

THE  
JOSEPH  
ROWNTREE  
CHARITABLE  
TRUST

*Joseph Rowntree*

Trustee and Chair recruitment 2024  
**Information pack**

# Welcome from the Chair



Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Our organisation stands at a pivotal juncture. We are seeking inspiring trustees and our next Chair, to be part of a unique opportunity to shape the future of an established social justice funder, and to make a lasting impact.

We work as a responsive funder, backing organisations bringing about genuine systemic change in the fields of peace and security, rights and justice, power and accountability, sustainable future, grassroots movements, and peace and human rights in Northern Ireland. As an independent charitable foundation, we've evolved gradually, seeking to provide lasting support to organisations working on deep rooted issues.

Since 2020, the Trust has been going through a process of reflection on its role and power as a philanthropic organisation, particularly when it comes to supporting wider movements of change, resourcing racial justice work, and contributing meaningfully to transformational change. We have been critically examining [our history](#) and have made an ambitious commitment to explore and identify forms of reparation.

While these new commitments and contexts bring huge potential, they have brought with them a number of challenges which require careful management and strategic attention. We've made significant changes already; expanding our team and grant-making, reviewing our ways of working, and broadening trustee recruitment beyond the Quaker community. We need to continue to reimagine and improve our own practices alongside our core mission of funding organisations to make lasting change.

I hope this short introduction encourages you to read further and consider applying to join our board. I have had the opportunity to be both a trustee and the Chair of JRCT, an experience I have found both inspiring and challenging, but ultimately very rewarding.

Huw Davies, Interim Trust Chair

## About JRCT

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) is a Quaker grant-making trust which supports people who address the root causes of conflict and injustice. JRCT has granted hundreds of millions of pounds since 1904. Last year we made grant funding of around £20million to people and organisations whose vital work creates lasting change. Based in York, we have a geographically spread staff team of 30. Our funding priorities are currently spread across six areas. Peace and Security, Power and Accountability, Rights and Justice, Sustainable Future, Northern Ireland and our pilot programme, Grassroots Movements.

[You can read more about our funding priorities here](#)

## Ethos and values

JRCT describes itself as a Quaker trust. Although Quakers have our own particular form of worship, structure and behaviours, it is clear that our values and actions are often shared with others, in this sense a Quaker trust is not necessarily that different from any other progressive grant-making trust.

The Quaker value base has influenced the Trust's priorities, including choosing to work on conflict transformation in Northern Ireland, to challenge militarism and the arms trade, and to support racial justice and the rights of minoritised groups. At our best, we strive in all our dealings (as a grant-maker, employer, investor) to live out our values – treating others with respect, acting with integrity, speaking truth with love.

Currently, half of our Trustees are Quakers, most staff and co-optees are not. We expect everyone involved in the Trust to have a commitment to the mission and values of the organisation. For some this will be directly linked to their personal religious beliefs, and for others it will not be. Similarly, we expect those involved with the Trust to respect Quaker practices (such as beginning meetings with a period of silence) but we also strive to ensure that such practices are used in an inclusive way.

Migrants Organise, a Rights and Justice grant holder at the Solidarity Knows No Borders Summit 2021. Image courtesy of Sophie le Roux.



# How is JRCT governed?

JRCT is a charitable trust. The board is usually made up of between 12 and 14 Trustees who have collective stewardship of a responsibly-invested endowment. Trustees meet quarterly and may also meet outside the board meeting cycle for extraordinary business, committees, working groups or staff meetings.

JRCT has two board sub-committees, an operations and finance committee and an investment committee. In addition there are five grant-making committees aligned with the funding priorities of Peace and Security, Power and Accountability, Rights and Justice, Sustainable Future and Northern Ireland. Trustees typically serve on two committees and a trustee chairs or co-chairs each grant-making committee.

Our Grassroots Movements pilot fund programme uses a participatory grant-making approach supported by a movements working group and movements assembly. We may, from time to time, set up working groups or search committees (for example, executive recruitments, trustee and co-optee recruitment).

Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction of JRCT, ensuring we comply with relevant regulation, to deliver on our mission. Trustees are supported by professional staff and an investment advisor, and draw on legal, HR and other expert advice as required.

