Z2K Fighting poverty

Trustee

Candidate Information Pack

October 2026

Zacchaeus 2000 Trust

Living Wage Employer

advice quality standard

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Trustee at Z2K. This is an exciting time to join us; we have recently appointed a new chief executive, and we are changing the way we are governed. We want to ensure that people with lived experience of financial hardship or housing insecurity are involved in decision-making by being better represented on our Trustee Board. With a national focus on the social security system, disability benefits, housing costs and homelessness, we have an opportunity to do more for people whose lives are affected by poverty

At Z2K, we are driven by a clear and urgent mission: **to end poverty for the more than 1 in 5 people in the UK who experience it**. Through frontline advice and representation, we work to secure adequate incomes and freedom from high costs, while campaigning to change the rules that keep people in poverty. And we do this in partnership with those who have lived experience of poverty, putting their perspectives at the centre of everything we do.

As a Trustee, you will play a vital role in achieving this vision. We are seeking passionate and skilled individuals to help shape our future. Whether you bring expertise in **Human Resources, people** and **EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)**, **strategic communications, national media and PR**, **fundraising and philanthropy, access to justice and the law**, or **lived experience of financial or housing insecurity**, your insight and strategic guidance will help us build a thriving, inclusive organisation and amplify our message for change.

Participation is central to Z2K's work. This is when people with lived experience of poverty can shape and influence organisational decisions and work together with us to influence the decisions of others. In other words, Experts by Experience change how Z2K delivers its work internally, as well as changing external policies and practices.

The **role of Experts by Experience** in our work is fundamental to how we're run, how we work and how we believe change happens. We have committed to increasing the number of trustees with lived experience of poverty on the board with meaningful representation and diversity of backgrounds being critical to our impact.

Our values - **power sharing, fearless, curious, inclusive, and caring** - define who we are and how we work. We believe in challenging injustice fearlessly, sharing power with those most affected, remaining curious and open to new ideas, fostering inclusivity in all that we do, and we care deeply about the people we support and work alongside. These principles are embedded in our strategy, our culture, and the way we engage with the world.

This is more than a trustee role; it is an opportunity to help drive real change at a time when our work has never been more needed. You don't need to have been a trustee before. If you share our passion for social justice and want to be part of a team making a lasting difference, we'd love to hear from you, and we're happy to have an informal chat first.

Emeka Forbes,

Chair, Z2K Board of Trustees

What does Z2K do?

We are a leading anti-poverty charity working to end UK poverty through providing expert frontline advice and representation services and campaigning for change.

We are deeply connected to the people we serve. We work in partnership with experts by experience to make sure everything we do is rooted in lived experience and to help challenge the unequal power relations that drive poverty and injustice.

By tackling the twin pillars that create and sustain poverty - **inadequate incomes** and **high costs** - we will end UK poverty, for good.

We will not stop until people in or at risk of poverty have their rights realised - until people have access to a social security system that provides financial security and are free from the burden and consequences of unaffordable housing.

Our Impact in 2025

Image: Three Z2K housing campaigners meet the Council leader outside Westminster City Hall

Our direct frontline services supported 764 clients across more than 1,000 benefits cases, unlocking £4.8 million in financial entitlements. We supported 354 housing cases, 79 of which focused on preventing homelessness.

In 2025, the Government's proposed cuts to Personal Independence Payments threatened to leave 400,000 disabled people significantly worse off. Z2K helped spearhead the sector's response which led to the Government scrapping its plans.

Since then, we have facilitated opportunities for people with lived experience to feed into the Timms Review of PIP. For further information about Z2K, please visit our website **www.z2k.org.**

What is the role of the Board of Trustees?

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility and accountability for everything the charity does. Trustees work together and make decisions as a group, and there is training and support available. They set our strategy and vision, monitor performance and work closely with the chief executive and senior management team to drive us forward. Trustees are responsible for meeting the charity's legal and financial duties as a registered charity, ensuring that we act honestly and with integrity, and making sure our money is spent wisely.

What do the trustees do?

