



# Trustee

March 2024

## A Letter from Annie Lennox, The Circle NGO Founder

Right now there is an urgent need to stand in solidarity in demanding action to defend the freedoms and rights of women and girls everywhere around the world. All our sisters, mothers and daughters must have protection against violence, as well as universal access to healthcare, education and fundamental human rights in all private and public spaces.

As we have recently celebrated The Circle's 15th year, I've become more conscious of everything we've achieved as an organisation, and everything we still have to do. It is a milestone moment for The Circle, and a crossroads moment for women around the world. The challenges women face are immense. From the epidemic of gender-based violence to the scourge of modern slavery. And now, for the first time in a century, we face concerted global efforts to roll back the rights won by generations of heroic women past, in order to make the disempowerment and subjugation of women and girls a cultural and political norm.

The Circle's message of 'Global Feminism' and your participation and support, offers us a unique opportunity to play a significant role in fighting against these negative trends. We are developing a network of inspirational partnerships and inroads at grassroots level which can produce powerful, long-lasting influence and transformative change. Join Us.

**"CHANGE IS POSSIBLE, BUT IT IS NEVER EASY. WE HAVE TO BE RESILIENT AND DETERMINED."**

Annie Lennox, The Circle NGO Founder

## A Letter from Raakhi Shah, The Circle NGO Chief Executive

### A NEW FRONTIER OF OPPRESSION

The rights of women and girls has come under a mounting assault across the world over the last few years. We watched in hope as women in Iran and Afghanistan rose up against repression and gender apartheid in their countries, and then reacted with horror as their voices were brutally silenced, with the international community standing by. We saw the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war continue to surge in the world's conflict zones. As the world economy reeled from the after-effects of the pandemic, we saw a rise in the exploitation of women as cheap or forced labour in farms and factories across the Global South. In



several countries, we also saw attempts to roll back the hard-won legal rights of women, most notably with the US Supreme Court decision to overturn the abortion protections set out in Roe v Wade. And we saw the surge of a dangerous new culture of online and institutional misogyny, with the violent abuse of women not just excused, but normalised, encouraged and celebrated.

## WE MUST ALL RISE

It was more important than ever for The Circle to stand strong, both in the solidarity we showed to women, and in the action we took to help the forces of global feminism fight back in defence of women's rights and freedoms. Last year, The Circle deepened its partnerships with grassroots global feminist organisations in several countries working at the front-line of their communities to end gender-based violence and enable women to build better futures for themselves. We were able to utilise our global network to support with legal advice, media skills workshops, and funding advice, amplifying the work and voices of our partners and activists, contributing to global advocacy coalitions, hosting events, and reaching new audiences.

## A UNIQUE GLOBAL FEMINIST NETWORK

Every woman and ally who is part of The Circle's global network is a changemaker uniting to make The Circle a unique home for impactful change. The Circle is a growing organisation, entirely funded by the donations and grants we receive from partners and supporters, with a five-year strategy that speaks to our ambition for greater impact than ever.

## The Circle NGO Partners

"Partnering with the Circle has been so special and given us the opportunity to meet and discuss with influential women around the world which is inspiring and motivating, and to be internationally recognised as a women's rights organisation."

Mukyala Zaituna, Women in Leadership Uganda

<https://www.thecircle.ngo/projects/women-in-leadership-uganda/>

"Our project with The Circle is a great opportunity for us to strengthen women workers and survivors in the garment industry through awareness raising, advocacy and psychosocial support. We should speak out fearlessly by coming forward to build a women's working activist network across the world."

Padmini Weerasuriya, Director of the Women's Centre Sri Lanka

<https://www.thecircle.ngo/projects/womens-center-sri-lanka/>

"The Circle and Rahela Trust share the belief that when women are given confidence, opportunities and access to resources, incredible, positive, change can be achieved. As a small charity, we are eager to learn from the circle's expertise and bring that knowledge to our evolving work. Together, we're confident we can



create an equitable future for the women and people of Afghanistan, and we are honoured to have The Circle as an ally in this important mission.”

Rahela Sidiqi, founder of Rahela Trust

<https://www.thecircle.ngo/projects/rahela-trust/>

## About The Circle NGO

The Circle NGO is a unique and dynamic organisation which brings global feminists together to fight for the safety and equality of marginalised and vulnerable women around the world. Founded by singer-songwriter and activist, Annie Lennox, The Circle is a space for creative ideas, connections and the opportunity to make change.

