

Thank you for your interest in the role of: **Management Committee member (Trustee)**

This pack contains the following:

1. Background notes on Detention Action

2. Role description

3. Person specification

4. Equal opportunities monitoring form

To apply for this role, please write a short letter (no more than three sides of A4) explaining your interest in the position, and return to Zaki Shah by email to zaki@detentionaction.org.uk or send in an envelope marked “Recruitment” to:

Zaki Shah,

Detention Action,

Unit 1.8, The Green House,

244-254 Cambridge Heath Road,

London

E2 9DA

We will acknowledge receipt of all applications sent by email.

**This is a rolling recruitment and will close when we have filled the roles.**

Work, paid or voluntary experience, is not the only means of showing you meet the requirements of the post. You may also have acquired relevant knowledge and skills through your life experience. If so, please try to demonstrate this in your letter.

The letter should be typed or completed in black ink, for photocopying purposes.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Detention Action is a national charity, which supports people detained in the largest immigration detention in Europe (based at Heathrow) and advocates for fundamental, progressive, reform to the immigration system.

Our vision is a country where no-one is detained indefinitely for immigration reasons and where people born or raised in the UK are not deported from the place they call home.

We are an ambitious and dynamic charity. We bring strategic litigation to prevent human rights abuses in the immigration system, we run high profile and visible campaigns and we work across the media to advance our goals. In 2020 we brought litigation in the Court of Appeal which prevented the unlawful deportation of 25 people to Jamaica & we brought further litigation to pressure the Government to release the majority of people in detention due to Covid risks. We also lead cross party efforts to push for a statutory time limit on immigration detention and secured a successful vote in favour of a time limit in the House of Lords.

Detention Action’s work is overseen by a six-member Management Committee (board of trustees). We are looking to increase the number of people on the Committee. The charity currently has 13 staff and a pool of around 60 Volunteers, who currently work mainly on a remote basis. Our main funders are the Oak Foundation, Trust for London, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Tolkien Trust, Esmee Fairbairn, Barrow Cadbury Trust, Network for Social Change, Bromley Trust and AB Charitable Trust.

Detention Action provides support and advice to people in detention in Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre in London, and those held under immigration powers in prisons throughout the UK. Detention Action’s casework team provides emotional and practical support and casework support to people in detention, through in–person visits and a freephone service. Detention Action undertakes general casework for people detained, including referrals to legal representatives and other specialist organisations and assistance with communicating with these agencies. We also work closely with solicitors on strategic litigation where it is necessary to defend the rights of people in detention. We do not currently provide immigration advice.

Drawing on evidence obtained from our frontline work, Detention Action undertakes media, campaigns and policy work to advocate for reform to immigration detention & deportation policy and practice. We regularly feature in national, regional and local print and broadcast media and work with others to lead the debate around the protection of human rights in the immigration system. Our campaign against indefinite detention aims to end the long-term detention of people without time limit.

Through our Allies for Justice campaigning network we train and support people with experience of detention, deportation and asylum systems to campaign and lobby for change. Additionally, we coordinate a lived experience group called Families for Justice, which involves people whose family members are caught up in the deportation system. We also run an alternatives to detention project for people who have had criminal convictions and who are experiencing or at risk of indefinite detention.

We have supported thousands of detained people, as well as advocating to keep detention on both the political and media agenda. For more information about Detention Action and what we do, please look at [our website](https://detentionaction.org.uk/about-us/).

People with lived experience are integral to all aspects of Detention Action's work, including as members of the Board and staff team, and are directly involved in developing our organisational strategy, shaping the services we provide, and advising on volunteer recruitment and training. We are dedicated to expanding lived experience representation in every aspect of our organisation. We are keen to expand the number of people with lived experience on our Board because we want to:

* Ensure all strategic and policy decisions of Detention Action are rooted in lived experience;
* Be more accountable to the people we serve;
* Honour our commitment to ensuring lived experience representation in Detention Action’s governance and management;
* Attract various skills and different perspectives to our Board that people with lived experience can bring into our organisation.

