Becoming a Trustee with

Birth Companions

### How we select new Trustees

Birth Companions regularly reviews its board of trustees to ensure we have the skills and experience needed represented on our board. When we identify the need to recruit new trustees, either to fill gaps in skills or to replace trustees who are retiring, we advertise widely to attract interest from a broad range of possible applicants.

We provide a role description and ask all potential trustees to complete an application form. In the form we ask them to confirm their eligibility to become a trustee; setout their interest, skills and experience; and provide two references (who are not friends or relatives). At least one of the references should be someone who knows them well, for example who has known them for several years via work, volunteering, community or faith activities.

All applications are reviewed by a panel of Birth Companion’s current staff and trustees and will be scored against the person specification set out in the role description. This part of the process is anonymous. The recruitment panel usually includes the Chair of Trustees and the Director of Birth Companions and at least one other person depending on the role.

This post is open to female applicants only as this is deemed a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR) for this role under Schedule 9, Paragraph 1 of the Equality Act 2010.

Currently Black and Asian women, and women from other groups who experience racism in our society are under-represented in our trustee board and we therefore particularly welcome candidates from these communities. If appropriate, we will use positive action under the Equality Act 2010 in the final stages of our recruitment process (see below for more details).

We are committed to ensuring that Birth Companions is a safe space for our Black and Asian staff, volunteers and trustees and for those from other groups who experience racism. We have put a range of measures in place to ensure this, including specialist therapeutic support for those who may be affected by racism in the course of their work or volunteering with Birth Companions. If you would like to know more, please see our website page~~s~~: <https://www.birthcompanions.org.uk/pages/114-anti-racism>

We welcome applications from individuals with lived experience of our services. However, our policy is that at least one year must have elapsed since being in receipt of support from Birth Companions before individuals can apply to become a trustee.

### Interview and checks

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend anonline interview with the Chair of Trustees and the Director of Birth Companions and at least one other person depending on the role. This will provide an opportunity for the potential trustee to learn more about the role and about Birth Companions. The interview will also provide an opportunity for everyone to get to know one another and consider the fit for working together as part of the Trustee board.

**DBS checks**

It is the policy of Birth Companions to conduct disclosure checks on all staff and volunteers. This policy includes members of the trustee board. Disclosure of a criminal record does not necessarily prevent any applicant from being successfully appointed. Should any applicant need to disclose they can discuss this with the Chair of the Trustees either prior or during the application process.

### Induction

Once invited to join the Board as a new trustee, an induction will be planned. The induction period takes place over six months.

New trustees will be provided with:

* An induction pack
* The Charity Commission’s ‘The Essential Trustee – what you need to know’ guide
* A trustees information form (which they should complete and return)
* The date at which their induction period will end.
* Conflict of interest declaration form

All new trustees will be offered a ‘buddy’ who is an existing member of the trustee board who will provide support and address any queries during the induction period. The buddy is there to answer any questions and to assist the development of a full understanding of the work of Birth Companions and the trustee role. New trustees will also be asked to attend Safeguarding for Trustee and anti-racism training sessions.

There will be a review at the end of the six-month induction period prior to final confirmation to join the board. This will involve a conversation between the Chair and the new trustee as well as feedback from other trustees. If mutually agreed, the new trustee will immediately be recommended to the board and formally confirmed as a trustee at Birth Companions.