



The Rainforest Foundation UK

Board Recruitment – November 2020

The Rainforest Foundation UK (RFUK) is seeking dynamic professionals to join its Board of Trustees. This is an exciting opportunity to join a unique organisation working at the nexus of forest protection and human rights and to use your skills and passion to help it adapt and thrive in a changing world.

BACKGROUND

RFUK is a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforests in their efforts to protect their environment and fulfil their rights to land, life and livelihood.

It was founded in 1989 by Sting and his wife, Trudie Styler, after they saw first-hand the destruction of the Amazon rainforests, and the devastating impact it had on the lives of the indigenous and forest-dependent people who live there. Since then, it has supported communities to secure and protect more than twelve million hectares of rainforest - an area the size of England. Today, RFUK works with 15 indigenous and NGO partners in the Peruvian Amazon and across West and Central Africa.

OUR APPROACH

Our approach differs from that of other organisations in that we are committed to both human rights and environmental protection. We firmly believe that the best way to protect the rainforest is through empowering indigenous peoples to defend their ancestral lands. We promote the establishment of community rights, tackling the root causes of deforestation, and paving the way for local people to benefit fairly from the use and protection of forest resources.

RFUK is now recognised as a leading force in the protection of tropical forests and their inhabitants, particularly in the Congo Basin region of Africa. As well as delivering high quality on-the-ground projects, often in difficult conditions, the organisation is also known for its advocacy work, which often challenges prevailing paradigms.

The organisation is often considered to 'punch above its' weight', and this has been achieved through a strong culture of organisational commitment, rigour and independence. It has forged experience from decades of participatory work in rainforest communities with progressive policy research and carefully targeted campaigns to produce a compelling case for change and improvement in approaches to tropical forest protection.

RFUK delivers its charitable objectives in two ways:

- 1) Through direct delivery using its own staff, especially for technical support and policy activities and;
- 2) Through grant-making, chiefly in support of partner organisations, involving substantial support to increase local capacity to design and implement projects. This ensures that the Foundation's work is firmly rooted in local knowledge and expertise.

Our thematic areas include:

Tackling the threats to forests. We tackle forest destruction by investigating and exposing the underlying causes, by building partnerships for change, and by pressing governments and companies to improve practices. For example, we have for the last ten years played a critical role in preventing the vast forests of the Congo being opened to extensive logging for timber.

Challenging false solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss. We work with forest communities to challenge top-down conservation projects and dubious offset schemes, and to promote sustainable, people-led rainforest protection.

Land and resource rights. We tackle communities' lack of control over forests by supporting them to [map, monitor and protect](#) their customary lands with new technologies, to develop sustainable livelihoods and by campaigning for laws and policies at both national and international levels that recognise their rights.

Indigenous Peoples and gender. We ensure that inclusion of marginalised groups is a crosscutting feature of our work and that the rights to participation, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and self-determination are upheld.

RFUK'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE & OUR TRUSTEES

RFUK is part of a family of independent sister organisations, which also include the Rainforest Foundation US and the Rainforest Foundation Norway.

Our Board consists of 6-9 Trustees and convenes at least four times per calendar year. The Board delegates day to day management activities to the Executive Director (ED) who in turn delegates some aspects of organisational management to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and other staff. The organisation currently has around 20 staff normally based in our North London office with several consultants and interns at any given time.

The Board has responsibility for the overall strategic direction of RFUK, in accordance with its mission and objectives as well as its legal and regulatory constraints. Its specific functions include:

- Ensuring that RFUK's charitable purposes are clearly established and regularly reviewed, that strategies are in place for them to be delivered effectively and sustainably.
- Providing effective strategic governance in line with the charity's purposes, mission and values.
- Ensuring the effective management and monitoring the organisational performance, including review of operational plans and budgets.

- Ensuring that the voices of RFUK's key stakeholders (including but not limited to, its employees, volunteers and donors) are heard, and their advice is listened to and learned from.
- Ensuring the organisation upholds principles of transparency and equality in every activity, and that there are plans in place to achieve the Board's diversity objectives.
- Ensuring that RFUK adheres to the highest standards of ethical and corporate behaviour and that the charity's reputation is safeguarded and promoted, having regard to legal and non-binding rules and best practice.
- Ensuring the financial health and sustainability of the organisation, in line with government and donor regulations.
- Actively managing and mitigating risks.
- *Full terms of reference can be provided on request.*

THE OPPORTUNITY

With a number of existing trustees having completed their term limits, we are looking for committed and talented individuals who are passionate about rainforests, human rights and climate justice to join the RFUK Board at what is a critical time for rainforests. You will be proactive, diligent, collaborative and above all believe in our mission.

Membership of the Board should reflect a balance of skills and expertise needed for it to fulfil its governance roles and responsibilities, and to represent the interests of the people it works for.

RFUK is committed to promoting diversity in its operations. The overall composition of the Board of Trustees should reflect this in terms of personal characteristics (gender, age, ethnicity etc.), experience/expertise, and a balance of perspectives.

While we will consider each expression of interest on its merit, we are especially looking for Trustees with experience and skills in the following areas:

- Human rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights;
- Tropical forests and environmental protection;
- Fundraising, philanthropy and finance;
- Strategic communications;
- Charity governance;
- Human resources, personnel and operations;
- Law, strategic litigation and legal compliance;
- Academia and relevant research areas.

As a Board member, you will be expected to:

- Participate in four board meetings per calendar year, either physically or remotely.
- Work with fellow members of the Board, Executive Director and other staff members on specific issues related to your area of expertise.
- Review and input on organisational documents, policies and strategies.
- Have no conflicts of interests.

Please send expressions of interest with a cover letter and CV to jobs@rainforestuk.org by no later than **4 December 2020**. Interviews are due to be held before the end of the calendar year.