

advocate



Treasurer Application Pack

November 2026

About us

Advocate is the Bar's national pro bono charity. We connect people who need free legal help, but cannot obtain legal aid or afford to pay, with barristers who are willing to donate their time and expertise.

We are the only pro bono charity to provide access to legal assistance in all areas of law, in all courts and tribunals across England and Wales. We exist because the thousands of barristers on our panel care about access to justice for everyone.

We have been facilitating free legal help since 1996 and have grown into a thriving organisation working with over 5,000 volunteer barristers. Our team comprises 23 dedicated casework, communications and administrative staff based around the country. We have 12 trustees on our board, which is chaired by Sharif A. Shivji KC.

Over the past 30 years, we have been at the heart of the Bar's pro bono work. In recent years, we have grown quickly to meet rising and more complex demand, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. That growth was essential and something we are proud of. Now is the moment to move from growing quickly to growing sustainably.

Our new three-year strategy, *The Next Chapter*, is focused on three aims, which will be delivered across three stages:

- More people who apply to Advocate are empowered to move through the legal system with confidence;
- More barristers are engaged, supported, and enabled to deliver pro bono;
- Advocate is a trusted and sustainable organisation that can adapt and respond to changing legal and societal needs.

What this looks like in Year 1:

- Our priority is getting the foundations right;
- Improving data and systems;
- Understanding the journeys of applicants and barristers;
- Using evidence and insight to improve how we deliver services.

About the role

We are looking for a new treasurer to join our board at a key stage in our development as we embark on our new strategy.

We are looking for someone with a recognised financial qualification (from one of the five CCAB (Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies) members) or substantial relevant financial management experience to be our next treasurer, to ensure an effective handover from our current treasurer, whose term ends in May 2027.

As treasurer, you would:

- Provide strategic financial advice, support and challenge to the board, chief executive and head of operations;
- Take an active role, working with staff on quarterly finance reports and statutory accounts;
- Help us deliver our strategy, focusing on increasing impact and sustainability through strengthening our income streams and having a secure financial position.

The Treasurer will be our lead trustee for financial governance, working closely alongside the chair, chief executive and head of operations.

The role of treasurer involves acting as the board member of Advocate tasked with specific board oversight of Advocate's finances, budgets, accounting and financial procedures.

Responsibilities include:

- Meeting regularly with the charity's finance leads;
- Reviewing the preparation of Advocate's budget for the forthcoming financial year and, with the finance leads, presenting the budget to the board for approval;
- Periodically reviewing Advocate's performance over the course of the financial year by reference to the approved budget and with the finance leads;
- Reviewing the preparation of Advocate's financial statements and, with the finance leads, presenting those financial statements to the board for approval;
- Overseeing the filing of Advocate's financial statements, as approved by the board;

- Reviewing and overseeing Advocate's financial policies, controls and processes, including payment authorisations and controls;
- Monitoring Advocate's financial standing, ability to meet future commitments and reserves;
- Leading the discussion and providing updates on financial matters at each board meeting.

We are looking for a candidate with a commitment to our vision of access to justice for all and an understanding of the responsibilities of being a trustee.

We welcome applications from all backgrounds, and particularly from groups under-represented on charity boards.

Time commitment and requirements of the role

- The role is for a four-year term, renewable once for a further four years, so a maximum of eight years.
- Trustees attend five board meetings per year, which generally last no more than two hours. We host a mix of online and in-person meetings. We work as a team and look for people willing to take part in discussions.
- A willingness to commit the necessary time and effort and to apply your experience and expertise to support the chief executive, head of operations, and the staff team, engaging in conversations to help improve our work. This includes assisting in events and other associated activities as requested.
- Experience shows that the expected time commitment for the Treasurer is approximately one day per month plus travel time to meetings and events.
- Outside meetings, communication is primarily via email and so trustees must be comfortable and responsive in its use.

Remuneration

The role is unpaid. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed in line with Advocate's expenses policy.

Application process

We hope you are interested in becoming the treasurer of Advocate.

To apply for the position, please send your CV and a short supporting statement (of no more than 1,000 words) to our chief executive, Christopher Stacey, on chris.stacey@weareadvocate.org.uk, setting out:

1. A description of why the role interests you;
2. How you meet the person specification;
3. What you would bring to the role.

If you would like to discuss the role prior to expressing an interest, or if you have any questions, please email Christopher directly, who would be happy to discuss the role further.

The deadline for applications is **midday on Monday 30th November**.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview with our chair of trustees, Sharif A. Shivji KC, our vice-chair Sarah Abram KC and the chief executive.

We have set aside time on Tuesday 15th December for interviews online and/or in person – please let us know when you apply if you are unable to make this date.

Further reading

To find out more about our work, who we help, our volunteers and supporters please visit our website – www.weareadvocate.org.uk.

For further details on the duties and responsibilities of a trustee, please visit the [Charity Commission website](#).

Thank you for your interest.