Trustee duties include:

1. Ensuring charity is doing what it was set up for and for the public benefit.
2. Ensuring compliance with the charity's governing document and the law. This means knowing what Z2K's constitution says and staying within it.
3. Acting in the charity's best interests – by being objective when making decisions and loyal to what the charity was created to do.
4. Managing the charity's resources responsibly, spending money wisely and protecting the charity's assets.
5. Acting with reasonable care and skill – paying attention to detail and ensuring due diligence.
6. Ensuring the charity is accountable by keeping good records, being transparent and reporting as needed.

You don't need to have previous knowledge or experience of these areas, they will all be covered in training. You can find out more about the duties and responsibilities of Trustees in the Charity Commission CC3 Guidance document available here which includes a five-minute guide and accessible formats.

What time commitment is required of trustees?

Most trustees will commit up to a day a month to the charity. The Board meets four times a year and also carries out business through its Finance & Risk and People & Equalities Committees. Meetings generally last no more than two hours. Board meetings are held in person, with flexibility to attend virtually, and the Board sub-committees meet online three times a year and in person once a year. Trustees hold an annual strategy day and an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Additional commitments may include joining interview panels, representing Z2K and attending events, adjudicating on complaints, disciplinary interventions or disputes and other ad hoc meetings.

Our current Trustees bring a broad range of personal experience and professional expertise from different sectors to support our work. We value the unique insights that lived experience can bring, and we want to put lived experience of poverty and the issues Z2K works on at the heart of everything we do. We have committed to ensuring at least 50% of

board members have lived experience by 2030, with plans to onboard Experts by Experience to our board this year as part of our Participation Plan. We welcome diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and areas of expertise to complement and strengthen our existing skill set.

Previous board experience is not required. All trustees will receive a full induction and training. Reasonable expenses (including travel and childcare for example) will be reimbursed.

The following areas of expertise are ones we have identified as priority needs, but anyone joining the board will play a full trustee role. We value the skills you've gained through paid work, volunteering, caring, community groups, campaigning, or dealing with systems like benefits, housing or the courts. If you've done something that sounds like what we describe below, even if you've never called it "HR" or "fundraising", we'd like to hear from you.

For background on our current Board, please visit our website www.z2k.org/who-we-are/

What is Z2K looking for?

We want to recruit up to four trustees who will bring different viewpoints, expertise and experience to further strengthen our board. We are looking for candidates with expertise and experience in any of, or a combination of, the following:

HR, People, and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Strategic Communications, National Media and Public Relations

Fundraising and Philanthropy

Access to Justice and the Law

Lived Experience of poverty, financial hardship, means-tested benefits, or homelessness/risk of homelessness

You can find an overview of what these terms mean to us at Z2K below. Please note that all trustees have responsibilities across the breadth of Z2K's work, not just the specific areas listed.

HR, People and EDI

In addition to the general duties of a Trustee, you will support the Board to make good long-term decisions on workforce related matters, ensuring that the organisation supports its employees, fosters a positive culture, and complies with employment laws and best practice. You will support the Board and senior leadership team to make sound decisions in areas such as HR policy, practice & risk, pay & benefits, employee and union engagement, employee wellbeing & satisfaction, diversity & inclusion, and organisational culture. You may have experience working as an HR professional and be willing to join the People & Equalities Committee of the Board which meets online once a quarter and has oversight of HR, participation and equalities matters.

Strategic Communications, National Media and Public Relations

In addition to the general duties of a Trustee, you will support the Board to provide strategic guidance on the organisation's communications, national media and public relations, ensuring alignment with the organisations mission. You will play a crucial role in shaping and guiding how we talk about Z2K and our work, where and we show up and what people think of us. You will work with the Board and senior leadership team to enhance the organisation's visibility, reputation, and engagement with supporters, funders, politicians, and the people we work with. This could suit you if have experience working in communications, the media at a national level or PR. Experience of sharing stories respectfully and with consent, growing brand awareness, of policy, or fundraising communications would all be desirable.

