



Operations Trustee Application Pack

Job REF# TrusteeOPS

It's our 115th Anniversary!
Leyf Nurseries
Young minds Big ambitions

A message from our CEO



WELCOME TO LEYF!

LEYF is a busy place full of people with great ideas and a real commitment to making a difference to every child we meet. We are always looking for people who want to be part of our happy group and help us create more social justice through our admired social enterprise model.

The London Early Years Foundation (LEYF) is the UK's largest childcare social enterprise and a family of 37 nurturing and pioneering Nursery Schools based across London. LEYF works with communities and parents to enrich and extend children's learning, so that each child is the best they can be.

As a social enterprise, all LEYF profits are reinvested back into the business, allowing it to subsidise free places for 20% of its families, giving access to early education and care to children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is through this means that the organisation has acted as a catalyst for long-term social change over the past 115 years.

I am delighted you are considering joining LEYF as a Trustee and supporting our ambition to change the world one child at a time!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "June O'Sullivan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

June O'Sullivan
Chief Executive

Who are we?



The London Early Years Foundation (LEYF) began as the Westminster Health Society in 1903, a time of poverty and shockingly high mortality. Distressed at the conditions they saw around them, three individuals embarked on an ambitious plan to change them.

Over 100 years before the first official children's centre and 45 years before the NHS, the Westminster Health Society helped to introduce the first health visiting programme in London. This included health education and training, clinics for maternal & child welfare and training in domestic skills. It was largely due to our three founders that maternal and child welfare and personal health services became available in Westminster.

During the Second World War, we opened our first nursery to support mothers working in the war effort. During the Blitz the nursery was temporarily housed in the air raid shelter of the Tate gallery!

As the needs of the community changed over the 20th century and health conditions improved, we focused our services on providing Early Years education and care through our nurseries. This enabled parents to go back to work, and children to get the best possible start in life.

In 2006 we began the journey to become a social enterprise to make us financially self-sustaining and allowing us to offer the same high-quality nursery experience to families across the city regardless of their background. In 2009 the organisation was re-named London Early Years Foundation as we moved out of Westminster, recognising the importance of spreading our model across London.

Today we are one of London's largest and most successful charitable social enterprises, inspired by the same passion and bravery of our pioneering founders, working to change the world one child at a time.

Learn more at www.LEYF.org.uk

Together with families and communities we enable each child to be the best they can be through wonderful experiences that enrich and extend their learning.

Our ambition

Changing the world one child at a time.

Our purpose

Together with families and communities we enable each child to be the best they can be through wonderful experiences that enrich and extend their learning.

Our values

INSPIRING

We encourage continuous development for children and staff. We challenge each other to question and explore so we learn together.

BRAVE

We are curious, bold and adventurous. We push boundaries and test new ideas, always standing up for the rights of children.

NURTURING

We are warm, caring, loving and welcoming. We create safe and homely environments for each child.

FUN

We are imaginative and creative and learn through play.



Job Description and Specification



The Board of Trustees of the London Early Years Foundation (LEYF) are looking for a talented individual to join our Board. With over 650 employees and c£20m annual turnover, LEYF is the largest childcare social enterprise and charity in the UK and primarily delivers its mission to ‘change the world one child at a time’ through a family of 37 community nurseries across London, reaching almost 5000 children. You will join LEYF at a critical time for the childcare and early years development sector as it seeks to address key issues including funding, gender diversity in nursery provision and achievement of high quality outcomes.

LEYF operates as social enterprise, seeking to maximise provision of subsidised high-quality childcare in some of the most disadvantaged places in London and operating a socially inclusive pricing strategy. We enrich and extend children’s learning through our unique pedagogy which strengthens the home learning bridge and multigenerational engagement with communities to enhance social cohesion and inclusion.

Punching well above our weight, LEYF leads campaigners on early years issues and influencing national policies such as our work on men in childcare and child obesity. The staff at LEYF are passionate about the provision of high quality childcare and are good at it too - 60% of its settings awarded outstanding by Ofsted (compared to national average of 16%). This year we are rolling out the first LEYF degree to add to our current well received CPD suite of learning opportunities for all staff including chefs.

What’s in it for you?

By working with the UK’s largest childcare social enterprise to support long-term social change, you can make a material difference to the life outcomes of disadvantaged children across London. We can offer you an opportunity to put your skills and experience to new use, in a different context and to make a difference - using your questioning mind and resourceful nature to support a cause you really care about, helping make LEYF even stronger so it can expand the impact it has.

You’ll be inspired by the passionate, nurturing and fun staff of LEYF. You’ll develop your skills. You’ll be part of a cohort of Trustees who are committed, professional, and collaborative. You’ll help us strengthen LEYF’s social impact and expand its reach, while ensuring financial and operational sustainability for future generations.

About you

We are seeking a trustee with extensive operations experience gained within a multi-site business (within hospitality and leisure or a similar sector) and/or a social enterprise. You'll bring a focus on P&L management, sales & marketing, resource management, and identifying/implementing improvement plans. As such you'll have the knowledge to improve and support our business development and operations and the gravitas to influence and lead senior decision makers through this exciting period of growth.

We are also looking for someone who is able to:

- Demonstrate genuine enthusiasm for the purpose, mission and values of LEYF, building on its distinctive history and recent growth agenda to embrace an exciting future.
- Build internal and external stakeholder relationships, making and bringing connections and networks that help LEYF achieve its strategic goals.
- Work collaboratively, leveraging highly-developed communication and influencing skills.
- Act independently, objectively and fairly, and is open, understanding and resourceful.

Experience as Trustee or working at senior or Board level providing strategic leadership during times of change is a plus but is not essential.

LEYF recognises the enormous benefits of a diverse board. We actively and warmly encourage applications therefore from a broad and deep range of backgrounds and both lived and life experiences.

Time Commitment

This is a voluntary, unpaid role. The LEYF Board of Trustees meet in central London, typically outside working hours. In normal circumstances, each year you will commit to around 1-2 days per month including attending board and committee meetings, our annual board strategy day and LEYF events and conferences.

What's next?

If you share a passion for continuous improvement and want to have a positive impact on the lives of others, then please email your CV and a covering letter setting out why you would like to be a Trustee with LEYF and what you can offer LEYF to grace@leyf.org.uk - please include the job reference TrusteeOPS.

All Trustees at LEYF are required to complete a full [DBS check](#) prior to their appointment.