TRUSTEE

Your Information Pack

BRITISH EXPLORING SOCIETY

British Exploring Society
1 Kensington Gore
London, SW7 2AR
Charity No: 802196

For further information visit
www.britishexploring.org or call
+44 (0)20 4534 0777

ABOUT BRITISH EXPLORING SOCIETY

British Exploring Society is a world-class youth development charity with a unique heritage founded on the belief that challenging experiences can transform lives, empowering and equipping young people with the courage, integrity, skills, resilience and motivation to make the most of their future.

We prepare young people for adventures and expeditions virtually, and in remote locations in the UK and overseas where they face challenges, acquire outdoor skills and learn about themselves - as well as undertaking projects with content relevant to their lives and to the fragile environments that they explore.

The results are transformative – not just in terms of practical skills and resilience, but in a new-found confidence and self-belief which they carry forward to their future life. More than this, through their adventure together, our young people forge friendships for life and become part of a unique supportive and continuing community of explorers with shared experiences, values and perspectives on the world.

Purpose: To help young people unlock self-belief - to Find their Fire.

Vision: For all young people to be able to contribute confidently in the world. We want equal access to challenging learning and adventure in the wilderness as an unbeatable preparation for adult life.

Mission: To grow and celebrate a diverse, inclusive community of young people with the skills, resilience and determination to make lasting positive decisions in their own lives, and to deliver community benefit and positive environmental change.

Values: Courage, Challenge, Community and Self-Belief.

79% of British Exploring Society's Members agree or strongly agree that their expedition "changed the course of [their] life"

APPROACH AND IMPACT

British Exploring Society provides young people with challenging expeditions and adventures to remote and wild environments in the UK and Overseas to foster resilience and confidence. Over its history it has run 229 expeditions across six continents and more than 99 locations, including the Arctic, the Amazon, the Himalayas, and deserts across the globe. Today, the charity continues to combine adventure with learning, empowering young people to develop confidence, teamwork, and environmental awareness.

The charity still works with young people aged 14-25 years from across the UK, but the demographic of those beneficiaries has transformed over the past decade. In 2024, 54% of young people who went on expedition declared total household income below £23,000. While any young person can apply to join a programme, British Exploring Society is focused on finding and supporting those from communities lacking access, or the confidence to access, learning opportunities outside the classroom, as well as individuals with poor educational and employment prospects, and young people facing personal, emotional and social difficulties.

Widening access to its programmes has been facilitated by closer working with a variety of other youth organisations, schools and charities, who make referrals and work in partnership with the charity.

Catering to this more diverse demographic has required the charity to think creatively about its processes, financial model, and approach. But the core idea - young people preparing for life by developing resilience and confidence through adventure and learning in a remote wilderness in small self-contained groups - remains the unchangeable heart of the charity's work.

There are three stands to British Exploring Society's approach, reflected in the three colours of its logo.

The results of this approach remain transformative – not just in terms of practical skills and resilience, but in new-found confidence and self-belief. Through their adventures together, the charity's young people forge friendships for life and become part of a unique supportive and continuing community with shared experiences, values and perspectives on the world.

"Having that space to share my feelings with my team and Leaders every day has given me encouragement in the future to express my feelings with friends and family."

- Young Explorer Naffie

TRUSTEE: JOB DESCRIPTION

Reporting to: Chair

Liaison with: Members of Council (trustees), staff, multiple partners and stakeholders

Term of office: 4 years, may be extended for a second term

Salary: Unremunerated

Usual hours: 5 board meetings a year, (3 x 2.5hrs in person and 2 x 1hr online), an away day, possible sub-committee meetings, discretionary attendance at some evening and fund-raising events

Location: West London

Our trustees

Our trustees play a vital role at British Exploring Society. They have independent control over, and legal responsibility for, our management and administration. Since 1932 we have always relied on the time individuals donate to us, and our trustees are a cornerstone of that culture of professional volunteering. We want our trustees to enjoy the time they give to us, and to feel motivated and uplifted by the work we do. We do everything we can to involve our trustees in the life of the organisation, to visit and get involved in our activities and to feel the positive impact of their contributions.

