

Role Description

Chair of Rising Minds Foundation & Social Projects Committee

Rising Minds CIC is a coaching and mindfulness social enterprise, helping people in a wide variety of settings to uncover their natural energy, clarity and resolve to thrive in their lives and work. We work both with individuals and teams in organisations, and with people in the community through a range of social projects and our Rising Minds Foundation. For more detail about our work, see the Appendix.

We are currently looking to recruit a Chair of our Foundation & Social Projects Committee. This document summarises the key skills and experiences that we are looking for from the Chair, as well as what will be expected of them to fulfil the roles' responsibilities. Please note that this role is unpaid, although expenses would be reimbursed.

What the role involves

The purpose of the Foundation & Social Projects Committee is to provide some oversight, advice and constructive challenge to the Directors and Associates of Rising Minds CIC in relation to its social projects (i.e. those working with people on a low income), and the Rising Minds Foundation (a scheme providing bursaries through donations).

In particular, we want the Committee to be a space where the voices of those with lived experience of issues that our clients typically deal with, and of those who work professionally in these fields, are really heard and taken into account in the design and delivery of current and future social projects.

It is envisaged that the Committee will meet 2-3 times per year for 2 hours. Generally, the meetings would be divided into two halves:

1) 'Business Meeting': Rising Minds Directors and Associates would report on current social projects and the Foundation, and would welcome feedback and comments from Committee Members. We would also open up discussion for ideas about new initiatives and areas that Rising Minds could seek to develop, and the role that Committee members could play in such developments. This could be in relation to project development, marketing & PR, or fundraising.

2) 'Topic Discussion': A broader discussion on relevant topics of interest, e.g. 'How might coaching and training services in this field better reflect the reality of life for our typical clients?'. These discussions could be introduced and facilitated by members of the Committee, taking it in turns meeting by meeting.

The role of the Chair of the Foundation & Social Projects Committee is a Non-Executive Director (NED) role. The role of a NED is to provide an independent perspective, standing back from the day-to-day running of the organisation to advise around strategy and identify new opportunities. Whilst NEDs are not part of the operational team, they do have the same legal duties, responsibilities and potential liabilities of the executive directors; they will be expected to ensure that Rising Minds meets its statutory obligations and continues to satisfy the CIC 'community interest test'.

We anticipate the time commitment for NEDs to be around 5-10 hours per quarter. This is an estimate at this stage and is intended as a guideline only.

The Chair of the Committee would be responsible for:

- Selecting and inducting new Committee Members in collaboration with the Executive Director;
- Scheduling and organising Committee meetings;
- Preparing agendas and committee papers to be sent in advance to the Committee Members;
- Chairing the meetings and facilitating open discussions;
- Ensuring accurate minutes are taken and circulated to members;
- Ensuring all Committee Members' voices are heard and all Members feel supported and included;
- Providing constructive feedback to Rising Minds Directors and Associates about current projects and working with them to identify gaps and design new projects.

In order to discharge the legal duty of a NED, the Chair would also be required to read annual accounts, produced by our accountants, ahead of our AGM (which will be held virtually, unless all members are based in London). The NEDs would be provided with relevant documents, and expected to read them carefully and raise any questions with the Director before signing. The accounts are not complicated or detailed.

Necessary skills, experiences and attitudes

Essential

- *EITHER* lived experience of the type of issues that the clients of Rising Minds' social projects are typically dealing with (see the Appendix for more details)
OR experience of working professionally with clients facing these issues (particularly in the public and third sectors);
- Good written and verbal communication skills;
- Ability to engage Members of varying backgrounds and ensure all feel included;
- Ability to prepare Committee papers;
- Ability to facilitate and manage discussions at meetings ensuring that all Members voices are heard;
- Willingness to attend 2-3 two-hour meetings per year (either in person in London, or online);
- Willingness to act as 'ambassadors' for Rising Minds where appropriate in professional or personal interactions and events – i.e. to potential supporters, partners or funders;
- A commitment to supporting Rising Minds CIC in our mission to bring commercial quality coaching and training to people who wouldn't otherwise be able to access it, through our social projects.

Desirable

- Experience of organising and chairing meetings;
- Experience of having been coached;
- Experience of having been taught mindfulness (and even better if you still practise the skills!);
- Experience of working in the public or third sector.

