

50 RIGHTS *of*
—years— **WOMEN**
1975-2025

JOIN OUR TEAM



Recruitment Pack

Chair of Trustee Board

June 2025

Please refer to the following information when making your application:

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Letter from Annie Hedge, Chair of Rights of Women

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the Chair of the Trustee Board for Rights of Women. Rights of Women is a long established and well-respected national women's organisation, providing specialist legal advice and support to women at risk of, or experiencing all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Our vision is one of equality, justice and safety in the law for all women. We provide specialist legal advice, information, training, strategic case work and litigation in the areas of immigration, family, criminal and employment law.

Rights of Women is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee governed by a Board of Trustees. We are committed to ensuring that our Board reflects the diversity and excellence of the women we serve and on whose behalf we campaign. We are particularly interested in attracting applicants from Black and minoritised communities including refugee and migrant women, disabled women and women who have personal experience of the issues that are core to our work including domestic violence and abuse, insecure immigration status and workplace sexual harassment. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.

Rights of Women is a national charity and we welcome applications from women based anywhere in England and Wales. However, given the specific demands of the Chair role and our office location in London it is important for the Chair to be able to travel to London regularly. You will be part of a committed and enthusiastic team of Directors and contribute to the future work and sustainability of this important women's legal rights organisation. As a Board we are very proud to be associated with the brilliant work of Rights of Women, and glad of the opportunity to make such an important contribution.

To apply please read the recruitment pack including the Role Description and Person Specification and complete the application form in full. We are committed to disability inclusion and are able to make appropriate reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process. If you require a copy of the recruitment pack in large print or an alternative format and/or if you have any questions or would like to talk through the role please contact recruitment@row.org.uk.

Key dates:

Closing date: Thursday 31st July 2025 5pm

Interview dates: Anticipated as week commencing Mon 11th August 2025

First Board meeting: Wednesday 17th September 2025

Please return your completed application to recruitment@row.org.uk with the subject heading: Application Chair of Trustee Board. We thank you for considering this position at Rights of Women and we look forward to receiving your application.

Please note: We kindly ask applicants not to use AI tools when preparing their application. We value your personal voice and perspective, and we're keen to hear directly from you.

Annie Hedge - Chair of Board of Trustees

About Rights of Women

Rights of Women is a registered charity established in 1975 to promote the legal rights of women throughout England and Wales. Our services support women at risk of or experiencing all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls including domestic and sexual violence, coercive control, economic abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called 'honour-based violence'. Our work places an emphasis on reaching women who may be particularly vulnerable and marginalised due to intersectional discrimination, racism and structural inequality.

We provide a range of services including free, confidential legal advice lines, training for professionals, legal guides, policy work and research. Our aim is to increase women's understanding of their legal rights and improve their access to justice so that they can make informed choices about their own lives, free from violence, discrimination and harassment.

Our **specialist telephone advice services support** on average 3500 women each year on key areas of law:

- family law including domestic violence, relationship breakdown and children
- criminal law including domestic and sexual violence
- immigration and asylum law
- sexual harassment in the workplace

"I had no idea of my rights or who to turn to... a referral to you meant all my queries were clearly and concisely answered. You removed the confusion about my legal rights, gave me time so that I felt listened to. This is an essential service and I am so grateful to you." (Advice line caller)

We also publish **free and accessible legal guides and handbooks for women and professionals** which cover a range of issues including domestic and sexual violence. Most recently we published a legal guide on coronavirus and child contact arrangements, after a significant rise in the number of queries related to this subject.

Our website, www.rightsofwomen.org.uk, is a vital tool in informing and educating women on their legal rights. We have around 500,000 visits to our website annually.

“Written by women experts in the violence against girls and women sector. Best resources I have come across. Clear, concise and empowering.” (Publication reader)

We provide **training on the law for professionals** from the voluntary and statutory sectors so they can provide urgent advice and information to women, helping them to navigate complex legal systems and processes. Annually, we are building the capacity of more than 900 professionals to support women and children, who are at risk of, or experiencing, violence and abuse.

“Rights of Women consistently lead on areas such as legal aid and provide useful documents and training for the rest of the VAWG sector” (Training participant)

Our Strategy

Our strategic priorities and objectives are set out in our Strategic Plan 2023-25, summarised below:

Priority 1: Sustainability – Preserve RoW’s unique services

Why: Our change aspiration:

We are the only frontline women’s legal advice organisation in England and Wales. Our free advice services are life-saving and our policy expertise is unique. Sustaining this work in challenging times is vital.