Fundraising and Philanthropy

In addition to the general duties of a Trustee, you will support the Board to provide strategic guidance on our fundraising strategy, strengthening donor relationships, and guiding our approach to raising money fairly and in ways that make a real difference. Your insight will help us unlock new streams of support, build long-term partnerships, and ensure that our mission continues to grow in both reach and depth. Proven experience in philanthropy, major donor fundraising, or high-value partnerships. You'll bring a strong network within the philanthropic, corporate, or charitable giving sectors, strategic thinking and the ability to translate vision into actionable plans, a commitment to ethical fundraising and inclusive practices, and a willingness to join a new development board which will meet and develop fundraising approaches to increase income diversification and advance Z2K's mission.

Access to Justice and the Law

In addition to the general duties of a Trustee, you will support the Board to provide strategic guidance on the future of our work supporting people on low incomes to access justice. You will play a vital role in guiding our strategy, ensuring our services remain impactful, and championing our cause in the legal community. We are particularly looking for someone with experience in access to justice, whether through legal practice, advocacy, policy work, or community engagement. You may have experience of challenging a benefits decision, going through a tribunal or appeal, dealing with housing or eviction problems, or helping someone else through these. You'll bring a strong network from within the justice sector, the ability to contribute to governance, strategic thinking and decision-making and a commitment to equality, fairness, and social impact.

Lived Experience of poverty and financial hardship

We encourage people with lived experience of poverty and financial hardship to apply to be a Trustee, whether or not you have experience of the areas listed above. Too often, people who have experienced poverty and financial hardship are not involved in decisions that affect them. We want to change that - starting with our own approach to decision-making and governance. We are consciously increasing the number of trustees

with direct, personal experience of financial or housing insecurity on our board. Current, recent or past experience of **financial hardship, means-tested benefits, the social security system, and homelessness or risk of homelessness** are critical areas of expertise that we want to integrate more deeply into our governance. **If you have lived experience, it is up to you how you define it and whether you share it publicly or in Board meetings – we will never ask you to do so.** Any lived experience that you share in your application will be treated confidentially.

Anyone joining the Board will be a full trustee; your input will not be restricted to your lived experience. As well as your lived experience, you will bring a range of valuable skills and experiences to the Board, whatever your background, and we encourage you to share all relevant skills and experiences when applying. You do not need professional experience to be a trustee. Equally you do not have to have lived experience of financial hardship or housing insecurity to apply but it is strongly desirable.

Z2K Experts by Experience and former clients are welcome to apply to be a trustee. If you'd like to have a conversation before deciding whether to apply, please contact us at recruitment@z2k.org.

All candidates

All candidates must show a commitment to our values and our approach to working in partnership with experts by experience. You must have a willingness to commit the necessary time and effort and to apply your experience and expertise, this might include any or a combination of the areas outlined above. Current or recent users of Z2K's services and Experts by Experiences can apply to be a trustee.

Previous Board experience is not required. You will receive a full induction, training based on your needs, and you will be supported by other Board Members and the Chief Executive in your role. An understanding of the nonprofit or charity sector is desirable.

The period of time that you will be a trustee will vary however we anticipate an initial period of 3 years, with an option for three further years. Trustee roles are unpaid positions however reasonable expenses will be reimbursed or can be paid in advance, for example travel and childcare expenses to enable Trustees to attend.

Person Specification

Values and Behaviours

- A commitment to the mission, vision and values of Z2K.
- A clear commitment to the involvement of experts by experience in our work.
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Integrity, independence and objectivity.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.

Being a trustee and having your expenses paid shouldn't affect your benefits, and we're happy to talk this through with you.

What specific skills are you looking for?

Here's a bit more detail about the skills we are looking for. However, we don't expect anyone to meet every point. We'll look at your application as a whole, including the skills and experience you've gained outside work, in volunteering and everyday life.

