



Every smile
tells a story

Chair of Trustee Recruitment Pack

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Registered Charity in England and Wales (1108160) and Scotland (SC041034)

CLAPA is **committed to safeguarding** and ensuring the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. **The suitability of all prospective employees or volunteers will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with this commitment.**

CLAPA is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment, and **we welcome applicants from all backgrounds and walks of life.** If you share our values and are passionate about supporting the UK cleft community, we want to hear from you. Please don't hesitate to let us know if there is anything we can do to make your application experience more accessible and inclusive.

Introduction from the Chief Executive

Hello, I'm Claire. I'm the Chief Executive of the Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA), and I want to tell you about this unique opportunity to join an incredible charity that has supported, connected and empowered people affected by cleft in the UK for over 40 years. I'd like to thank you for your interest in joining our Board of Trustees.

We are currently looking for a new Chair of Trustees who can use their skills to lead a charity with limited resources. We need someone who thrives as part of a dynamic group of Trustees, who is willing to champion the charity and who values seeing the impact that our work can make. If you think you have the experience, knowledge and passion to help support us to continue to meet the needs of the community we serve, we would love to hear from you.

Please read on to find the Role Description and Person Specification along with more information about our organisation and details of how to apply. We look forward to receiving your application.

Claire Cunniffe
Chief Executive

A word from our outgoing Chair of Trustees

OK. Cards on the table. Being a Trustee, sometimes, is not easy. However, it can also be the most rewarding volunteering experience you can ever have.

In my ten years' experience of being a Trustee (as a board member and Chair of Trustees) I have experienced every emotion on the scale. From the incredible lows we experienced around the impact of Covid and, more recently, the need to begin an emergency fundraising campaign to #SaveCLAPA, to the incredible highs of witnessing our teams work first-hand, meeting our community and the feeling of elation when new funding lands.

I have a daughter with a cleft. That's my reason for being a CLAPA Trustee, but you don't need to be directly impacted by cleft to be a Trustee with us. We need you to be empathetic, time-generous (sometimes beyond the four meetings a year), and willing to share your expertise and knowledge. We need you to be collaborative, to be passionate and to care.

Being a Trustee is a responsibility; both legally and emotionally. Your contributions to our Trustee board impacts the governance of the charity, the work of our amazing team and the impact of our critically important organisation to our wonderful growing community across the UK. The importance of an organisation like CLAPA has never been greater in terms of the support, recognition and awareness of cleft. We have come a very long way, but we still have a very long way to go.

Make the greatest decision of your life and become our new Chair of Trustees. You'll genuinely feel a better person for it, both professionally and personally.

Nick Astor
Chair of Trustees

Chair of Trustees

Role Description

Role Description

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity, developing the CLAPA's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

Key Tasks

The duties of a Trustee are to:

- Ensure that CLAPA complies with its constitution/memorandum and articles of association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that CLAPA pursues its objects as defined in its governing document
- Ensure CLAPA applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. it must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those organisations are
- Contribute actively to the board in giving firm strategic direction to CLAPA, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance
- Safeguard the good name and values of CLAPA
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of CLAPA
- Protect and manage the property of CLAPA and ensure the proper investment of CLAPA's funds
- Appoint the Chief Executive and monitor their performance

The Chair of Trustees will be expected to:

- Lead quarterly meetings including the annual Trustees Awayday plus any additional interim meetings as agreed by the board.
- Support and supervise the Chief Executive and act as a channel of communication between the board and the Chief Executive.
- Act as a figurehead for the charity e.g. representing the organisation at events, meetings or in the press
- Lead on the development of the board, making sure that its decisions are carried out
- Take urgent action (but not decision-making unless authorized) between board meetings when it isn't possible or practical to hold a meeting

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience of Chairing a Charity Board of Trustees (or similar equivalent)
- Strong communication skills and excellent leadership skills along with a willingness to challenge the status quo.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team as well as independently.
- Integrity, good independent judgment and analytical/ evaluation skills.
- A commitment to CLAPA and willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to the charity, and to act as the charity's ambassador to external bodies, charities and companies.

- Competent use of IT skills
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Previous experience of influencing & developing people and organisational strategy.

Desirable

- Knowledge and understanding of cleft lip and palate and its impact on people born with a cleft and their families

Terms of Office

1. Trustees will normally hold office for a term of three years.
2. Usually a maximum of two terms can be served.

About Cleft Lip and Palate

Early in pregnancy, different parts of the face form and come together just above the top lip. If this doesn't happen quite as it should, the result is a gap or 'cleft' in the upper lip, the palate (roof of the mouth), or both. It's usually caused by a mix of genetic and environmental factors interacting in a way that can't be predicted or prevented. A cleft can affect feeding, hearing, speech, teeth placement and more. The treatment pathway can last 20+ years, including several surgeries.

Around one in 700 people are born with a cleft – that's 1,200 each year in the UK alone.

About CLAPA

The Cleft Lip and Palate Association (CLAPA) is a small charity supporting people born with a cleft and their families in the UK. We bring together people affected by cleft to help them connect with others who share their experiences, welcoming them into a supportive community for life.

