

# governance, structure & management

Big Leaf Foundation is controlled by its Constitution incorporated on 14 July 2018. It was recognised as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 14 December 2018 (UK Registered Charity Number 1181180) whose only voting members are its charity trustees ('Foundation' model constitution). The charity is run by the Board of Trustees who are responsible for ensuring the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these.

## appointment of trustees

Any person over the age of 16 who is willing to act as a trustee, and has not been disqualified from acting as a trustee by virtue of sections 178 - 180 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision), may be appointed to be a trustee by a decision of the trustees.

There must be at least three trustees and a maximum of eight. Apart from the first trustees, every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years, by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the trustees.

Retiring trustees are eligible for reappointment. But a trustee who has served for three consecutive terms may not be reappointed for a fourth but may be reappointed after an interval of at least one year. In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, the trustees consider the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

Big Leaf Foundation's trustees include business and charitable sector professionals with experience in youth work, education, finance, project management, IT, fundraising and communications.

Big Leaf Foundation is committed to the ongoing professional development of its trustees and their knowledge is kept up to date through internal and external training, knowledge sharing with partner organisations, academic reading and regular participation in project team meetings.

The trustees meet at least six times per year and more regularly in periods of high activity or change. We ask that trustees attend a minimum of two Big Leaf Foundation projects per year as we strongly believe this contributes to a better understanding of our organisation, how we work and the young people we support. All trustees are DBS checked at an enhanced level.

The Programme Managers report on the operational plan at each trustee meeting. Big Leaf Foundation has a Safeguarding Sub Committee that meets to discuss safeguarding and review and update safeguarding policies and processes as needed. This committee includes the DSL, DDSL and the Chair or trustees.

The trustees have delegated authority to the Programme Managers with clear limitations. The Chair and the Programme Managers also have regular meetings to discuss operational matters and resource needs.

## risks & mitigations

Government policies undermine the rights & entitlements of the young people we support

**Mitigation |** Like many other organisations in the sector we are increasingly having to step into a campaigning space to ensure the rights and entitlements of the young people we support are upheld. We recognise that to oppose dangerous and inhumane policies – like the Rwanda Offshoring plans – we need to work together with other like-minded organisations. Big Leaf is now a member of the Together with Refugees coalition and the Refugee and Migrant Children's Consortium. We also engage with MPs at a local level and on individual cases where a young person is at risk. Big Leaf is in the process of developing a campaigns strategy that responds to the current hostile environment and works towards creating a fairer, kinder and more effective asylum process.

Risk of harm to the young people we support

**Mitigation |** Safeguarding is embedded in Big Leaf, with all staff and volunteers trained at an appropriate level through our safeguarding partner, SafeCIC. We have a range of policies in place to support good practice, including safeguarding, health and safety and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers and beneficiaries. Our policies are reviewed and updated at least once a year.

Insufficient funds to achieve our objectives

**Mitigation |** In 2018/19 Big Leaf was reliant on two main funders for the majority of its income. In 2020 we grew our funding base, receiving funding from 10 trusts and organisations. We have continued this growth trend and over the last year we welcomed four new funders and high donors and have increased the number of supporters giving regular monthly donations. Our focus over the next year will be on securing multi-year core funding to build long-term sustainability and help us meet the growth in demand for our services.

## our team

Our team includes refugee care and migration studies experts, experienced youth workers, volunteers with lived experience of forced displacement and finance, project management, fundraising and communications specialists.

[www.bigleaffoundation.org.uk/about](http://www.bigleaffoundation.org.uk/about)