You need to have first-hand experience of immigration detention in the UK, or of the UK’s asylum or deportation systems, along with a commitment to Detention Action’s vision and values. As a trustee:

* You will be required to attend six Management Committee meetings, our Annual General meeting in September, and occasional Board away days and additional meetings. Meetings will normally be on a weekday evening.
* Travel expenses and any child care costs will be reimbursed. . Please note that this is otherwise an unpaid position.
* You will be given a full induction, mentoring and ongoing support.

**For further information and to apply, please read further information below, and send a cover letter which explains how you meet the requirements of the role and state why you wish to be a trustee of Detention Action.**

**N.B.** Detention Action is committed to safeguarding practice and DBS checks are mandatory for all our trustee roles. We are aware that, for some people currently navigating the immigration or asylum system, it might be challenging to provide necessary identification documents for DBS checks.

Please get in touch with us to discuss any support you may require to apply for this role, including any questions regarding the DBS check. We are open to make positive changes to make sure this role is as open and as inclusive as possible.

To discuss this further, or if you have queries about this opportunity, please contact Zaki Shah at [zaki@detentionaction.org.uk](mailto:zaki@detentionaction.org.uk)

This is an opportunity to help shape and steer Detention Action, and to support and make a real difference to people in immigration detention and those who are subjected to UK’s harsh deportation policies. You would be part of a small yet impactful organisation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**ROLE DESCRIPTION**

As a trustee of Detention Action, you will be responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the organisation as well as ensuring the long-term stability of the charity. You will need to be confident to express your views and communicate effectively, but you will also need to be able to work as part of a team with other trustees to guide and steer Detention Action effectively, with clarity and vision.

The best Boards have a diversity of skills, experiences and perspectives. Some trustees are chosen for their previous board experience and long professional careers in finance or service delivery, others for their knowledge of the immigration system through lived experience.

We are currently particularly looking for trustees who can bring skills and experiences in any of the following areas:

* Fundraising
* Organisational or project evaluation skills
* Research and policy
* Finance
* Immigration advice

**It is a requirement of all applicants for these positions on this occasion that you have lived experience of detention in the UK, or of the UK’s asylum or deportation systems.**

With particular regard to fundraising, we are looking to broaden our expertise in income generation across the Management Committee (MC). As we embark on a new income generation strategy and develop a new integrated financial model, we are ideally looking for one of our new trustees to support the fundraising work of the staff team.

**No previous governance experience is needed.** We are keen to talk to anyone interested who can demonstrate the ability to think strategically and has the integrity to take on this important role. Please do not be discouraged if this is not something you have done before, or if you don’t meet all elements of the role specification; We will provide mentoring and training to support new Trustees to understand and excel their role. Please do consider applying if you have the time, the interest and enthusiasm to encourage, challenge and support us to be the best we can be.

Overall duties of Trustees

* To actively contribute to the Board of Trustees - giving strategic direction to the organisation and setting overall policy.
* To ensure that the organisation complies with its governing documents, charity law, company law and other relevant legislation and regulations. Detention Action will provide training to help all members of the Board to understand what is expected of them.
* To commit to Detention Actions vision and values.
* To safeguard the good name and reputation of the organisation.
* To ensure the financial stability of the organisation and its efficient administration.
* To act as a critical addition to the existing Board, offering guidance, support and constructive challenge.
* Represent Detention Action internally and externally, be a positive ambassador for the charity and the sector.
* Keep up to date with Detention Action’s work.
* Read and scrutinise board papers before meetings so as to be able to contribute fully.
* Occasional participation in relevant working groups
* Occasional participation in staff interview, disciplinary or grievance panels

Additional knowledge and requirements

* Commitment to Detention Action’s vision, purpose and values and to act in a manner consistent with these.
* Understanding of the issues and challenges faced by people facing detention and removal from the UK.
* Sound independent judgement and a willingness to speak your mind.
* An ability to work collaboratively and effectively as a member of a team.
* Ability to read and understand financial information
* Ability and willingness to positively represent the organisation
* The confidence and insight to make positive contributions to board discussions
* A willingness to share your experiences where you feel able to, and to learn from fellow board members
* Experience of strategic thinking and of setting monitoring and reviewing plans
* An understanding of the risks that might affect an organisation like Detention Action.
* Ability to review organisational policies and practices
* Understanding of the role of Trustee and the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities this involves
* Commitment to prepare for and attend all Trustee meetings during the year, unless otherwise unable to do so