What you can expect from us

- **Commitment to your induction** – we'll spend time with you to explain the nature of the role in as much detail as you need.
- **Expenses** – we'll reimburse expenses incurred for travel, home-working costs, stationery etc.

- **Commitment to your personal development** – we want this role to feel fulfilling for you, beyond meeting the legal obligations, and so we'd be keen to find ways as we go along to ensure that the role provides opportunities for the learning and development that you'd most like to get from it.
- **Training opportunities** – you would be welcome to attend selected group mindfulness and resilience programmes we run for our social projects, as a participant and/or a volunteer supporter.
- **Networking and social opportunities** – you'll be invited to Rising Minds events and social gatherings.

Interested in applying?

Please email Melanie Sheehan at melanie@risingminds.org.uk with a short expression of interest (one paragraph) and your CV by midday on 26th July 2021

We are committed to diversity and inclusion, and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds who meet the role description.

Appendix: About Rising Minds

Our Social Projects

As a social enterprise company, we are committed to making commercial-quality professional coaching and training services available to people in the community who would not otherwise be able to afford them. We currently do this through three funded projects:

- This Way Up: funded by the anti-poverty charity, Quaker Social Action (see box below for more)
- This Way Next: a 'next steps' programme for people who have completed initial life coaching and mindfulness training with Rising Minds
- East London Cares: we run regular Wellbeing Sessions for this innovative charity that seeks to build great social cohesion by running social clubs bringing together older and younger people to do interesting, fun and enlivening activities

We also provide bursaries, through donations to our Rising Minds Foundation, to self-referring individuals for coaching and resilience training services.

Spotlight on 'This Way Up'

Our flagship social project is 'This Way Up' – a six-week intensive programme for low-income people, delivered on behalf of anti-poverty charity Quaker Social Action. Since June 2012 to date there have been 17 tranches of the programme, working with 275 people. The programme has a strong track record of helping people make major changes in their lives, and dramatically improve their wellbeing. The programme consists of three sessions of one-to-one life coaching and a six-session group mindfulness training course. It's designed to help people to:

- find their own resources to take charge of their lives
- feel confident and well in themselves, so that they can handle stress easily
- plan and make decisions better, so that they can take positive steps towards their goals – like getting into work, training or education; taking up new activities, or making new friendships.

About the clients of our social projects

Clients of our social projects are generally people with scant financial resources who feel stuck in life and so are unable to achieve their potential and contribute fully to society. They are often only a few steps away from being engulfed by a combination of forces at play in their lives: such as housing insecurity, poverty, past traumas, ill physical or mental health, extreme loneliness and isolation. As a result, they are less likely to be in employment; active in the lives of their communities; or engaged in fulfilling personal pursuits. Yet until a specific crisis happens – homelessness, a mental breakdown, hospital admission – there is precious little help at hand.

Many of these people fall between the cracks in services, or are coerced into single issue crisis services with narrowly pre-determined outcomes. Such services don't address the needs of the whole person or recognise their innate resourcefulness to make their wise life choices; support might even be withheld by services unwilling to work with people who have multiple problems, a particularly common experience for those who have been involved in the criminal justice system. In this way, harmful situations become ever more complex and chaotic, with no real prospect of resolution. Rising Minds seeks to change this.

Our Work with Organisations

We provide group and one-to-one coaching & training programmes to organisations – particularly those seeking to have a positive social impact – helping leaders and teams to stay resilient, inspired and connected, in the face of complex pressures.

The workplace can be highly rewarding and fulfilling. But growing complexity and performance pressures also make it tough. Old formulas for success – working harder and following the management rule-book – don't work anymore, and stifle productivity and engagement. We understand the significance of these challenges. Through our 1-1 and group programmes, we support leaders and teams to thrive at work, building key capacities including:

- **Stress management** – greater calm and flexibility of emotional/psychological responses
- **Leadership confidence** – especially when stepping into more senior roles
- **Self-management**: time management and prioritisation, productivity and effectiveness
- **Clear thinking**: enhanced strategic planning and decision making
- **Relationship building**: emotional intelligence, communication skills, influencing, delegation