

THE COWRIE SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION – TRUSTEE ROLE DESCRIPTION 2026

About The Cowrie Scholarship Foundation:

Creating a new future for at least 100 talented disadvantaged Black British students through education.

[The Cowrie Scholarship Foundation](#) believes that learning in higher education can transform a person's life and the society around them, creating a more equitable society and more diverse future leaders.

Our mission is to empower at least 100 talented, disadvantaged Black British students over the next decade, by fully funding their undergraduate fees and living expenses in partnership with universities, donors and businesses, supported by professional mentors. To date, we have over 100 fee places pledged by UK universities, and have raised funds to fully support 70 of these Scholars through their undergraduate degrees.

Named after the Cowrie shells that were historically one of the most successful and universal forms of currency in West Africa, The Cowrie Scholarship Foundation launched in June 2020, following the murder of George Floyd and renewed global focus on the Black experience. Cowrie's Founder, Professor Richard Oreffo, set the explicit goal of **supporting at least 100 talented, disadvantaged Black British students by 2030** through UK universities, thereby contributing to positive educational change.

The role of a CSF trustee:

The board of trustees at [The Cowrie Scholarship Foundation](#) comprises a small number of committed volunteer individuals who drive its charitable activities (including mentoring, building public awareness, building partnerships with universities, raising funds and supporting current Scholars) and fulfil the legal duties of running a fully registered charity (such as reviewing policies and preparing the annual financial return).

The Foundation board is made up of individuals at different stages in their careers, from sectors including higher education, law, communications, marketing, and finance, and is supported by volunteer Ambassadors and Advisors.

The roles available:

We are seeking new trustees, in particular, but not exclusively, with skills/interests in

- **communications (digital and print, social media)**

and/or

- **fundraising (corporate, major donor and regular giving, philanthropy)**

and/or

- **Data Protection**

to join us and help develop these areas as our charity moves into its next phase of growth.

We are especially looking to recruit:

- **3 established individuals** with career experience to support our vision.

What we are looking for in new trustees:

This is an exciting time to volunteer with The Cowrie Scholarship Foundation. New trustees will be joining us as we build on a strong record of success (70 Scholars placed and over £4.1m pledged by UK universities).

You will be joining a group of highly committed individuals from across the sectors who are all passionate about the Foundation's mission, growing your own networks and utilising and expanding your own skills set as you advocate for and develop the work of the Foundation.

We are seeking the following:

- A desire to use your skills, ideas and/or networks for the direct benefit of the next generation of Black British students and professionals;
- Proactive individuals – We are a small charity with no paid staff and our volunteer trustee board is currently integral to our operations;
- Effective communicators – there are opportunities to represent the charity to businesses, at events and conferences, throughout the year;
- The ability to review complex information – Information packs are sent out by the Chair prior to every meeting, for trustee comment;
- Those who can accommodate time-pressured, confidential applications provided by our partner universities, giving input into shortlists of annual scholarships in July each year.
- A genuine commitment to equality and diversity, reflecting our mission to create a more diverse future society;
- Experience of / a genuine belief in the power of education, particularly at degree level, to transform life-chances and positively impact future generations;
- Those comfortable to draw on their own established networks of contacts, to help widen the charity's reach and build corporate and individual giving programmes.
- Lived experience as a Black or British minority ethnic individual would be an advantage but we welcome all interested individuals. We seek individuals willing to commit time to the vision and mission of the Foundation.

Our commitments:

We are committed to equality and will welcome all interested applicants, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexuality. In our commitment to diversity and as a charity led by a diverse board for

Black British young people, we particularly welcome applications from individuals of Black or British minority ethnic heritage.

Time commitment, expectations and location of trustees:

- Trustees meet c.4 times per year, via video link (2 hours), usually after office hours. Extra meetings may be called, e.g. before special events. There are occasional opportunities to meet in person across the UK, for those who can attend. (Expenses may be offered.)
- In addition, Scholar selection meetings take place via video link 2 or 3 times each summer, in conjunction with our partner universities.
- There are opportunities to represent the Foundation at events for Scholars and an annual summer event, where attendance is encouraged (but not mandatory).
- The Foundation is based in Hampshire but by using video calling for trustee meetings, our trustees are, currently, based across the UK.

Where to find out more and how to apply:

More detail on responsibilities and expectations of our trustees can be found [here](#).

It is essential to note that this is a fast-paced, active small charity with no employees. Prospective trustees are asked to read the expectations document and fully consider and confirm availability for the time commitment requested before applying for the role.

Find out more about our charity, board and advisors here:

<https://cowriescholarshipfoundation.org/who-we-are/> and on our social media channels. You can also access our latest [impact report](#).

All new trustees will be required to sign a declaration of eligibility form and will be subject to checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) given our work with young people.

Please note that the Foundation is advertising for this role across numerous channels and will be shortlisting potential applicants.

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Closing date for all application - Monday 16th march 2026.