**Trustee Role Description**

Borderlands is a charity based in Bristol and exists to work with refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants to help them from exclusion to belonging. It was established as a registered charity in 2011 following a long history of the parish at St. Nicholas of Tolentino RC Church providing informal support to asylum seekers and refugees. Our values of Warmth, Sharing, Dignity and Respect are informed by a wide consultation with our members (asylum seekers and refugees), staff, volunteers and trustees. Our values and way of working celebrate and reflect the roots of the charity. We welcome people of all faiths or none as trustees, staff, volunteers and service users.

Trustees are elected for a three-year term and can be re-elected for further terms. Trustees are not paid but can claim expenses such as travel costs. The Charity Commission describes six main duties of trustees:

* 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
* Manage your charity’s resources responsibly
* Act with reasonable care and skill
* Ensure your charity is accountable

1. *Ensure Borderlands is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit*

* Consider all decisions and proposed actions in terms of their compliance with the purposes (objects) of Borderlands
* Ensure that Borderlands applies its resources in pursuance of its purposes
* Provide clear strategic direction, with defined goals and targets, to the staff team
* Take overall responsibility for monitoring the work of Borderlands to ensure high quality services for service users
* Be committed to Borderlands’ values, objects and aims

2. *Comply with Borderlands’ governing document and the law*

* Be familiar with Borderlands’ governing document (Articles and Memorandum of Association)
* Ensure that Borderlands is complying with all relevant laws, regulation and guidance

3. *Act in Borderlands’ best interests*

* Develop, review and monitor Borderland’ strategic plan in line with its objects
* Always work in the best interests of Borderlands and not any internal or external stakeholder or group of stakeholders

4. *Manage Borderlands’ resources responsibly*

* Manage and support the CEO and work with her to ensure there are resources (including staff, volunteers, premises, equipment and so on) in place to effectively deliver the strategic plan
* Ensure that Borderlands is financially stable, has reasonable reserves and a healthy cash flow

5. *Act with reasonable care and skill*

* Attend relevant training and updating sessions
* Accept and support the collective decisions made by the board of trustees
* Understand the lines of communication and authority within Borderlands
* Prepare thoroughly for meetings – including reading documents and undertaking research necessary to contribute properly to discussions and decisions
* Make every effort to attend all board meetings and other relevant meetings
* Be willing to undertake specific project or other work as necessary (including representing at external events) to further Borderlands’ aims.

6. *Ensure Borderlands is accountable*

* Safeguard the good name and values of Borderlands
* Ensure that key stakeholders are consulted as appropriate
* Ensure that a robust risk assessment process is in place and it is reviewed regularly
* Ensure Borderlands is accountable to service users for the quality of its services
* Promote Borderlands’ role in the community and be willing to act as an ambassador at external events from time to time

**Trustee person specification**

* Share Borderlands’ ethos, vision and values
* Be committed to providing a safe place of welcome which serves and empowers asylum-seekers and refugees
* Be willing to give the time and energy necessary to support the work of our team of staff and volunteers led by our CEO. This includes being well prepared for all meetings, engaging with the CEO and trustees between meetings and using Office 365 to keep up with relevant documents. We ask trustees to commit a minimum of five-six hours a month to Borderlands.
* Be willing to participate in sub-committees and working groups and as appropriate to chair such groups
* Be able to contribute effectively in board meetings, with good listening and communication skills and a willingness to challenge where necessary
* Be able to think strategically and make clear decisions
* (Some trustees) Have lived experience of being a refugee or an asylum seeker
* Always act as a team player

**We are particularly looking at candidates with**:

* HR skills/professional background
* Knowledge of relevant government (local/national) policy
* Lived experience of refugee/asylum issues and/or candidates with a good knowledge & understanding of refugee/asylum issues

**The benefits of being a trustee of Borderlands**

* Making decisions that bring tangible benefits to people’s lives
* Being part of a small, international and vibrant team
* Using your skills, experience and knowledge to benefit others
* Access to training opportunities to develop your skills as a trustee and board member
* A chance to develop a wide range of skills that can be transferred to work, volunteer and other roles; this will include strategic thinking, working in a team, identifying and managing risks, financial planning and management
* Adding value to the important work of Borderlands

**Chair role description**

In addition to the roles and responsibilities set out above, the chair also has the following responsibilities:

1. *Provide leadership and direction to the board*

* Lead the board in setting and reviewing Borderlands’ vision, mission and strategic direction
* Ensure the board reviews and develops its skills
* Ensure that board decisions are implemented
* Ensure that the work of the board is consistent with Borderlands’ purpose
* Ensure that issues of interest to all stakeholders are appropriately considered
* Ensure that new trustees receive proper induction to the board

2. *Facilitate meetings and decision making*

* Approve the agenda for Board meetings in consultation with the CEO
* Facilitate board meetings to enable robust discussions, ensuring that: all trustees have the opportunity to contribute; decisions are clear with responsibility for taking forward action points properly allocated
* Ensure that the performance of the board and of individual trustees is regularly reviewed
* Ensure that delegation arrangements are appropriate and enable the work of Borderlands to be carried out effectively
* When necessary, take or authorise urgent action between board meetings when it is not possible or practical to hold a meeting
* Ensure that sub-committees and working groups are properly set up and chaired and report back in a timely manner to the board

3. *Support and line manage the CEO*

* Provide line management to the CEO including regular formal sessions and ad hoc support as required
* Carry out the annual appraisal of the CEO
* Establish a good working relationship with the CEO and trustees

4. *Engage with a range of stakeholders*

* Attend internal and external awareness-raising and fund-raising events
* Attend meetings with funders when necessary
* Support the CEO in developing good working relationships with partners and other organisations
* Provide brief reports for newsletters, the annual report and other internal and external communications as appropriate
* Support the CEO to ensure that Borderlands is an active member of Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seekers Partnership (BRASP)

**The benefits of being a trustee of Borderlands**

* Through our multiyear grant with Lloyds Bank, the Chair will access 1:1 mentoring/coaching support through an external consultant appointed among a network of experienced trustees
* Making decisions that bring tangible benefits to people’s lives
* Being part of a small, international and vibrant team
* Using your skills, experience and knowledge to benefit others
* Access to training opportunities to develop your skills as a trustee and board member
* A chance to develop a wide range of skills that can be transferred to work, volunteer and other roles; this will include strategic thinking, working in a team, identifying and managing risks, financial planning and management
* Adding value to the important work of Borderlands