

Make A Difference in Essex

Trustee Recruitment 2026

Welcome to Essex Community Foundation

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee of Essex Community Foundation. Over the coming months, we are looking to appoint two new Trustees to help guide and shape our work now and, in the years, ahead.

Our ambitious [2030 Strategy](#) sets out our vision to:

- Attract new philanthropy to invest in our community.
- Increase our grant making.
- Be a bold and independent voice for the voluntary sector.

We are looking for Trustees who share our commitment to Essex and can help us deliver this vision with confidence and impact.

We are seeking people who live or work in Essex, Southend or Thurrock, with experience in one or more of these areas:

- **Strategy and Financial Stewardship:** investment or accountancy, including charity investment, business management, or finance to help our resources and grant making grow.
- **Policy and Influence:** health or government policy, campaigning or advocacy, to strengthen our voice at a time of continuous change.
- **Communication and Connection:** marketing and communications, or strong community links, to help us attract new philanthropy and stay rooted locally.

We want our Board to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, and particularly welcome applications from LGBTQ+ people, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people with disabilities and those under 40.

Trustees attend four Board meetings a year. If this would be your first Trustee role, please don't be deterred: we provide a full induction, ongoing training and mentoring from existing Trustees. This is a voluntary role, with expenses reimbursed.

This pack includes the application link, our latest Annual Review, Report and Accounts, and details of our governance. If you would like an informal conversation, a current trustee or our CEO, Caroline, would be happy to speak with you. The closing date is **5pm on Wednesday, 4 November 2026**.

If you care about Essex and are ready to contribute to the governance of our work, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours sincerely



Atul Manek
Chair of Trustees

About Us

Our mission is to inspire philanthropy and charitable giving – matching people, ideas, resources and needs to make a real and lasting difference in our local communities.

Since 1996 we have worked passionately to develop and support the charitable sector in Essex, Southend and Thurrock. We work with individuals, families, businesses and charitable trusts, introducing them to organisations tackling issues that are important to them and our communities.

By investing the donations we receive and the funds we manage, we provide a sustainable source of funding that local organisations can tap into year on year.

Each year we provide grants to over 400 local organisations, large and small, with funds provided by 220 donors and national programmes. Our invested (endowed) portfolio of funds is currently circa £60 million and in the last year we awarded around £3.4 million in grants.

Our core activities:

- To inspire and develop charitable giving from individual donors, companies, local and national government, and existing charitable trusts who give through us to causes that matter to them.
- Awarding grants to charities, community organisations and social enterprises working in the heart of their community with a focus on community-based, grassroots action.
- Through our investment (endowment) strategy, building community assets to provide a sustainable source of funding for communities.
- Working in partnership with other funders, charities, and public sector bodies to support our communities.

We engage over 300 local people through our grant making panels who help us to understand local needs and to make decisions about where to award our grants.

We are a small team of 20 paid staff and 3 volunteers who are based in our offices in central Chelmsford.

Please [visit our website](#) for more information about our work including our 2030 Strategy and Annual Report and Financial Statements.

“Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it’s doing what it was set up to do. They may be known by other titles, such as directors, board members, governors, committee members.

Whatever they are called, trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run.”

The Charity Commission

Our Board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for our Foundation. Each Trustee brings their individual expertise and experience to the operation of our Board and collectively this drives our strategy and our progress. The contribution of each Trustee is valued by all associated with us and they tell us that it is a rewarding experience that contributes to their own development.

We currently have a board of 12 Trustees, 6 men and 6 women who bring a range of skills and great enthusiasm for how to develop our charity and our work locally. One trustee will retire this year following 8 years of service. We are, therefore, now looking to attract new skills to our Board.

Currently, our Board of Trustees meet four times a year. In between we carry out detailed work through committee meetings. Trustees have specific roles and responsibilities as defined by the Charity Commission, which you [can read here](#).

