

Back Up Trustee Recruitment Pack 2019



Registered Charity Nos. 1072216 and SC040577 Company No. 3596996

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee at Back Up. We're currently developing our next five-year strategy to take us through to 2025, and we have ambitious plans to grow our fundraising income to support even more people affected by spinal cord injury. We're looking for three new trustees to play a vital role in evolving this new strategy as we look ahead to the future.

If you're successful in your application, you'll join our team of nine existing trustees who live far and wide and come from a range of backgrounds with varied interests. They are, however, united by a common interest and passion, and that's to transform the lives of people affected by spinal cord injury.

You may have previous trustee experience or be considering such a role for the first time. All applicants are welcome as we are looking for a range of skills, attributes and experiences. We have developed this pack to demystify the role, so that you have a clear picture of what you'd achieve, how you'd go about it, and assess whether you have the right skills and experience to press ahead with the application.

Having conducted a skills audit of our board, we are seeking a range of applicants to help improve the diversity of our board and meet our strategic ambitions. We would love to hear from applicants with a marketing and communications background, and we'd also particularly welcome applications from people aged 18 -24, people with medical experience in the spinal cord injury field, family members affected by spinal cord injury and people from an ethnic minority background.

If you still have questions after reading this our contact details are on the last page. We look forward to hearing from you and good luck with your application.

Yours sincerely,

Becky Hill
Chair of Trustees

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Information about spinal cord injury and why we exist

Your brain and spinal cord are vital for controlling your bodily functions. The spinal cord is responsible for communicating two-way messages to and from the brain to all parts of the body – your muscles, organs and your skin. We are able to feel pain and move our arms or legs because of these messages or impulses.

If the spinal cord is damaged or injured, some of the messages or impulses may be 'interrupted'. This can lead to partial or total loss of feeling or movement in parts of your body – including your limbs and your internal organs.

Most spinal cord injuries cause loss of movement and feeling in the parts of the body below the level of the injury. If you damage or break your spinal cord close to your neck, this will cause paralysis in a larger part of the body than damage to your spinal cord lower down your back. As well as the physical impact of a spinal cord injury, there are also emotional and psychological effects on the person concerned – and their family.

Statistics

- There are an estimated 50,000 people in the UK living with a spinal cord injury
- Each year over 2,500 people are newly injured.
- Every four hours, someone's life will change forever in the UK because of being spinal cord injured
- Less than a third of people with a spinal cord injury are in employment

In the coming years we believe that there will be a greater need for our services due to:

- local authority funding cuts
- shorter spinal cord injury rehabilitation
- difficulty accessing specialist spinal cord injury rehabilitation (especially for children and people with a spinal cord injury not caused by accidents)

These factors all affect people's wellbeing, their need to maximise their independence, and their ability to participate in normal everyday activities and roles. People with a spinal cord injury have high support needs around employment, and pressure on them to be working is increasing.

Read more about spinal cord injury [on our website](#).

Our vision, mission & values

Our vision:

- A world where people affected by spinal cord injury can realise their full potential

Our mission:

- To inspire people affected by spinal cord injury to transform their lives
- To challenge perceptions of disability
- To deliver services that build confidence and independence and offer a supportive network.

Our values:

- Driven by the needs of people affected by spinal cord injury, we are passionate about transforming lives
- Through challenge and fun we open up possibilities to develop, achieve and get the most out of life
- We respect individuality and embrace diversity
- We strive for quality and excellence in all we do.

“Back Up has always had the ability and passion to challenge and change, not just the public’s perception of what can be achieved after a spinal cord injury, but the person and their family who is directly affected. The services we deliver have changed as we have seen people’s rehabilitation and community support reduced over the years. However, the way we deliver our services stays the same and rooted in our values.”

Sarah Bryan, CEO

About us

The charity

At Back Up, we inspire people affected by spinal cord injury to get the most out of life. Each year, we reach over 1,000 people with our award-winning services that are designed and delivered by people affected by spinal cord injury.

We offer wheelchair skills training, an accredited mentoring service, proactive telephone support, life skills and activity courses, and support returning to work or education. Our services are available to people with all levels of spinal cord injury and their loved ones. Find out more about the support we can offer on [our website](#).

