



# 2023 APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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# INTRODUCTION FROM **OUR CHAIR**

**ThinkForward is a very special organisation with an enthusiastic and committed staff team.**



**Our vision is simple - to prevent the next generation of youth unemployment. We deliver long-term coaching and employability programmes for under-served young people at key stages in their lives, enabling them to successfully transition into work.**

The education system perpetuates and exacerbates the inequalities faced by young people growing up in challenging circumstances and discriminates against those from marginalised and minority groups. Our programmes work. 82% of the young people we support get into further education, employment or training after school; the national equivalent is 67%.

We are looking to recruit two new Trustees who can help us continue our ongoing transformation, with the vision and enthusiasm 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, one to work with our programme delivery and impact teams to improve the insight from our evidence base.

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

**Charlie Green,**  
Chair

# THINKFORWARD

**ThinkForward exists to empower young people to create better and brighter futures.**

**Hundreds of thousands of young people across the UK experience barriers such as challenging relationships, living in low-income households, and a lack of access to opportunities. Without the right support these barriers can lead to high risks of unemployment and long-term effects on career and life chances. We want them to be able to identify, realise and shape their aspirations and be ready to make a successful transition into work.**

There are more than 800,000 16-24-year-olds in the UK who are not in education, employment or training. Our ambition is to prevent young people becoming one of these statistics.

In 2023 we will be supporting more than 1,200 young people across our three 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, empowering young people to take control, find solutions to challenges, develop skills and create a positive vision for their future.

Specialised ready for work activities support young people to get familiar with the workplace, become inspired and identify a pathway to their chosen career. We run this programme in 15 schools in north and east London, Nottingham and Kent.

The **DFN-MoveForward programme** operates in schools and colleges in London, Kent and the West Midlands with young people who have mild to moderate learning disabilities, with the aim of supporting them into sustainable paid employment.

Coaches provide long-term support to prepare young people for sustainable paid employment. Young people take part in insight visits, work placements and business mentoring to build their experience and develop skills and capabilities. We also work closely with parents to engage them in the opportunities and benefits of the programme.

The **Future Leaders programme** works with black male students in Year 10 and 11 that have been excluded or are at risk of being excluded from mainstream school. In London, black students are more likely to be excluded from school than white British students and young black men experience high unemployment rates.

To tackle these issues, Future Leaders will support young black men in alternative provisions to make a successful transition into a post-16 destination, 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 VISION

**That every young person is empowered to gain the confidence, independence and skills they need for a better and brighter future.**

# OUR MISSION

**ThinkForward delivers unique, personalised coaching programmes for young people at a key stage in their lives, enabling them to overcome the challenges they face and make a successful transition into work. Every young person takes part in workplace activities to develop their life goals and readiness for work. We raise the voices of our young people and support employers to provide fair access to opportunities.**

# OUR VALUES

**Integrity** I will do what I say

**Determined** I will believe in people's potential

**Innovative** I will search for creative solutions

**Trusted** I will trust my colleagues

**Collaboration** I will collaborate with others

# OUR IMPACT

We supported 1,286 young people in 2021/2022.

## FutureMe

**731**

**YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED  
ON THE PROGRAMME**

**6,995**

**1-2-1 COACHING  
SESSIONS DELIVERED**

**2,711**

**GROUP COACHING  
SESSIONS DELIVERED**

**4,539**

**PARENTAL  
ENGAGEMENTS**

**876**

**READY FOR WORK  
ACTIVITIES**

We intentionally work with the most at-risk young people, as interventions exist for those who require less intensive support. Through a scoring mechanism and the knowledge of school staff, we identify young people with known risk factors, including poor behaviour, attainment and attendance and whether young people are in care, on free school meals or have special educational needs.