What: Our Top 3 Key Actions

1. Increase our sustainability by increased diversified income
2. Increase and diversify the number of people who support us
3. Support our staff and volunteers

Priority 2: Advice - Provide legal advice services to meet women’s changing needs

Why: Our change aspiration:

Advice enables women to make safe and informed choices for themselves and their families. We believe that all women have the right to accurate and accessible advice and information about the law and their legal rights, especially when those rights are being eroded or denied.

What: Our Top 3 Key Actions

1. Increase the impact of our legal expertise and provision
2. Ensure advice strategies centre the lived experience of women
3. Improve accessibility to our services for the women who need us most

Priority 3: Policy - Change laws, legal procedures and systems to benefit women

Why: Our change aspiration:

The law disadvantages women in myriad ways and needs radical change. We will combine our expertise with that of others to bring about changes that make access, treatment and outcomes in the law better for women.

What: Our Top 3 Key Actions

1. Influence culture change and improvements to specific, targeted law, policy and legal advice provision
2. Develop strategic learning from our unique evidence base
3. Work collaboratively with sector partners and key stakeholders to increase access to legal rights

Application and Recruitment Process

1. Guidance on applying

To apply, please submit an up-to-date CV, a covering letter of no more than 2 pages and a short Essential Information Form (including details of referees).

Rights of Women welcomes applications from suitably skilled, experienced and/or qualified women throughout England and Wales and from all sections of the community. Your application documents are the first stage of the selection process. They provide the information we use to shortlist candidates for interview.

Please complete the covering letter clearly and in full, demonstrating how your skills, knowledge and experience relate to the Person Specification and competencies required for the post. Please address all of the criteria in the Person Specification and provide evidence to support your statements. You may want to include experience, skills and knowledge acquired in and outside of formal employment including through education, volunteering and life experience.

We can only shortlist candidates based on information provided in the application form.

2. Guaranteed Interview Scheme and Reasonable Adjustments

Rights of Women is committed to disability justice. As part of this commitment, all disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for the role will be invited to interview. If you wish to be considered under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, please complete the relevant section in the Application Form.

If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process please contact recruitment@row.org.uk

3. Referees

Please provide details of two referees, one must be your current or most recent employer, voluntary placement or educational reference.

References will only be taken up as part of pre-appointment checks if you are offered the role.

4. Equalities Monitoring

Rights of Women is committed to building and valuing diverse teams and aims to provide a working environment that is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination, where everyone can participate and thrive. As part of this process, we monitor recruitment to help us understand who we are reaching, reduce inequalities and continually inform our policies and practices. Completing the equalities monitoring form is voluntary however we do encourage you to do it. The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only, it is confidential and will not be shared with the recruitment panel.

5. Shortlisting

After the closing date, all applications will be reviewed by a shortlisting panel to determine how each candidate's skills, knowledge and experience relate to the competencies required for the post (as outlined in the Role Description and Person Specification). Candidates who best meet the role criteria will be invited for interview. We will only consider information included in the application form when shortlisting.

As part of our due diligence procedures, we will conduct a limited review of publicly available online information and social media activity for all shortlisted candidates, to ensure consistency with our values and professional standards.

5. Interviews

A first stage interview will be held online. You will meet with a panel of three trustees who will ask you questions relevant to the role. This is your opportunity to expand on your application and demonstrate that

you have the skills, knowledge and experience required for the post. At the end of the interview, you will have the opportunity to ask the panel any questions you have about Rights of Women, the Board of Trustees and the terms and conditions of appointment. At this stage you will also be asked to complete a written assessment.

A second stage interview will be held in person at Rights of Women offices:

Rights of Women, Tindlemanor, 52-54 Featherstone Street, London, EC1Y 8RT

If you are successfully put through to the second stage, you will have a second panel interview with trustees and then meet with the Rights of Women Director and members of the senior staff team.

If you require reasonable adjustments to participate in any of the assessment processes above, please contact recruitment@row.org.uk.

Further due diligence checks will be undertaken prior to the formal appointment to the role.

5. Feedback

Applicants who are unsuccessful following the second interview stage will be notified of the outcome in writing and offered the opportunity to receive feedback upon request.

Chair of Trustees, Rights of Women - Role Description

The Chair of Trustees provides leadership and direction to Rights of Women and the Board of Trustees, ensuring Rights of Women fulfils its legal and governance responsibilities while remaining true to its mission and values. The Chair plays a key role in shaping the strategic direction of the organisation, supporting the Director, and acting as an ambassador for Rights of Women.

