The Belay Foundation Co-Chair Pack

Would you like to:

- **use your skills and experience to help some of the most vulnerable children in the UK?**
- **be part of a supportive, compassionate and thoughtful team who have created an effective, loved and respected service for adoptive, fostered and children in guardianships and their families?**
- **help a small user-led charity that has become reputationally successful and punches way above its weight to grow sustainably into its next iteration and be able to serve more families?**
- **work in partnership with other organisations to address both the symptoms and causes of distress and trauma in our young people and train future generations of psychologists, social workers and child-professionals?**

… then this role is for you!

Our staff work largely remotely so most of our meetings are online.

This in an unpaid post but reasonable expenses will be paid.

Our board is a mixture of parents, care-experienced adults and professionals, and we hope to attract a Co-Chair that will lead the board and help us grow our capacity.

The Belay Foundation – useful background

Founded in June 2020 by Sarah Fry, a parent of two adopted children and psychologist Jade Fullick, The Belay Foundation was created to fill and urgent need for practical 'in-home' support to families whose children have previously been in local authority care. It also provides opportunity for trauma-informed work experience and development for professionals and those in training. A gap existed in the care sector for an organisation which responded to what is felt as a 'crisis' by many families, whilst giving valuable insight to individuals and universities into the practical management of trauma in families and communities.

We were awarded charity registration in December 2020 and were soon working with families and local authorities across the UK. The Belay Foundation understands that early developmental trauma can have a profound impact on children and their families, as well as the schools and communities who care for them. We have demonstrated that very positive outcomes can be achieved by early intervention and strong supportive networks.

Our main areas of focus are: finding, training and supporting people who can offer trauma-responsive childcare and respite; disability benefits advice to families and young people; training professionals and parents to understand and respond to the impact of early-life trauma.

Over the last year, we conducted a major review of our services and business model, enabling us to relaunch services so that they can be scaled and respond to ever-expanding need. We have recently recruited a permanent CEO and will soon be developing a long-term strategic plan.

We are now looking for a Co-Chair to lead our board of trustees. We are particularly interested in applicants with previous experience of working with a growing small charity and/or with lived experience of being a child or parent in an adoptive, kinship or special guardianship family.

The Role of Co-Chair

As a young, growing charity, the board of trustees have the responsibility of growing our reach and developing our offering in line with our charitable aims. This role involves a combination of preparing for and chairing online evening meetings (roughly every 6 weeks), providing further support to the operational team as required, liaising regularly with the CEO and other Co-Chair, ensuring the board is effective and attending an annual in-person away day.

As Co-Chair you will:

- Meet regularly with the other trustees (mostly online and in the evenings) to shape, drive and monitor the charity's strategy
- Scrutinise the proper management and administration of the charity
- Champion the charity's core values
- Help develop the financial sustainability of the charity
- Consider further service delivery in line with the charity's aims
- Promote the work of the charity and develop contacts externally

The role of Co-Chair is not paid but reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

On joining the organisation there will be a full induction and support to fill in any gaps in understanding/training you may have about working for a trauma-aware organisation and appropriate knowledge of safeguarding.

Co-Chair - Person Specification

Essential:

- An interest in good governance and strategy
- Ability to scrutinise organisational systems and outputs, and a willingness and ability to support with operational tasks
- Experience of providing oversight of operations in an organisation
- Excellent communication and leadership skills
- Collaborative, enthusiastic and empathetic
- Able to offer 6+ hours per month, including attending trustee meetings, fortnightly meetings with the CEO and an in-person away day each year

Preferable but not essential:

- Experience of a trustee role
- Personal or professional interest in adoption, special guardianship and/or kinship care
- Experience in supporting the growth of a small organisation

In accordance with our commitment to equal opportunities and improving the diversity of our Board, we particularly welcome applications from people from Black, Asian, and other minority ethnic backgrounds, who are currently under-represented in our governance structure.

How to Apply

Please send your CV and a cover letter to Matt Humberstone, Co-Chair of Trustees: matt@thebelayfoundation.org.uk by 9pm on Friday 27th November 2026.

November 2026