Role description – Treasurer (Trustee)

Role	Treasurer (Trustee)
Responsible to	Board of Trustees (led by the chair)

This is an unpaid (voluntary) officer post with a registered charity and is not remunerated. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed in line with Advocate's expenses policy.

Overall responsibility

The overall responsibility of the board of trustees, and therefore of every trustee, is to safeguard the assets and reputation of Advocate and to ensure that the charity achieves its objects and complies with its governing document, UK charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation.

Individual trustees are recruited based on their expertise and experience in specific areas, where they will help to drive the organisation forward in those areas, increasing the charity's effectiveness and providing support to the board based on their experience and expertise.

The board of trustees has collective responsibility for the organisation, with each trustee being accountable to the trustee board, led by the chair. As a trustee, the treasurer role carries the same responsibilities as a normal board member.

Finance is the joint responsibility of the whole board. We also believe it is important to have a board member with a particular focus on finance who can provide challenge and support to the leadership team, and provide advice and direction to the rest of the board.

The additional responsibility of the treasurer is to maintain an overview of Advocate's financial affairs, and report at regular intervals to the board of trustees to enable the trustees as a group to take informed financial decisions ensuring the charity's financial viability and its adherence in financial matters to good practice, its governance documents and legal requirements.

Responsibilities

Each trustee will work with the trustee board, chief executive and leadership team to:

- Establish and promote Advocate's vision, values, strategic aims and objectives;

- Ensure that policies and priorities are in keeping with the aims of Advocate;
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction, setting overall policy and defining objectives;
- Monitor and review Advocate's impact, performance against strategic objectives and key activities, ensuring that all activities fall within the charity's stated objects;
- Ensure that Advocate functions within the legal and regulatory framework of charity law and company law in England and Wales and strives to achieve best practice in governance;
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of Advocate and, in particular, the performance of the chief executive;
- Ensure the financial stability of Advocate;
- Uphold the fiduciary duty vested in the position, undertaking duties in the best interests of Advocate;
- Monitor significant changes in the external environment and ensure an appropriate response.

In addition to these general responsibilities of trustees, the treasurer will have the following responsibilities:

- to oversee and present budgets, accounts and financial statements to the board of trustees;
- to ensure that proper accounts and records are kept, ensuring financial resources are spent and invested in line with good governance, legal and regulatory requirements;
- on behalf of the board, periodically review internal financial controls to ensure their appropriateness and that they are effectively implemented;
- to be instrumental in the development and implementation of financial reserves and investment policies.

Other responsibilities

Strategy

- Take part in formulating and reviewing Advocate's strategic aims and objectives;
- Contribute, where appropriate, specific skills, knowledge and experience in support of Advocate's fundraising, financial and administrative activities.

Policy

- Be adequately informed about the work of Advocate;
- Play an active part in ensuring the board of trustees exercises its responsibilities and fulfils its functions;
- In any discussion or communication with third parties, adhere to the trustee board's position and Advocate's policies, and safeguard the reputation and values of Advocate.

Practice

- Regularly attend and adequately prepare for meetings of the board;
- Participate in the induction process and any ongoing training offered;
- Monitor and advise on the financial viability of the charity including advising on the financial implications of Advocate's strategic plans and provide assurance that the financial resources meet its present and future needs;
- Liaise with the head of operations and external auditors to ensure that the accounts are prepared, audited and disclosed in the form required by the relevant statutory bodies (the Charity Commission and the Registrar of Companies). Guide and advise trustees in the board's formal approval of the audited accounts, making a formal presentation of the accounts annually at a board meeting and drawing attention to important points in a coherent and easily understandable way;
- Lead the appointment process by the trustees of the external auditors;
- Board-level liaison with the external auditors on specific issues such as the auditors' management letter and the related board representations;
- As appropriate, promote awareness of Advocate to third parties;
- Perform such other tasks as may be requested from time to time by the board, chair or chief executive;
- Respect and observe in practice the delegation of authority and distinction between the role of trustees and those of the chief executive and leadership team;
- Maintain good relations and communications with other trustees, chief executive and leadership team;
- Declare an interest in any matter in which they or any individual or organisation with which they are connected stands to gain an advantage, and take no part in the decision made by the board of trustees on that matter;
- Maintain confidentiality about all sensitive or confidential information received.

Person specification

The experience, skills and qualities we are looking for are:

Skills and experience

- A recognised financial qualification from one of the five CCAB (Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies) members, or substantial relevant financial management experience;
- Understanding of charity finance or a willingness to learn how wider financial skills translate to charities;
- Understanding of financial controls and processes;
- Excellent communication skills with the capacity to express yourself with authority and sufficient to explain complex financial aspects to non-expert audiences;
- Ability to critically assess complex financial information.

Personal qualities

- Commitment to the vision and values of the organisation;
- Ability to promote the work of Advocate, particularly at fundraising events;
- Willingness and ability to devote the necessary time and effort to support the organisation;
- Sound judgement;
- Ability to work effectively as a team member.