Our user-led approach

We know that people affected by spinal cord injury are best placed to know what they need and how to support others in a similar situation. People affected by spinal cord injury are involved throughout Back Up, delivering our services and forming a significant proportion of our staff, volunteers and board of trustees (we always aim for at least 50% of board members to be spinal cord injured.)

We pride ourselves in being innovative and creative to ensure people affected by spinal cord injury drive our strategy and services. Consultation happens at every stage of decision-making, from establishing need, to designing and developing the services, to delivery and then review and recommendations.

Peer support

At Back Up, peer support has always been a central part of our work. Many of our staff and volunteers are affected by spinal cord injury, and they regularly draw on their experiences in the delivery of their jobs. Indeed, we have many staff and volunteer opportunities that are only open to people with lived experience of spinal cord injury because of the specific skillset they require.

Many of the people we support remark that having the chance to speak to others in a similar situation makes a huge difference to their emotional and physical wellbeing. For some, Back Up's services offer the first chance to speak to someone else who understands life with a spinal cord injury. This supportive network can play a vital role in getting back up to living life to the full.

Our current strategy

We're entering the final year of our 2015-2020 strategy, and we've made great strides in our efforts to be an inclusive, leading and sustainable organisation. Back Up has supported more families and people based in Scotland than ever before and offered new support to people with a spinal cord injury who can walk. We've shared our expertise nationally and internationally and developed closer relationships with our charity partners – leading to better outcomes for everyone affected by spinal cord injury.

Looking ahead, we now know that over 2,500 people are newly injured each year across the UK, as opposed to 1,000 people that was known at the start of the current strategy. With a much bigger spinal cord injured population, Back Up is re-evaluating how we define greatest need, and how we can ensure that we have the greatest impact on the largest number of people possible. These questions will play a central role in the exploration and development of our new five-year strategy.

More information can be found by reading [our annual reports](#).

Our 2015-2020 Strategy



About the trustee role

We have a detailed role description and person specification over the next few pages to help you understand the requirements of the role.

The main purpose of our role:

As a trustee at Back Up, we are volunteers with a specific legal responsibility to:

- o Ensure our aims and objectives are being met
- o Act in the best interest of the charity
- o Manage responsibility for what we have (our people, our money etc)
- o Act with reasonable care and skill

You can find more information from the [charity commission](#).

What you will gain:

- o An insight into how a charity runs, particularly how a charity board runs
- o A new group of friends and colleagues
- o A sense of pride when hearing about the difference our services make and that you have had a role in transforming lives affected by spinal cord injury.
- o Confidence in building relationships with a wide range of people and speaking up at meetings
- o An opportunity to develop your skills and experiences
- o An opportunity to use your skills and experience to the benefit of the charity

Being a trustee is a voluntary role, therefore unpaid, but expenses including for travel are reimbursed.

You will receive a full induction to help you in the role at Back Up. In addition, where there is a training need, a range of training courses are on offer. You'll need to commit time and energy to attend these or spend time in the office building up your knowledge so that you feel confident in the role. This often takes longer than you think, but we understand that – we were all new trustees once too.

Trustee role description and person specification

ROLE DESCRIPTION:	Trustee
REPORTS TO:	Chair of Trustees
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	People affected by spinal cord injury Charities Commission and Companies House

SUMMARY:

Back Up is developing the five-year strategy 2020-2025 to increase our reach and impact for people coming to terms with spinal cord injury. The board supports the vision and mission of the organisation so that people with spinal cord injury can realise their full potential and live the life they want.

Principal Role:

- To safeguard the vision, mission and values of Back Up
- To take big decisions about the future
- Support development of policies that further the aims and objectives of Back Up and to monitor their success
- Ensure compliance with our memorandum and articles
- Ensure Back Up's accountability and legal obligations
- Overseeing finances to meet Back Up's charitable objectives
- Ensuring resources are used in efficient and cost effective manner
- Maintain effective Board Performance
- Promote the organisation – be an Ambassador

Vision & Mission

- To uphold the values of the charity, undertaking the duties of trusteeship in a way that adds to public confidence and trust in the charity.
- Promoting and developing the charity in order for it to grow and maintain its relevance to society.
- To support decisions that are in the best interest of service users, donors, volunteers and stakeholders at all times.