Our trustees ensure that we comply with the law, with our Articles, and that we continuously strive to fulfil our charitable purpose. This includes a proactive duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our beneficiaries and a duty of care to ensure beneficiaries and others the charity comes into contact with do not come to harm.

What we expect of our trustees

The cornerstones of good governance at British Exploring Society are financial sustainability and the well-being and safety of the young people we serve.

Our trustees help support and shape the culture of the organisation and to foster an atmosphere of openness and trust. This helps ensure that people feel able to report concerns in any area of activity. Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities are a priority. We expect all our trustees to make sure that protecting people from harm is prioritised and that the policies we have in place are appropriate and are being followed by all trustees, staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

You can find out more guidance about becoming a trustee on the Charity Commission's website.

> "It's incredibly rewarding to see the progress in the Young Explorers from the start to the end of the expedition, and to have played a part in supporting them through their journey... it's brilliant to know we have such well thought out safety and knowledge available to us should we need it."

- Anonymous feedback, volunteer Leader

"After the expedition I really do feel that I have a greater sense of self-confidence. The expedition has made me happy with who I am and confirmed the journey I want to embark on."

- Young Explorer Nye

Key responsibilities

Planning

- Approve our mission statement and review the team's performance in achieving it
- Annually assess the changing environment and approve the charity's plans
- Annually review and approve the organisation's strategy
- Review and approve our financial goals
- Annually review and approve our budget
- Approve and review major policies, including all those relating to financial procedures, health and safety, risk, data protection and safeguarding.

Organisation

- Recruit, appraise, advise, support and if necessary change the CEO of the charity
- Be assured of management succession
- Approve appropriate salaries, terms and conditions of service for staff
- Support sub-committees and fill vacancies as needed
- Regularly audit the performance of Council and approve plans to improve its performance.

Operations

- Review results achieved by our team in relation to aims and objectives, annual and long range goals
- Be certain that the financial structure of the charity is adequate for its current needs and strategy
- Provide open and constructive criticism, advice, comments and support
- Approve major actions of the charity, such as expenditure on items over authorised limits and major shift in activity.

Audit

- Ensure accountability within the charity, particularly where trustees delegate responsibility for particular tasks or decisions to staff or volunteers
- Be assured that Council is adequately and currently informed of the condition of the charity and its operations
- Be assured that published reports adequately reflect the nature of services and the financial condition of the charity
- Ascertain that the CEO has established appropriate policies to define and identify conflicts of interest throughout the organisation and is administering and enforcing those policies
- Appoint independent auditors
- Review and assure compliance with statutory accounting, reporting requirements, relevant laws and standards affecting the charity

"It smashes down barriers, builds resilience, boosts confidence and self-esteem."

- Chloe Moul, Senior Social Leader

HOW TO APPLY

Equal opportunities

British Exploring Society is committed to equal opportunity and to building an executive and volunteer team that together represent a diverse variety of backgrounds, skills and perspectives on the world. The more inclusive we are, the better we think we'll be at delivering our chartable aims.

What's next?

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter of no more than 2 sides of A4 explaining your suitability for the role to Chair@britishexploring.org copying ChairAdmin@britishexploring.org.

In your application, please let us know if you have any accessibility requirements, or if you need us to make any adjustments to the interview process.

If you would like to speak to someone about the role, please contact ChairAdmin@britishexploring.org and we will make arrangements with you to give you a call.

"It truly has been his own experience and one which I know he will remember for ever. He's been challenged and pushed, and made friends that he will keep for many years, and I'm sure that the confidence and resilience that he's built through the experience will stand him in good stead for when he leaves home for university in the next couple of years."

- Sheila, Young Explorer Guardian