

We are looking for a trustee with a strong finance and business background who will help us grow our private sector networks.

Term	Minimum three years, renewable
Remuneration	Unremunerated. Reasonable expenses reimbursed.
Board lead	Private sector partnerships and corporate engagement
Committee	Finance and Audit Committee, with an invitation to attend Fundraising Committee
Location	This role is based in the United Kingdom or Europe.
Closing date	Applications considered as received.

About Build It International

Build It International equips young people in Zambia from disadvantaged communities with construction skills, life skills, and real work experience so they can earn a sustainable living. Our rural cohorts help build the schools, clinics, and community facilities that their communities urgently need. Since 2007, we have trained more than 2,500 young people and built over 60 schools and clinics, benefiting more than 400,000 Zambians.

Our 2023 Impact Study found that 88 % of graduates were in paid construction work 6 months after training. Average monthly income increases by up to five times one year after graduation and up to nine times five years after graduation. Eight impact studies over more than fifteen years, using consistent measures and a comparison group, give us unusually strong evidence for an organisation of our size.

We work from our Centre for Excellence on the outskirts of Lusaka, through mobile training cohorts, and through community construction projects in rural Zambia. Our annual income is approximately £1 million. We are firmly rooted in Zambia and our 2025–2028 Strategy commits us to move from delivery alone towards supporting the wider development of Zambia’s construction and skills sector.

Governance and the board

Build It International is a registered charity in the UK (1115989) and a company limited by guarantee in Zambia (PACRA 120150137444). Although two legal bodies, since 2022, it has functioned as one organisation governed by a joint Board of Trustees. A memorandum of understanding guides the relationship between the two legal bodies.

Both boards are represented on the Finance and Audit, Fundraising, and Nominations and Remuneration Committees. A trustee also chairs the Safeguarding Committee.

Build It International fully understands the importance of effective governance for the well-being of the organisation and invests in its board to achieve this. Trustees must be enthusiastic advocates of the role of NGOs in international development and comfortable working on strategic and policy matters. They are also expected to contribute to expanding our community of support.

We are recruiting three trustees to the board in 2026. Each appointee takes the board lead for one area of our work. This role description covers one of the three; the others are advertised separately.

Why this role, and why now

Securing funding and support through corporate partnerships is a key priority, and our strong programme quality and proven impact support this ambition. We have data-driven evidence of what our training achieves, programmes that are tangible and easy to see, and work that sits naturally alongside the environmental, social, and governance commitments of many sectors including construction, built environment, infrastructure, and finance businesses. This combination is a strong proposition for the right corporate partner, and recent wins with private sector funders show it can be converted.

What we lack is depth of reach into the UK and European private sector. We are looking for a trustee who understands how partnership and sponsorship decisions are actually made inside a business, including the use and development of specific philanthropic pools of capital. They will help us to open doors and use their network and connections to introduce us to prospects we would not otherwise reach.

We are also developing social enterprise ventures to diversify our income. This work needs a critical friend on the board who understands business, who can interrogate a business case properly, and ask hard questions about margin and risk, and business opportunity.

What this trustee will bring

Essential

- A strong finance or business background at senior level, with the ability to read and interrogate management accounts, cashflow forecasts, reserves positions, and business cases.
- Established networks across the UK or European private sector, and a genuine willingness to use them on our behalf.
- Understanding of how corporate decisions on partnership, sponsorship, and environmental, social, and governance commitments are made and funded.

Desirable

- A background in private equity, asset management, investment, or corporate finance.
- Networks in infrastructure and finance, as well as African investments.
- Experience of social enterprise, blended finance, or impact investment, particularly in African markets.
- Previous service on a finance and audit committee, or as a charity treasurer.
- Knowledge of Zambia or Sub-Saharan Africa.

What you will do

- Take the board lead on private sector partnerships and corporate engagement.
- Introduce Build It International to companies, networks, and individuals who could become partners, members, or funders, and support the CEO and Head of Corporate Partnerships in converting those introductions.
- Advise on the development of suitable fundraising products for the corporate market.

- Bring commercial rigour to our social enterprise pilots, testing the business cases and the assumptions behind them.
- Contribute finance and business judgement across the board's wider work, including reserves, cost recovery, and financial sustainability.

Summary of trustee responsibilities

- Ensure that the charity focuses on a clear vision, mission, strategic direction, and effective execution.
- Monitor the performance of the charity.
- Ensure good governance and compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Act as guardians of all the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment, and proper application.
- Take the board lead for one aspect of our work, developing a deeper understanding of the related issues and advising and supporting staff.

All trustees will bring

- Commitment to our vision, mission, values, and strategy.
- Good, independent judgement and a willingness to be flexible, tolerant, and diplomatic.
- The ability to demonstrate Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership.
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to work constructively as part of a board.
- The ability to make decisions impartially and objectively in the best interests of the organisation.
- Willingness to be an advocate for Build It International and to support fundraising.

In addition, trustees should

- Have a good understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities, and liabilities of trusteeship, in the UK or Zambia. Training can be provided.
- Commit to devoting the time and effort necessary to fulfil the responsibilities outlined.
- Have experience of, or a genuine willingness to understand, the context in which we work in Zambia and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Sign up to our Code of Conduct.
- Declare relevant interests on appointment and keep that declaration current. We maintain a register of interests, and any matter in which a trustee has a personal, professional, or financial interest is handled through our conflicts of interest policy. Making introductions and advocating for Build It International is welcomed and expected; taking part in a decision where you hold an interest is not.

Terms of appointment

Time commitment

Trustees make a commitment of an average of around two hours per week, the equivalent of 10 to 12 days per year, plus attendance at four board meetings and one away day. It is a requirement that trustees are easily contacted by email.

Location

Board meetings are held in Central London and Lusaka on a mid-week afternoon, and also on Microsoft Teams. An annual away day is held online in September or October. Our offices are in Shrewsbury, United Kingdom, and at our Centre for Excellence at 10 Miles, Chibombo, Zambia.

Committee meetings are held online before each board meeting, usually for 90 minutes.

Remuneration

Trustees are not remunerated but may reclaim expenses directly incurred in carrying out their role for the charity, on submission of the appropriate receipts.

Term

A minimum of three years, renewable.

How to apply

Please email a cover letter and CV to Alison McKittrick at alisonmckittrick@builditinternational.org.

In your cover letter, please tell us what draws you to Build It International and what you would want to contribute in your first year.

It is important that we get to understand each other before a decision is made. After an initial call, a face-to-face meeting will be arranged. This usually includes prospective board members sitting in on a board meeting.

There is no fixed closing date. Applications are considered as they are received, and we will close the search once we have made the appointment.

Thank you for your interest.