application form.

As part of your application you'll need to provide a CV and you'll be asked to provide responses (max 300 words) to the following questions:

- 1.** Tell us why you'd like to join RSU as a Trustee. Make sure to explain how your personal values align with RSU's.
- 2.** What knowledge, abilities, and experience can you contribute to our Board's collective skills?
- 3.** Tell us about your professional background, whether in finance, HR, or another field, and how your specific expertise would add value to RSU's Board and support the staff team in maintaining effective and sustainable practices in your area.

When answering, consider these in the context of the role description set out later in this pack.

Eligibility

In order to apply for a Lay Trustee position, you must meet the Charity Commission's eligibility criteria for trustees.

You must also agree to RSU's Trustee Code of Conduct, available on our website.

It is recommended that all applicants read the Charity Commission's guide to being a trustee: *The Essential Trustee: What you need to know, what you need to do*.

Key information

Position

Lay Trustee (two positions available).

Number of vacancies

Two.

Hours of work

Four to six Board of Trustee meetings throughout the academic year (around two hours each), plus reading time ahead of each meeting.

Location

Roehampton SU, London. Meetings are held in person.

Specialisms sought

Finance; Human Resources and People.

Term

Four years from date of appointment, with the potential of a second term. (Up to a maximum of eight years).

Contract

Voluntary, unpaid. Reasonable travel expenses reimbursed.

Diversifying our board

In order for us to make sure every student is able to celebrate who they are, shape their university experience, and feel connected to a community, we need to continue to innovate and champion diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in everything that we do.

This means having a genuine commitment to a diverse and inclusive Board of Trustees.

The ACEVO and Voice for Change Home Truths report (2020) highlighted a significant and persistent lack of representation of Black and Asian individuals in senior roles within the charity sector, including as trustees. We take that seriously, and we are actively working to do better.

We would particularly welcome applications from Black and Asian candidates, those who identify as women or non-binary, disabled candidates, and candidates from any background who feel underrepresented in leadership spaces.

We are committed to ensuring that people with a diverse range of skills and experiences are encouraged to apply and contribute fully as Trustees. We will strive to remove the barriers that prevent people from applying and ensure that our application and selection processes are inclusive of, and accessible to, people with a wide range of skills and lived experiences.

If you need any adjustments to apply or to participate in an interview, please let us know and we will do whatever we can to help.

About the Students' Union

RSU is the Students' Union for the University of Roehampton. We're an independent charity, and our whole reason for existing is to make student life better at Roehampton. We're a small but ambitious organisation. In 2025 we launched our new five-year strategy, Foundations for the Future, which sets out a bold course through to 2030.

As a Lay Trustee, you'll be one of the people responsible for overseeing its delivery.

Questions

If you are interested in becoming a trustee at RSU and aren't sure if you meet the requirements, or if the role is for you, please get in touch for an informal conversation.

Michael Bailey - Chief Executive



michael.bailey@roehampton.ac.uk



Lay Trustee role description

As the Students' Union is an incorporated charity, trustees are also appointed as Company Directors.

Your role is not a passive one. We're looking for active, engaged, and independent trustees who bring perspectives and expertise that are genuinely valuable at board level.

Collective responsibilities of all trustees

- Help ensure RSU works to fulfil its charitable purpose and acts within its Articles of Association.
- Support RSU's compliance with charity law, company law, and other applicable legislation and regulation.
- Contribute to ensuring RSU is financially sustainable, with appropriate oversight of income, expenditure, and long-term resourcing.
- Support effective strategic planning and engage with processes for monitoring and evaluating RSU's performance against its goals.
- Help ensure that effective governance policies and procedures are in place across RSU's activities.
- Contribute to identifying and managing risks to the organisation.
- Actively participate in the work and decisions of the Board.
- Support a culture of scrutiny and accountability in relation to RSU's senior leadership, including the Chief Executive.
- Uphold and demonstrate RSU's values and protect the reputation of the organisation.
- Adhere to the Nolan Committee's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.
- Help ensure robust safeguarding frameworks are in place and that any safeguarding risks are identified and acted upon.

Your specific contribution as a lay trustee

In addition to the shared responsibilities above, we are recruiting for two Lay Trustees with distinct areas of expertise. Both will bring external perspectives and professional experience that strengthen the Board's collective capability.

Finance Trustee

- Provide mentorship, scrutiny, and support in relation to financial matters.
- Contribute to RSU's finance, fund raising, and reserves strategies and provide support in setting objectives and evaluating performance.
- Support senior leaders to ensure the charity is in a sound financial position and meeting regular targets relating to commercial income, fundraising, and reserves.
- Ensure structures are in place to enable the Board to have effective oversight of RSU's finances, so that its use of resources aligns with the strategic plan and the needs of members.
- Work closely with the CEO and Finance team to ensure sound financial management of RSU.

HR/People Trustee

- Provide mentorship, scrutiny, and support in relation to people, culture, and employment matters.
- Contribute to RSU's approach to workforce strategy, including pay, wellbeing, and staff development.
- Support senior leaders to ensure RSU has effective people management frameworks and that the organisation is a healthy, high-performing place to work.
- Help ensure the Board has appropriate oversight of HR policies and practices, including those relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Work closely with the CEO and senior leadership team on matters relating to organisational culture and people.

We regularly assess the skills and knowledge of our Board. We will only consider applications from candidates who can demonstrate relevant expertise in either finance or HR and people management at a senior level.

Your skills

While Trustees are expected to take personal responsibility and contribute their knowledge and skills, the Board works together as a whole. Collectively, the Board needs to have the following skills:

- The ability to challenge the status quo, test perceived wisdom, and question decisions constructively.
- A good understanding of, or genuine curiosity about, the issues impacting Higher Education, students, and students' unions.
- The ability to think strategically, ask good questions, and weigh competing priorities.
- The ability to provide support, guidance, and mentorship to elected officers, student leaders, and the senior leadership team.
- Confidence to contribute to group discussion and collective decision-making.
- An ability to be a 'critical friend' to the organisation - scrutinising policies, procedures, and frameworks where appropriate and ensuring issues, concerns, and risks are identified and addressed.
- Knowledge and understanding of, and a commitment to, good charity governance, safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability.
- The ability to work and communicate effectively as part of a high-performing team, and to collaborate with people outside the trustee group.

Personal values

- A commitment to RSU's values, mission, and charitable purpose.
- Enthusiasm for student wellbeing, student empowerment, and a desire to contribute to improving the student experience.
- Willingness to take an active role in the leadership of RSU, including contributing to board meetings, engaging in committees, and participating in forums and working groups.
- A passion for learning and personal development - keen to enhance your own skills, engage in development opportunities, and share knowledge with others.
- A strong sense of integrity and a willingness to communicate with transparency, owning the decisions you make and being willing to explain them to the beneficiaries of the Charity.
- A commitment to the collective decision-making principles of the Board.
- A dedication to championing equity, diversity, and inclusion through the work of RSU and in all board decisions.

Support and development

We take trustee development seriously. This isn't a role where you'll be thrown in at the deep end.

- You'll receive an induction from the Chief Executive before your first Board meeting.
- Your development will be guided by regular skills reviews, and you'll receive training tailored to your needs.
- You'll have ongoing support from the Chief Executive throughout your term.
- Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.

Time commitment

- RSU holds four to six full Board meetings per year, each lasting around three hours. Meetings are held in London.
- We ask trustees to read the Board papers ahead of each meeting, usually around two hours of reading time.
- There may be occasional additional invitations to attend staff events, away days, or working groups. These are optional but valuable.

