



Trustee Recruitment Pack - January 2024

A message from our Chair



Thank you for your interest in the Phoenix Autism Trust (PAT). I have been Chair of PAT for the past two years following my retirement as Executive Headteacher from Phoenix School (a specialist school for children with Autism). I was Headteacher at the school for 32 years and I have served as a Trustee of PAT since 2015.

Phoenix College grew out of Phoenix School to provide a continuation pathway for its students, and was granted independent college status by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in September 2020.

The Phoenix Autism Trust was established in 2015, initially to provide governance to Phoenix College which was set up to provide education, work related learning and internships for students graduating from Phoenix School at the age of 19. The Board is keen to expand the range of services that we offer to the post 19 autistic community within East London which, with the support of Tower Hamlets council and the college's relocation, we will be in an excellent position to do.

PAT currently has an excellent Board of Trustees which appointed Renato Marques, as College Principal from September 2021. Renato is a well-qualified and ambitious Principal, and the college has made extraordinary progress during his tenure. To support his excellent work, we are now keen to expand the expertise on our Board.

At present, the college is leasing premises from Phoenix School, but we are keen to establish ourselves in our own premises and we are actively engaged in negotiation with the local authority. This is a key moment for new Trustees to join our existing board members in helping the College to take its next step forward.

If you're interested in joining our Board, or just want to find out more about the Phoenix Autism Trust, please contact me through Brad Coales (Clerk to the Board) b.coales@gmail.com.

I do hope you will consider joining us to help expand our important work.

Stewart Harris

**Chair
Phoenix Autism Trust**

Phoenix Autism Trust (PAT) is seeking to recruit two additional Trustees to enlarge and strengthen its Board.

People with autism are just like you - they just experience the world differently. Join our Board and you will too.

The Trust's main activity is the operation of Phoenix College - an independent specialist college in Tower Hamlets, providing education, life skills, and employability training for young people with autism.

Apart from traditional education, this entails the provision of meaningful work experience with the aim of securing paid employment for every student when they leave.

Although designated as an independent provider, all College places are funded through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the placing local authority and are free to students.

At present the College occupies space shared with Phoenix School and is running at capacity. Therefore, it needs to move to new premises to allow it to continue to grow to meet the needs of people with autism living within Tower Hamlets and the surrounding area.

The Trust also has plans to develop a wider range of support services to meet the needs of its client group, such as therapy sessions, and the provision of out of term-time support.

Whilst the College has its own complement of full-time paid professional staff, the Trust itself very much relies upon the skills and knowledge of its Board members.

The Trust already has significant specialist education, charity and legal expertise amongst its current Board members. To help it grow and fulfil its ambitions, the Board is particularly keen to attract new members with knowledge and expertise in any of the following areas:

- Commercial property acquisition, leasing or management
- Community organising, lobbying, influencing, or campaigning
- Finance and business management, or business development
- Human Resources management

The Board currently meets four or five times a year, but members are encouraged to provide pro-active contributions and support outside of the formal meeting structure, and so there is plenty of scope for involvement.

Given the nature of the Trust's work and the area in which it operates, the Board would especially welcome applications from those with direct experience of autism, or neurodiversity, and those with a connection to the local community.

This year, challenge yourself to see things differently by joining us and learning to understand, embrace, and support difference.

Person Specification

To apply for these roles, you should have:

Essential:

- An interest in supporting the development of young people.
- A strong commitment to supporting equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Sufficient time to prepare for and attend Board meetings.
- The time and willingness to utilise your professional knowledge and expertise to support the work of the Trust outside of Board meetings (provision of advice and guidance only - not your professional services).
- The time and willingness to act as an advocate and ambassador for the Trust and its work.

Desirable:

- A basic understanding of autism, neurodiversity, or a desire to extend your knowledge of them.

What we can offer you

Full support and training in the role of a Trustee (no previous experience is required).

The opportunity to learn more about living with autism.

A friendly and welcoming environment in which to volunteer your time.

The opportunity to make a real and visible difference to the lives of the young people supported through the work of the Trust.

How to apply

Please submit a covering letter explaining why you are interested in the role and what you have to offer, together with a copy of your CV to Brad Coales (Clerk to the Board) b.coales@gmail.com .

Timescale

Applications Close: Wednesday 7 February 2024

Shortlisting and notification of interviews: By end of w/c 5 February 2024

Interviews: Monday 19 February 2024

Further Information

For further information, an informal conversation, or to arrange a visit to the College, please contact: Brad Coales (Clerk to the Board) b.coales@gmail.com .

For further Information on Autism

Please see National Autistic Society <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism> .

About Phoenix Autism Trust



The Trust works to advance the education of people with Autism and/or language, communication, and interaction difficulties. This includes supporting post-19 education and other areas of activity. We operate mainly in East London.

The Trust is both a registered charity and a registered company. The Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees that currently has five members. The Board meets four-to-five times a year, with Trustees providing additional guidance and expertise between meetings as required.

The Trust's principal activity is currently the running of Phoenix College.

The Trusts audited accounts for 2022 show an income of £1.2m, mainly from government contracts and grants, which equates to a near doubling of income since 2018 as the College has grown.

For further information please see: [Phoenix Autism Trust on the Charity Commission website](#)

About Phoenix College



Mission Statement

Phoenix Autism Trust provides specialist 19-25 further education provision to enable students with complex autism access to further education in their local communities. Its mission is to enable and increase student knowledge, skills, and confidence to allow successful transition into adulthood and to live, work and contribute as part of their community.

Apart from traditional education, this entails the provision of meaningful work experience with the aim of securing paid employment for every student when they leave. This is delivered by highly skilled and experienced staff from Phoenix Autism Trust in collaboration with college staff and provides opportunities to learn through a range of experiences and partnerships within the community, through local employers, services, and facilities.

The College currently has over 40 students and is keen to increase the number of places that it can offer, as soon as it is able to secure larger premises.

For further information please see <https://www.phoenixcollege.london>