[You can access our annual reports here.](#)

## Support for trustees

### Financial support

All reasonable expenses are paid in line with our expenses policy. An iPad or equivalent can be provided for use in Trust business. In some circumstances we'll meet claims towards loss of earnings incurred as a result of working for the Trust. We ensure financial concerns aren't an obstacle to trustees. If you have any concerns please don't hesitate to speak to us

### Peer support

Our board includes a 2nd Vice Chair, a position that holds responsibility for pastoral and peer support for trustees. New trustees will be offered a 'buddy' to help guide them through their first few months.



### Induction and development

All our trustees have access to a full induction programme, reading material, meetings with key members of staff and opportunities for continuous learning and development.



# The trustee role

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Being a trustee for JRCT can be a life-affirming, enriching role which gives you the chance to meet and support a range of organisations often working with great commitment at the cutting edge of their fields. The learning and experience this offers often complements the professional lives of our trustees. Our trustees are appointed for an initial term of 5 years, renewable for a further 5 by mutual agreement. Our trustees have a range of expertise. We're looking to expand our group skillset – especially in terms of communications, finance, audit and risk, law, responsible investment and safeguarding.

In addition, successful candidates will be asked to sit on either one of our grant-making committees or our board committees, therefore knowledge of our funding priorities, grant-making and/or operational management at a senior level is useful, but not essential.

To be successful in the role, you will have the ability to act with discretion, diplomacy and self-awareness. You will be a good communicator, with experience working with multiple stakeholders. At JRCT, this would include staff, co-optees and grantee organisations. We expect trustees, at all times to be led by Quaker values.

Trustees generally have responsibility for the strategic direction of the organisation, therefore some knowledge of strategic planning would be useful.

For further information on the legal responsibilities of the trustee role, visit the links below:

[The Essential Trustee Guidance](#)

[The Good Governance Code](#)

## Time commitment

Quarterly board meetings take place four times per year in York (early Friday evening until mid-afternoon Saturday). Trustees typically serve on two committees which meet 2-3 times a year (a commitment of between 4 and 6 meetings per year). Committee meetings are, on average 5 hours long. Some committee meetings are held in London, Manchester and Belfast. If serving on a grant committee, trustees would be expected to make grantee visits up to twice a year. In addition to the meetings noted here, trustees would need to make time for administrative communication (e.g. commenting on grant applications or investment committee matters) and ad hoc working groups as required. The expectation for this role is approximately 1.5 days per month.



# The Chair role

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A central relationship in the Trust is the partnership between the Chair and the Chief Executive, which reflects the division of responsibility between the strategic governance role of trustees and the administration of the organisation by its Chief Executive. Due to JRCT's Quaker Registered Body status, there is an occupational requirement for the Trust chair to be Quaker therefore this role is open to Friends, Attenders and those in the wider Quaker community.

The purpose of the Chair role is to ensure that the body of trustees acts effectively as a group to fulfil its responsibilities for governance of the Trust and, where appropriate, to act as their spokesperson.

To be successful in this role, you will have skills in diplomacy, effective communication, active listening and decision-making. Previous experience in a chairing or senior-level management role is desirable.

The responsibilities of the role include;

- \* To foster a constructive and purposeful relationship between the body of trustees and the staff.
- \* Act as the line-manager of the Chief Executive, including undertaking their annual appraisal.
- \* Regular communication with trustees, 1:1 meetings and support as required
- \* Chair the Trust Quarterly Meetings and other extraordinary board meetings
- \* When required, to represent the Trust, and to act on behalf of trustees in their relationship with the sister Rowntree Trusts or other bodies, or at public events

## Time commitment

In addition to the time commitment for quarterly meetings, the Chair sits on the operations and finance committee, the investment committee and a reference group (prior to a board meeting) four times a year. This equates to an additional 9 meetings per year of between 2-5 hours each. The Chair will also be expected to make time for communication and administrative requirements of the role encompassed in the responsibilities noted above. The expectation for this role is approximately 4 days per month.

## How to apply

If you have any questions about the role or would like an informal conversation, our trustees would be more than happy to have a chat. Please get in touch by contacting our executive governance officer, Louisa Campbell by email (as below). Interviews to be held in July [*please advise of your availability to interview in your application*]

If you wish to express an interest in either the role of trustee or Chair, please send us;

- \* A statement of interest, either written or via a short video format, explaining what draws you to the idea of becoming a JRCT trustee, what skills and experience you would bring to the role and details about your current/previous involvement with Quakers.
- \* A current CV with contact details

Your statement and CV should be sent to [louisa.campbell@jrct.org.uk](mailto:louisa.campbell@jrct.org.uk) by midnight on 30 June 2024.