**82%**

**OF YOUNG PEOPLE  
WERE IN EDUCATION,  
EMPLOYMENT, OR  
TRAINING**

**55%**

**EMPLOYMENT ONLY**

**14%**

**IN BOTH**

**14%**

**EDUCATION  
ONLY**

**17%**

**NOT IN EDUCATION,  
EMPLOYMENT, OR  
TRAINING**



# OUR STRATEGY

## We have undertaken an intensive strategic review of the organisation.

Our current five-year strategy will take ThinkForward through to 2025. By then we aim to have achieved our three strategic goals – **Impact, Sustainability** and **Growth**. Behind our goals are four objectives which will keep us focused on our mission and ambition to increase our reach and influence.

Our four objectives:

### **Refine and expand our programmes for young people with SEND**

- > Successfully deliver our DFN-MoveForward Social Impact Bond and evaluate its impact.
- > Grow the number of young people supported through new SEND programmes. Broaden the reach of these programmes for young people who have left education and are unemployed.
- > Leverage employer partnerships to create more supported pathways to employment and entry level jobs.

### **Refine the FutureMe programme**

- > Continue to support 900 young people per year, further embedding our work in schools and the wider community.
- > Conduct an external evaluation and refine aspects of the programme's design.
- > Respond to the changing needs of young people by packaging up our coach-led activities in different ways.

### **Become a thought leader**

We will make recommendations to local and national decision makers by:

- > Using our growing evidence base of what works.
- > Sharing young people's experiences of being on our programmes.
- > Joining forces with other youth sector organisations.

### **Become a capability partner**

Where our partners have a common goal of improving employment outcomes for young people we will share our expertise and resources on:

- > Coaching.
- > Employment & job creation.
- > Equity, diversity & inclusion.

We want to reach 1500 young people per year and increase our annual income to £4m. Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion will sit at the heart of our work to achieve our goals, and we will also ensure that young people continue to participate in our governance and shape the design of our programmes.

"I hope you get a sense of our ambition and where ThinkForward seeks to be in the coming years. In a nutshell, we want to reach more young people with our unique coaching and employability programmes and support them to have better and brighter futures."

**Ashley McCaul, ThinkForward CEO**



# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MANIFESTO

ThinkForward aims to be a place where all can thrive. We will lead from the front by placing equity, diversity, and inclusion at the heart of all we do as an employer, in our work with young people, and within our sphere of influence. We value creativity, productivity, good decision-making and reputation, and we know that good equity, diversity, and inclusion practices will build these.

We are working to create a world where our young people are more likely to thrive, and the absence of uniformity is considered a strength. We want learning and challenging the status quo to be considered progressive and where people's ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disabilities, learning abilities, or socio-economic origins are not the defining characteristics of their potential for success.

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

We believe greater diversity and a wider range of views and ideas within our Board is vital to making our work stronger, more relevant and more inclusive and we welcome applications from people that bring difference.

We particularly welcome applications from people of the Global Majority, people with disabilities (including 'invisible' disabilities or neurodiversity such as autism and dyslexia) and people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as these groups remain underrepresented in Governance roles in our sector.

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Since ThinkForward's inception our young people have been central to the design and improvement of our programmes.

Through our Ambassador programme, youth advisory board and alumni projects our ambition is to continue to amplify these important voices in the development of our work and resources and to become influential change-makers within their communities.



# THINKFORWARD TEAM

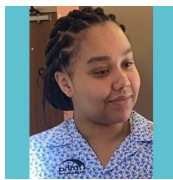
## BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Charlie Green**  
Chair



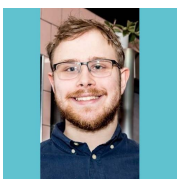
**Jill Baker**  
Trustee



**Sally Cartwright**  
Young Trustee



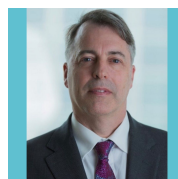
**Robert Craig**  
Trustee



**Dan Easterbrook**  
Young Trustee



**Kathryn Jack**  
Trustee



**Keith MacDonald**  
Trustee



**Vanessa Morphet**  
Trustee



**Asi Panditharatna**  
Trustee



**Matthew Tate**  
Trustee

## EXECUTIVE TEAM



**Ashley McCaul**  
CEO



**Robert Posner**  
Deputy CEO



**Gemma Shepherd**  
Director of  
Development



**Charlene Theophile**  
Director of  
Programmes

# ROLE DESCRIPTION & PERSON SPECIFICATION

**We are looking for two new trustees with different sets of skills and experience: One with the ability to help to grow our income and support our development team; and one to work with our programme delivery and impact teams to improve the insight from our evidence base.**