Compliance, quality and effectiveness

- Support the chair and oversee the charity's senior management team
- Positively question and challenge assumptions at board meetings.
- Proactive and timely responses to questions or information
- Ensure the policies and procedures at Back Up support the vision and mission of the organisation. These should be in line with best practice.
- Ensure the strategic plan and business plan delivered by the SMT furthers the aims of the charity in line with its Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Remain aware and act in accordance with the legal responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.

- Strive for best practice in governance, through proactive learning and development
- Maintain sound financial management of the charity's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with the organisation's objects and investment activities meet accepted standards and policies.

TRUSTEE PERSON SPECIFICATION

KEY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- able to think strategically, creatively and for the long-term
- able to understand the difference between being strategic and operational
- knowledge of and able to carry out the core responsibilities of being a charity trustee
- excellent interpersonal skills:
 - able to relate to people at all levels internally and externally, as an ambassador for Back Up
 - able to comment, challenge or question in a way that is helpful, supportive and constructive
 - able to be proactive, timely and clear in your communication on and around meetings or projects

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- a specific area(s) of expertise matching current organisational need. This always includes a need within the group for trustees with:
 - financial management skills
 - experience in organisational leadership / governance
 - experience working in the voluntary sector
 - personal experience of spinal cord injury (target 50% of trustees with SCI and at least one family member)
 - experience of collaborative working with other organisations
 - access to networks of wealthy and/or influential people who can make a difference to Back Up
 - other specific areas of expertise as may be specified by the board

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- integrity
- a demonstrable commitment to Back Up's aims and values
- self- starter, honest, proactive, enthusiastic and conscientious
- team player, flexible and adaptable
- willingness to understand/hear about issues relating to SCI

TIME COMMITMENT

- four evenings a year for board meetings in SW London (usually in February, April, July and October) and one to two away-days per year. Travel and other expenses are covered
- sub-committee meetings done via teleconference (e.g. four times per year)
- prior to meetings – reading and absorbing information, reflecting, discussing by telephone
- follow up to meetings – reading and commenting on minutes, carrying out any agreed actions
- follow up emails from trustees or staff in a timely manner
- trustees must serve a minimum term of three years and can serve a maximum of four terms

RESTRICTIONS

- over 18
- not bankrupt
- subject to satisfactory DBS check and references
- not excluded by Companies House or Charity Commission
- without conflicts of interest that would be so significant as to undermine the role in general

Next steps

You've read the pack, and you:

1. Feel inspired by the work of Back Up
2. Have read the role description and person specification and feel you could make a good trustee

So, it's time to submit your application. Please send your CV along with an accompanying letter explaining your reasons for applying to our Chair of Trustees, Becky Hill, at becky@backuptrust.org.uk.

The deadline for completing the application is **22 May 2019**

The next steps are:

- All applications will be reviewed against the role description and person specification by a small team of trustees and the CEO by **5 June 2019**
- Everyone will be contacted by email or phone with regards to the success of your application at this stage and you'll have the opportunity to get feedback if you are not successful.
- If you have been shortlisted, you'll be invited to the office, based in South London, for a one hour interview with two trustees and the CEO. Interviews will take place during the **second and third weeks of June 2019**. Please advise us in your application if you cannot make these dates.
- A decision will be made by the **end of June** and if you are successful you'll be asked to attend your first trustee meeting to be held in **July 2019** at our offices.
- We expect you'll have more questions, and if so you can get in touch with either Sarah, the CEO, or myself, Becky the Chair, as between us we are likely to know most of the answers!



You can contact us:

Sarah Bryan

Email: Sarah@backuptrust.org.uk

020 8875 6725

Becky Hill

Email: Becky@backuptrust.org.uk

If you have any questions please do get in contact with us.

Good luck with your application. We look forward to hearing from you.

Back Up, 4 Knightley Walk, London, SW18 1GZ.

Registered Charity No. 1072216 and SCO020577

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