Skills	**What does this mean?**
Strategic thinking	• Ability to see the 'bigger picture' and look ahead when considering issues and topics • Understands the importance of strategy and plans and what they might include • Ability to see beyond your own personal experience or specialism and consider other information and views
Analysis and decision-making	• Ability to identify relevant implications from what is being considered, e.g. priorities, challenges, risks, etc. • Ability to recognise when information is limited / more information is required • Ability to balance different considerations and exercise good judgement when making decisions
Communication and Interpersonal	• Ability to express views and opinions and demonstrate active listening skills and appreciation of the views of others • Ability to question, provide constructive challenge and scrutiny • Ability to be engaging, enthusiastic and persuade others
Working co-operatively and collaboratively	• Ability to work collaboratively with other Board members and the Senior Team Management team • Ability to engage and build relationships with partners and stakeholders (for example supporters and funders, politicians, people we work with, other charities) • Proactively shares knowledge and experience (with the exception of personal lived experience, which does **not** need to be shared unless comfortable doing so)

As well as the above skills, we're keen to receive applications from people with one or more of the following areas of knowledge and experience:

Knowledge & Experience	**What does this mean?**
HR & People	• Experience in HR, people management, or organisational development. • Knowledge of employment law, HR best practices, and workforce engagement. • Experience in developing HR policies, strategies, or culture change programmes. • Strong commitment to employee wellbeing, equity, diversity and inclusion. • Experience with union engagement is desirable.
Strategic Communications, National Media and PR	• Experience in strategic communications, media, PR or digital strategy, particularly in policy and fundraising spaces. • Experience in building brand profile and working with supporters and funders, politicians, people with work with and other charities. • Strong knowledge of national media relations and stakeholder engagement. • Understanding of content strategy and social media is desirable.
Fundraising and Philanthropy	• Proven track record in securing philanthropic funding or managing donor portfolios. • Strong network within charitable foundations, grant-making bodies, or high-value donor communities. • Understanding of fundraising ethics, compliance, and best practice. • Strategic thinking with the ability to translate vision into actionable plans. • Excellent communication and relationship-building skills.
Access to Justice and the law	• Qualified solicitor, barrister or equivalent experience. • Strong network within the legal sector, good communication and networking skills. • Understanding of charity governance and regulatory requirements. • Experience in pro bono work or legal aid. • Proven track record in legal practice, policy, or advocacy related to access to justice.

Lived experience	Relevant lived experience may include one or more of the following: • First-hand experience of the social security system, applying for means-tested benefits, Personal Independence Payments, or benefit appeals. • Lived experience of homelessness, temporary accommodation, risk of homelessness, or severe difficulty in covering your housing costs. • Experience of how systems really work for people, spotting barriers, and knowing what good support looks like. • First-hand experience of accessing Z2K's advice and representation services. • Current/recent/past experience of these issues.

How to Apply

Please apply by emailing recruitment@z2k.org with:

1. A CV and short statement of no more than 800 words telling us about yourself – this can be submitted as a written document, email, video, or audio file. Please avoid using AI. Your application doesn't need to be perfect, we really want to hear why you personally want to be involved. You should try to include the following:

- Why you are interested in becoming a trustee at Z2K
- Your relevant experience based on the areas outlined above
- One or two examples from your experience, what you learned and how that would help you in this role
- A bit about your values and how they help you make decisions
- What you would hope to achieve as a trustee

The CV and supporting statement is the only information we will use in consideration of your application, so please ensure that you share all relevant information, with particular attention to your supporting statement detailing how you meet the specifications for the role. We welcome and encourage evidence of experience from both work and non-work settings such as volunteering and personal life.

2. Names and contact details for two referees; these should be people who have known you for at least three years, be able to vouch for your character, skills and experience and should not be family members or current Z2K employees.

Please also complete an Equality Monitoring form available here. This is anonymous and completely separate from your application. It helps us monitor the range of people we're engaging so that we can keep our work connected with all the communities we serve.

Application support

We will be holding a webinar about being a trustee at Z2K on 06 November 2026 at 2pm. To register your interest please email recruitment@z2k.org.

For an informal conversation with our Chief Executive, or for more information, please email recruitment@z2k.org.

If you have any particular support needs in relation to the application process, please email jasongreen@z2k.org to explore how we can support you. This could be about accessibility, the format of the interview or recruitment materials, timings or additional time, having materials or notice in advance and so on.

Key dates and deadlines

Closing date: 5pm, Sunday 15 November 2026
Panel Interview dates: week starting 23 November 2026

Final Interview dates: 04/07 December 2026