CLAPA's Services

- Vibrant **social media channels** which promote positivity, bust myths and celebrate differences.
- **Online support groups** moderated by trained volunteers provide an instant connection for those looking for an informal support network.
- **Regular online events** give people the chance to talk about their experiences and worries and hear from others at all stages of the cleft journey.
- Confidential **one-to-one support** provided by trained volunteer patients and parents who reassure those most in need that they can cope with whatever lies ahead.
- Accredited **information** on cleft led by our community, reflecting their experiences and emotional needs as well as medical facts.
- An **Advocacy Service** that provides information and signposting to those with complex enquiries.
- A **Children and Young People's Council** made up of 9-17-year-olds who meet to share their thoughts and experiences, helping to improve our support services as well as cleft research and NHS care.
- A consultancy service for **researchers** which connects their work with our community.

- A **feeding service** that supplies 15,000 subsidised items of specialist equipment for babies born with a cleft each year, including free of charge items for new and vulnerable families



When my Sonographer told me about my baby's cleft I was devastated. Soon after, I found CLAPA who introduced me to a whole new community of smiles and support. The experience has been amazing."

– Parent of young child

CLAPA's Values

- **Inclusive.** Everyone affected by cleft in the UK, regardless of background, identity or socioeconomic status, should be able to find a warm and welcoming community with CLAPA. We value all voices and want everyone to see themselves reflected in our work.
- **Trusted.** We passionately believe in doing what is best for the UK cleft community. Their needs and voices are at the front and centre of everything we do. We take responsibility for our mistakes and use them as chances to learn.
- **Adaptable.** We seek authentic feedback to help us raise the bar in everything we do. We don't stay stuck in our ways. We follow the evidence, try new things, and change with the times.
- **Collaborative.** We work best when we work together, whether this is as a staff team, as a community, or in partnership with others.

CLAPA's Strategy

Like many organisations, 2020-21 saw CLAPA revolutionise its service delivery to better serve communities wishing to access support online. Our 2022-25 strategy has us building on this work to provide a suite of high-quality, community-led, online services which will be able to keep pace with whatever challenges the future may bring.

Within this strategy, there is a particular focus on developing external partnerships to support our work, developing enduring resources to make the most of our considerable knowledge base, and reviewing our services and marketing to ensure accessibility, diversity and inclusion are top priorities. This period will also see a shift in how we raise funds to ensure the ongoing sustainability of CLAPA's work.

This Post

The Board is looking for a new trustee who is aligned to the ethos of the charity and would enjoy the opportunity to contribute their expertise to provide robust and dynamic governance to ensure we achieve our ambitions and remain financially solvent. We are keen to recruit a HR professional onto the board so are particularly looking for someone who meets this criteria.

In the role of Trustee, you will help inspire, set and maintain the charity's vision, mission and values, as well as developing the strategy, and ensuring compliance and accountability for finances, legal and governmental obligations. Previous experience in a trustee role is not essential as a full induction will be provided.

Taking on the role of a trustee is a significant undertaking. An appropriate time commitment will be required for the preparatory work required in between meetings as well as attendance at the meetings as details below.

The role of a Trustee

CLAPA is structured around a small Senior Management Team and CEO who report to the Board of Trustees, but with a constructive, collaborative culture where all voices and contributions are valued. CLAPA encourages cross-team working to give staff a chance to test their skills and learn about every area of how a modern charity operates.

The role of a Trustee is to provide overall strategic direction. Involvement in the detail of service delivery is not required. Trustees are responsible for the financial and legal operation of the organisation but your financial liability is limited to £1 because CLAPA is a company limited by guarantee as well as a registered charity. Trustees are unpaid, but travel expenses can be reimbursed.

The Board currently meets monthly with all meetings being held via Zoom on a weekday evening, the exception being the Trustees Awayday which is a daytime meeting every September held at the CLAPA office in London.

There is more information on the role of a Trustee on the Charity Commission website www.charity-commission.gov.uk.

CLAPA is committed to supporting new Trustees and will provide a thorough induction once appointed, and access to ongoing training as required.

How to Apply

Please complete the online Application Form:

https://CLAPA.formstack.com/forms/clapa_trustee_application_form

You may request an application form in another format by emailing info@clapa.com with 'Chair of Trustees Recruitment Pack Request' in the subject.

All applications are subject to our shortlisting process. If you're shortlisted, we will contact you and invite you to attend an interview. We'll also tell you if there will be any skills tasks to complete as part of the recruitment process. If you are shortlisted, we will ask you to complete a criminal records disclosure. Check [NACRO guidance](#) for more information on what should be disclosed and your rights.

If you have not heard from us by 30th October, please assume your application has been unsuccessful.

Applications close: 8am on Friday 20th October 2023

Interviews: w/c 30th October

Start date: December 2023

Criminal Record Background Checks

If you are invited for an interview, you will be sent a **Criminal Record Declaration form**. You will need to complete this form prior to the interview, but it will be stored securely and will only be looked at if your application is successful.

If you have declared that you have a criminal record on this form, we will complete a risk assessment process in line with our Safeguarding Policies.

Contact

Contact Claire Cunniffe, Chief Executive at claire.cunniffe@clapa.com, or call the CLAPA office on 020 7833 4883 if you have any questions about the role or the application process.

Due to most of our staff being part-time and flexible working, there is usually limited cover, but if you leave a message on the answerphone, we will call you back as soon as possible. Please leave your full name and phone number when leaving a message.