Key responsibilities

Leadership and Governance

- Provide leadership to Rights of Women and the Board to ensure that Rights of Women has maximum impact in its support for women.
- Chair meetings of the Board, ensuring they are effective, well-structured, and allow for robust constructive discussion and decision-making.
- Ensure that the Board functions properly, that all Trustees fulfil their duties and responsibilities, and that Rights of Women complies with its governing document, charity law, company law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations, including, but not limited to, the Charity Commission and Companies House.
- Provide leadership in maintaining high standards of governance, ensuring policies and procedures are in place to support the organisation's compliance and effectiveness.
- Champion and ensure that justice, equity, diversity, inclusion are actively embedded in all Board activities and discussions. This includes fostering a culture of belonging, preventing and challenging unfair bias and discrimination, and ensuring that governance and decision-making processes reflect a sustained commitment to anti-oppression, inclusion and representation.
- Ensure that the Board sets the strategic direction of Rights of Women and regularly monitors progress against agreed objectives.
- Safeguard the good name, reputation, and values of the organisation.
- Ensure Rights of Women applies its resources exclusively to its charitable purposes.

Financial oversight

- Ensure Rights of Women's financial dealings are prudently and systematically accounted for, audited, and publicly available.
- Ensure that risk management strategies are in place to maintain financial sustainability.
- Ensure that appropriate goals and priorities are set for the resources available.

Supporting the Director and Board development

- Provide regular and constructive support, feedback and oversight to the Director, including her performance and her professional development, so that she can lead the smooth and effective running of the organisation, delivery of Rights of Women's strategic plan and funded outcomes.
- Work with the Director and the Board to recruit Board members with relevant expertise and experience, ensuring an inclusive and diverse Board.
- Ensure that all Trustees receive appropriate training, advice, and information to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Support and encourage a culture of open communication, collaboration, and mutual respect between the Board, Director and staff.
- Lead the Board in annually reviewing its own performance and effectiveness
- Ensure that justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion principles are embedded in governance practices, fostering an inclusive and welcoming culture within the Board and across the organisation.

External representation and advocacy

- Act as an ambassador for the organisation, representing Rights of Women at external events, meetings, and engagements.
- Build and maintain key relationships with stakeholders, including funders, government bodies, and partners.
- Advocate for Rights of Women's mission and strategic priorities within relevant networks and forums.

Person Specification

Essential criteria

- A commitment to Rights of Women's vision, mission, and values. Experience in governance, leadership, and strategic decision-making, ideally within a charity or public sector setting.
- Strong financial and risk management acumen including experience with organisational financial management, planning, processes and procedures.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to positively influence a range of stakeholders and collaborate effectively both online and face to face.
- Strong networking capabilities.
- A clear understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of Chair trusteeship.
- Ability to form constructive working relationships with the Board and Director.
- Proven ability to lead and facilitate effective Board discussions and decision-making.
- A proven track record of developing and embedding equity, diversity and inclusion principles and practices into governance and decision-making and delivering measurable change.
- Experience in supporting organisational growth and development.

Desirable criteria

- Experience in one or more of the following areas: organisational change and development, service development and delivery, women's sector, legal sector, and fundraising.
- Knowledge of the challenges facing charities and the broader socio-political landscape affecting the sector.

Terms of appointment

- The role is voluntary and unremunerated, though reasonable expenses (including reasonable travel for face-to-face meetings) will be reimbursed in line with Rights of Women's expenses policy. We meet online and face to face, so the Chair will need to be able to travel into London regularly.

- The Chair is expected to meet the Director at least 12 times a year, chair 4-6 Board meetings per year, co-chair annual away days with the Director and SMT, and chair additional ad hoc meetings as required; attend subcommittee meetings and task and finish groups when relevant.

This role is open to women only, in accordance with occupational requirements (Equality Act 2010, Schedule 16, Part 1 applies).

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

We recognise that women may experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on their real or perceived characteristics including age; disability or medical history; sex, ethnicity, race, colour, national origin or ancestry, gender identity, expression and/or reassignment, family partnership or marital status, pregnancy and maternity status, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, citizenship and immigration status, caring responsibilities, spent convictions and trade union membership. This is not an exhaustive list. Rights of Women works to address discrimination and the structural inequalities women experience. Achieving equity and justice is integral to our work and we are committed to dismantling harmful and oppressive structures of power. We operate open, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory recruitment practices and actively encourage applications from women from a variety of backgrounds, and with a range of skills and experiences. We are particularly interested to hear from women from Black and minoritised communities including refugee and migrant women, disabled women and women who have lived experience of the issues that are core to our work including domestic violence and abuse, insecure immigration status and workplace sexual harassment. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates.

If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the recruitment process, including accessing a copy of the recruitment pack in large print or an alternative format please contact recruitment@row.org.uk.

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