The Circle funds and supports frontline grassroots women’s rights organisations, their partners, in some of the world’s most vulnerable countries. The organisation uses the collective voices of partners, changemakers and those with lived experience to advocate and strive for long-term structural change. Over the last 15 years, The Circle has supported **over 1.4 million people** directly on women’s rights in 31 countries and over 630,000 women directly through our partners. Every woman and ally who is part of The Circle’s global network is a changemaker uniting to make The Circle a unique home for impactful change.

Under our priority thematic areas of Economic Empowerment and Ending Violence Against Women, The Circle helps provide marginalised and vulnerable women and communities in Rwanda, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Kenya, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Uganda, Sri Lanka, Middle East and UK with:

- Safe spaces and refuges
- Counselling and education
- Awareness raising campaigns through radio
- Domestic abuse support workers
- Psychosocial and therapeutic support
- Skills development to access employment
- Mentoring
- Support through the training of village advocates
- Emergency Assistance
- Training in the workplace
- Workshops to understand their rights

Last year The Circle reached over 20 million people through their communications work, including international media coverage on BBC Radio 4 Woman’s Hour, People.com, and Times Radio and partnerships with global platforms such as TikTok.



The Circle is at a pivotal moment in its history, moving from a start-up to a growing and ambitious organisation, with a strategy that speaks to transformational growth and impact.

## Our Vision

A future where there is safety for all women and girls.

## Our Mission

To economically empower and end violence against marginalised and vulnerable women across the world by building a network of Global Feminist changemakers who fund, advocate, amplify, connect and convene.

## Our Impact

- Read our [2022/2023 Impact report](#).
- Watch our [15 years of impact film](#).
- Read more about [our grass-root partners and the impact we have](#).

## The Role

Role: Trustee

Location: UK based

Remuneration: This is a voluntary position (unpaid)

Term: Trustees normally serve an initial three-year term and this is sometimes then extended for a further three years to a maximum term of six years.

## Job Summary

Are you passionate about global women's rights and would love to contribute to the cause? Do you believe in the difference you can make in the lives of marginalised and vulnerable women across the world?

Embark on a journey of impact with us at The Circle. As we deliver our ambitious 5-year strategy, we're seeking a visionary trustee to join our dedicated Board. We are looking for someone who can support and advise on our programme and advocacy work which is delivered in partnership with a group of grassroots women's rights organisations across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the UK. We are looking for someone who brings programme management, grant giving, and advocacy experience and working with grassroots women's rights organisations. You will be active in the global feminist movement. Your role will be to



ensure that The Circle's support to our partners creates opportunities for women's lives to be improved and for their voices to be heard.

You will understand the international women's rights and gender equality policy frameworks, the key global women's rights organizations, and have a deep understanding of women's rights and gender programming, and especially The Circle's two strategic priorities of ending violence against women and achieving women's economic empowerment. We need you to bring your sector knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion when representing the organisation externally and when working with our board, team and partners.

## Trustee Role Description

We are looking for a Global Feminist with programme management, advocacy and policy experience who is passionate about women's rights and working with grassroots women led partners. You will contribute to driving The Circle's increased impact and ambitions to support more women and girls globally.

The Circle is proud that we have increased our financial and non-financial support to our grassroots partners and especially that we provide unrestricted core funding. We are constantly working to improve our grants management, document and tell the stories of the impact this support is having as well as manage risk and compliance in line with best practice. As well as financial support, we provide ongoing non-financial support to our partners including opportunities to learn from each other, access to support for organisational strengthening, and opportunities to speak about their work to policy makers and Global Feminists around the world. We are therefore looking for someone who can advise and support our grant making and broader support to our partners.

Your understanding of programming and advocacy will be used to advise on strengthening The Circle's communications and fundraising to ensure that our partners work, impact, and voices are core to our organisational identity.

The Circle is fortunate to have a Board that is engaged in and passionate about its work. The Board is responsible for accountability, inspiration, and constructive challenge. Our Board oversees and holds accountable The Circle's executive leadership, ensuring it is always financially sustainable, well-run, and of good reputation. The Board safeguards assets and applies them in line with The Circle's governing documents. Our Trustees come from a range of backgrounds in the charity, public and private sectors. More information on our fantastic Board members can be found here: <https://www.thecircle.ngo/about-us/our-team/>

We recognise the importance of having a diverse and inclusive Board. The Circle is committed to achieving greater diversity and therefore welcome applications from women with a range of life experiences and backgrounds.

