

ThinkForward Trustee

Role information pack



About ThinkForward

ThinkForward exists to support young people to create better and brighter futures. We want them to be able to identify, realise and shape their aspirations, and be ready to make a successful transition into work.

Young people experiencing barriers such as challenging relationships, living in low-income households, or growing up in areas with a lack of access to opportunities can be confronted with hurdles. Without the right support, these barriers can lead to a high risk of unemployment and long-term effects on career and life chances.

There are more than 900,000 16-24-year-olds in the UK who are not at school or college, or don't have a job or training place. Our ambition is to prevent young people becoming one of these statistics. In 2025, we will have supported more than 1,500 young people.

For more information on ThinkForward, our vision and mission, our programmes and equalities manifesto, please visit [our website](#).

Introduction from our Chair

After serving as a trustee for three years, I was delighted to step up as Chair in 2024. I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact ThinkForward's programmes has for young people and I am excited to continue the incredible work ThinkForward is doing. I truly believe that every young person deserves the chance to succeed to achieve their full potential. As we enter our next phase of development, following the culmination of our current 5-year strategy, our vision remains to prevent the next generation of youth unemployment.



Our long-term coaching and employability programmes for under-served young people at key stages in their lives, enable them to successfully transition into work. We know our programmes work. 23% more of our graduates successfully get jobs or go on to further training than the national average.

We are looking to recruit new Trustees with the vision and enthusiasm to help us continue to sustain our sector-leading programmes at the same time as support us to drive forward a charity with growth ambitions which are relevant to commissioners, schools and young people.

We are looking for specific skills in two areas to help strengthen the Board: Firstly, someone with the ability to help grow our income and support our development team; and secondly, to help us raise our profile by turning our strong evidence base into policy and campaigns.

As a Trustee you will have the belief, passion and resilience to help us succeed in shaping our future whilst managing risk. I'm extremely excited about this opportunity to refresh our Board and I encourage you to consider becoming a Board member of ThinkForward.

- Matt Tate, Chair

Our values

Our values are more than words; they are the principles that guide our actions and decisions every day. By embodying these values, we create a positive and empowering environment for ourselves, our colleagues, and the young people we serve.

Read more about how our values are embedded in our work [here](#).



About our programmes

The **FutureMe** programme provides five years of personalised coaching and employability activities to get young people ready for the world of work. Coaches build trusted relationships, supporting young people to take control, find solutions to challenges, develop skills and create a positive vision for their future.

The **Making Strides** programme works with young adults who have learning disabilities and/or autism with the aim of supporting them into sustainable paid employment. Young people take part in insight visits, work placements and business mentoring to build their experience and develop skills and capabilities.

The **Future Leaders** programme works with young Black men and women, and young South Asian women that are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded from mainstream school. The programme helps them to overcome the barriers they may face such as a lack of networks, social capital and soft skills, and prepare them to be ready to find a fulfilling career.

Our impact

FutureMe

81%

of those we were able to contact were EET 6 months after graduating from the programme

Young people graduating from our FutureMe Programme are **20% more likely** to be EET than young people facing similar challenges to them.

MoveForward

80.5%

of work-ready young people who completed the programme were EET.

This compares to the national average of just 4.8% of adults with learning disabilities achieving paid work.

Future Leaders

81%

sustained being EET for 5 out of the 6 months after graduating from the programme.

83% left the programme with an idea about which jobs suit their interests and skills.

EET = in Education, Employment or Training

Our team

Board of Trustees



Matthew Tate
Chair



Dan Easterbrook



Kathryn Jack



Keith MacDonald



Roxanna Patel



Sally Cartwright



Vanessa Morphet

Senior Leadership Team



Ashley McCaul
CEO



Robert Posner
Deputy CEO



Charlene Theophile
Director of Programmes



Gemma Shepherd
Director of Development

Our strategy

As we come towards the end of our current strategic plan we have been reflecting on the past five years and what we have achieved. Our report card is extremely positive. We raised over £15m during the period, worked with 1.5x the number of young people from start to finish, successfully ran our existing programmes and introduced new programmes of work including Making Strides and Future Leaders.

We generated two research reports which demonstrate the impact of our work and make recommendations for tackling inequity for young Black men and young people with learning disabilities.

Our new plan will help us to navigate the difficult waters all charities are facing at the moment, with particular emphasis on sustaining our work at the same time as generating growth.

This is an exciting time to join our Board of Trustees as you will be closely involved in the development of our new strategy to take us forward.

Youth Participation at ThinkForward

Our aim for youth participation is to provide opportunities for young people to meaningfully engage in our work and programme design, which will contribute to the development of their work-readiness skills and to the improvement of our programmes.

We currently offer multiple opportunities for young people to use their voices to influence change within ThinkForward. These include: our Youth Advisory Board, consultations, our alumni network, social action projects and being involved in the recruitment of all new staff. Our young trustees work with our Youth Advisory Board to provide a feedback loop with the main Board of Trustees.

This year, we were delighted to be awarded the London Youth Gold Quality Mark. This award recognises our commitment to involving young people in decision-making and celebrates the quality of our youth work provision. London Youth has over 500 members and ThinkForward are one of 9 members to have achieved this award, demonstrating our dedication to youth participation.



About the role - Trustees

We are looking for new trustees with skills and experience to:

- help to grow our income and support our development team
- help us raise our profile by turning our strong evidence base into policy and campaigns.

You will help drive the progression of successful evidence-based organisation that makes a positive impact on the lives of young people and their communities.

We are looking for those who value the potential of young people, are passionate about their growth and development and understand the challenges that some face. An interest in ThinkForward's work and approach are essential as well as an ambitious outlook for our future.

You will be well respected, have active networks in philanthropy, fundraising and statutory development or in policy and campaigning which has generated systemic change.

You will have a proven track record of working at a senior and strategic level and will understand the governance and risk management requirements of the role. You will also be keen to act as a representative, spokesperson and cause leader creating and identifying donors and business opportunities for ThinkForward.

The details

To apply, please email your CV and covering letter summarising your motivations for applying for the trustee role, an outline of the specialist skills you can bring to the governance of ThinkForward and addressing the key points in the person specification to jobs@thinkforward.org.uk

Closing date – 20th July 2025
Interviews – July/August 2025

Applicants are asked to provide suitable contact details.

Our CEO, Ashley McCaul, would be delighted to speak to any interested candidates:

Email
ashley.mccaul@thinkforward.org.uk

LinkedIn
www.linkedin.com/in/amccaulsfg

Important information

ThinkForward is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and post holders to share this commitment.

ThinkForward is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships.

As a registered Disability Confident employer, ThinkForward has an accessible recruitment process. We offer interviews to all applicants who meet the job requirements and who declare themselves as having a disability. If you need support, such as materials in larger print, dyslexic-friendly fonts or adjustments for the interview, please contact jobs@thinkforward.org.uk and we will ensure you have what you require to successfully complete this process.



ThinkForward

0300 102 4475

info@thinkforward.org.uk

www.thinkforward.org.uk

Bluesky: [@thinkforwarduk.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@thinkforwarduk)

Instagram: [@thinkforwarduk](https://www.instagram.com/thinkforwarduk)

LinkedIn: [thinkforward-uk](https://www.linkedin.com/company/thinkforward-uk)

ThinkForward is a charity registered with the Charity Commission.
Registration number 1152862.