Skills We Want to Increase on Our Board

Strategy and Financial Stewardship

Finance and Investment; Business Management

Help us make all our assets go further and build an organisation that lasts. We're looking for people with experience of managing finances and investments, leading or advising organisations, shaping strategy, or overseeing risk. Charity investment, accountancy, audit or fund management experience would be especially valuable, but so would a senior business background and a head for sound decision-making.

Policy and Influence

Health and Government Policy; Campaigning

Help us shape the bigger picture and tackle the root causes of the issues our communities face. We'd love to hear from people who understand how policy is made and changed, whether in health, local or national government, public services, or through campaigning and advocacy. You'll help us use our voice and relationships to influence change beyond our own grantmaking.

Communication and Connection

Marketing and Communications; Community Engagement

Help us tell our story and stay rooted in the communities we serve. We're seeking people with senior experience in marketing, communications strategy, brand or digital development, alongside those with deep links to local communities, grassroots groups or the voluntary sector. You'll help us reach new supporters and make sure the people we exist for are heard in everything we do.

You don't need to tick every box; we value experience and fresh perspectives as much as professional expertise.

About You

As well as a passion for your specialist skills and a willingness to apply these to support and shape our work now and in the future, we are looking for people who have:

- A strong belief in philanthropy and the charity sector, with the ability to raise awareness of our work within your networks.
- A strong connection to Essex, Southend or Thurrock either through living here or working here.
- A keen interest in the work and impact of charitable Trusts and Foundations and in learning about Community Foundations and our unique role in social change.
- Enthusiasm to undertake training to build skills and knowledge.
- An ability to listen to the different views and unique experiences of others and willingness to reflect their perspectives to the rest of the Board.
- Strong and respectful communication skills and commitment to diversity of knowledge and experience and working in a team

Induction & Support

We will make every effort to ensure that you are able to fulfil your role to the best of your abilities and that this is a learning and development opportunity. Support offered will be alongside your fellow new trustees so you will be learning together.

We offer:

- Access to trustee training to ensure that all aspects of governance are covered as well as the opportunity to access wider training for the sector as appropriate.
- An existing ECF trustee or other external support as a buddy or mentor will be arranged.
- Opportunity to observe the work of our committees.
- Time spent with our executive team to support your understanding of our work including visits to partner charities.
- If necessary/relevant, we would be prepared to discuss this role with your employer to support you. We would suggest that you may consider telling your employer prior to applying if possible or certainly if you are shortlisted.
- Our trustees are volunteers and are not paid, but all out of pocket expenses will be covered by us.

Eligibility

You must be at least 16 years of age and eligible to serve as a Trustee of ECF. You do not need to have any previous trustee experience to apply.

How to Apply

Interested candidates must submit your application, [via the online form](#) by **5pm on Wednesday, 4 November 2026**. Your application must include your CV, and a short personal statement.

If you would like to have a chat with one of our current trustees, then please just email recruitment@essexcf.org.uk and we will arrange for a telephone call.

We particularly welcome interest and applications from LGBTQ+ people, Black, Asian and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and people under 40 years of age.

To ensure fairness and inclusivity, we use a blind recruitment process, removing personal details from applications to help minimise unconscious bias.

Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an online interview **Friday, 4 December or Monday, 7 December 2026**.

Term of Appointment

Trustee appointments are for an initial period of four years, which are then renewable for two further terms of two years on mutual agreement. Therefore, Trustees may serve for a maximum of eight years.

Commitment

- Attendance at 4 x annual Board meetings, which are generally held in Chelmsford both in person and virtually.
- Board meetings are held between 5-7pm and the timings are regularly reviewed.
- Reading the meeting agenda and papers beforehand so that you are prepared.
- You will be asked to join a committee, which generally meet for 2 hours 4 times per year.
- Participation at an annual away day.
- We have a number of events and receptions throughout the year, which you are invited to attend.
- We also have special task and finish groups, grant panel meetings or visits to grant partners, a great way to learn more about our work

Thank-you for your interest in our work and we look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions about how to apply then please contact our CEO, Caroline Taylor on 01245 355947 or [email](#).