**This is an exciting opportunity to help drive the progression of a growing and successful organisation that makes a positive impact on the lives of young people and their communities.**

## **1. General Person Specification**

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

You will be well respected and have active networks in development or impact/evaluation sectors and will be able to bring expert knowledge in support of ThinkForward's work.

The individuals will have a proven track record of working at a senior and/or strategic level and will understand the governance role within which they will be operating. They will also be willing to act as a representative, spokesperson and cause leader creating and identifying donors and business opportunities for ThinkForward.

ThinkForward's board is made up of members, who are recruited, selected and approved by the Board of Trustees. Each trustee serves a three-year term.

What we ask of you:

- > Attend at least one Trustee training programme as part of your induction so that you understand the work we deliver

- > Attend Trustee meetings, which are held four times per year. These are generally 1.5 hours in duration and are a mix of online and in person meetings in London. Trustees are expected to attend at least three meetings per year.
- > In addition, we have a subcommittee structure which also meets throughout the year. You will be asked to join one at least one sub-committee.

What we can offer you:

- > An opportunity to develop your governance experience
- > Training in safeguarding, equality and diversity
- > Additional governance training
- > The opportunity to be part of a fantastic charity which is working to prevent the next generation of youth unemployment

## **2. Development Expert Person Specification**

The Development Committee plays a vital function in assuring the viability and growth of our charity – monitoring progress towards income generation targets and holding the organisation’s leadership to account on delivery against the Income Generation Strategy.

We’re seeking committed, enthusiastic individuals who can bring their personal skills, knowledge and connections to the benefit of our charity.

Our vision is of a diverse committee who represent our organisation, both in terms of the young people we serve and the communities in which we work. We’re particularly interested in professionals with experience of:

- > Contracting, commissioning and bidding for public and statutory funding sources
- > Working within education and multi-academy trust settings
- > Raising funds from corporate sources

What we ask of you

- > Attendance at quarterly development committee meetings per year (remotely)
- > A willingness to commit to a collaborative fundraising target, by bringing your personal influence and networks to bear
- > Attendance at additional ad hoc meetings as required to respond to emerging funding issues

For an informal discussion about the role please contact Gemma Shepherd, Director of Development by email at [gemma.shepherd@thinkforward.org.uk](mailto:gemma.shepherd@thinkforward.org.uk).

### **3. Impact Expert Person Specification**

As a front-line, service delivery charity it is vital that we can harness our data and digital systems to analyse our performance, understand the impact our work is having and forge relationships that will help us to sustain our work. We would welcome applications from those with expertise in all aspects of measuring impact (from theory of change through to impact systems). We are at a critical stage in the evolution of our programmes and will have multiple evaluations running in 23/24 academic year.

- > We are looking for a Trustee who will support the Executive on delivering to our evaluation plans, hold the organisation to account on making timely progress, Chair the sub committee overseeing this work and support on making evaluation informed programme adjustments.

As a Trustee you will be expected to:

- > Attendance at quarterly programme delivery committee meetings per year (remotely)
- > Attendance at additional ad hoc meetings as required to respond to emerging programme and evaluation issues.

# HOW TO **APPLY**

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](mailto:jobs@thinkforward.org.uk)

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](mailto:ashley.mccaul@thinkforward.org.uk)

**LinkedIn**

[www.linkedin.com/in/amccaulsfg](https://www.linkedin.com/in/amccaulsfg)