## Candidate profile



## Skills and Experience:

- **Women's rights knowledge:** Brings women's rights programme and grants management and advocacy experience and has strong networks and contacts in the women's rights movement globally.
- **Networking Skills:** Ability to build and develop relationships including with our grassroots partners, and key external individuals and relationships relating to programming and advocacy work.
- **Advocacy and Persuasion:** Ability to advocate for feminist causes persuasively, inspiring individual and institutional donors to support the work of The Circle's grass root partners, compelling storytelling and impact-driven arguments.
- **Due diligence:** Understand the core verification and due diligence requirements for grant making and advise The Circle to ensure the organisation meets regulatory and legal requirements as well as manage and mitigate risk.
- **Ethical Integrity:** Commitment to upholding the highest ethical standards.
- **Governance:** An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of trusteeship. Experience as a previous trustee or similar role is desirable but not essential. We are committed to supporting you to develop new skills in your role as our Trustee, for you to take beyond your time with us.
- **Collaboration & Teamwork:** An ability to work effectively as a member of a team, demonstrating an approach which is collaborative and flexible. An ability to think creatively, challenge ways of thinking in a respectful and constructive manner.
- **Values:** A commitment to our values of empowerment, passion, innovation, respect and equality.

## As a Trustee, the key governance duties are:

- Support and provide advice on the purpose, vision, goals, and activities of The Circle.
- Approve operational strategies, operational policies and ethical standards, and monitor and evaluate their implementation.
- Oversee The Circle's financial objectives, plans and budgets, and monitor and evaluate progress.
- Appoint the Chief Executive and delegate to him/her all such authority, powers and functions as is required for the management and implementation of The Circle's activities and affairs.
- Endeavour to attend all Board meetings, ensuring that they are adequately prepared, and to contribute to deliberations.
- Exercise independence of judgement, acting legally and in good faith to promote and protect The Circle's interests, to the exclusion of their own personal and/or any third-party interests. Use information received in their capacity as a director with discretion and to the ends for which it was provided.

## Commitment

The Board meets four times a year, generally weekday early evenings (UK time). Meetings are normally held online. One of our partners is often invited to join us for part of each meeting, which is a way for them to share their work, and for us to remain engaged in what they are doing on the ground. The Board meets in person for a full day twice a year to focus on strategy. Trustees will be expected to represent the



organisation at a range of public and private events, where possible (potentially 3-4 a year), including meetings such as the CSW. Trustees are required to agree to abide by the Trustees' Code of Conduct and to declare as appropriate their business interests.

The Programming & Advocacy Trustee must be able to commit one day a month on average to read papers, attend meetings and events, and contribute between meetings by emails and calls, including with our grassroots partners and staff team as required.

## How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the "Apply" button on the job advert page, complete our online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Document Name-Date (mmyy) e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-012024-TheCircle or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-012024-TheCircle.

Please note that all our clients recruiting in the UK are legally obliged to confirm that the appointee is eligible to work in the UK. As of 1 January 2021, government's new regulations will apply. For further information visit the Home Office website at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>.

## Timeline

Closing Date:	28 April 2024
First stage interviews:	13-17 May 2024
Final interviews:	3 -14 June 2024 (TBC)

## Selection process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the role email to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

## Equality Statement



Equality and diversity are at the core of The Circle NGO values. Staff are expected to work collectively and individually to promote a constructive and sensitive approach to others from a variety of backgrounds, where the work of others is valued and respected.

## Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or support, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email; [thecircle-trustee-programme-advocacy@oxfordhr.com](mailto:thecircle-trustee-programme-advocacy@oxfordhr.com) in the first instance.

## About Oxford HR

Exceptional leaders can have exceptional impact. They can inspire change and propel social and environmental impact organisations towards reaching their world-changing goals. Finding such leaders can be a challenge; and yet their transition into leadership is vital to an organisations mission and success.

At Oxford HR we understand this because we've worked in organisations across the breadth of the sector ourselves. We've also worked with such organisations since 1995; so we appreciate just what benefits impactful people can bring.

This motivates us to enable organisations to recruit and support remarkable leaders – to look beyond the obvious choices and find leaders with refreshing perspectives grounded in solid skills and experience. Leaders who can navigate challenging times and intimidating transitions. Leaders who can make a difference in our journey towards an inclusive, equitable and sustainable future.

Not only do we appoint and support these leaders, but we also work with our clients in partnership to bridge the gaps in leadership and to strengthen their culture of cohesion and collaboration.

More than 300 assignments in 2022

52% of our longlisted candidates are women\*

61% of our longlisted candidates are non-EU/UK/US/CAN/AUS/NZ\*

50% of clients worked with in 2022 were repeat business

50% of clients worked with in 2022 were new clients

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