

# The Bow Foodbank Limited

## Executive Director ( a new position)



Charity Number: 1162185 A company limited by guarantee: 08852728

[www.bowfoodbank.org](http://www.bowfoodbank.org)

## Background

The Bow Foodbank Limited (BFBL) is a registered charity, founded in 2014. Our mission is to support those in financial crisis through the provision of food and essential items, and through additional free confidential support with legal, welfare and benefits issues.

The charity was formed by a coalition of community and faith-based organisations in response to the growing local need for emergency food support. Our operating model is underpinned by the desire to protect the dignity of those who ask for support. We have a “free choice” model, challenging the stigma by providing a shop-style layout for clients’ own choice – although this has not been possible since March 2020 because of the distancing regulations.

A key element of our approach is that we do not ask clients for personal information about themselves, only demographic questions.

We have two foodbanks, both within Tower Hamlets- one in Bow which operates on a Monday and the second in Bethnal Green which operates on a Wednesday.

## **Recent developments**

Prior to the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, up to March 2020 we were supporting around 100/120 clients each week at Bow Foodbank but had reached capacity. We sought premises to start a second foodbank in another part of the borough and were fortunate to set up in Bethnal Green in February 2020.

From that point the numbers attending at both foodbanks escalated- we had to move the Bow Foodbank to larger premises in May 2020 and in March 2021 the Bethnal Green Foodbank has also had to move to premises able to serve the growing client numbers.

At mid-March 2021 our weekly client numbers had reached over 1,000, including 802 family groups. We are providing additional support for over 2,000 children. The borough of Tower Hamlets was an area blighted by multiple social deprivation before the pandemic, particularly among the elderly and children, and realistically we believe that the expected recession will disproportionately affect our community for some time.

Currently we are purchasing a significant proportion of the food and essential items that we distribute and a key role in establishing financial stability will be the expansion of the network of donors of food and services.

Pre-pandemic the organisation was entirely run by volunteers, but as the scale of operations increased we were fortunate in taking on 1.8FTE temporary staff to manage day to day operations and support the 200+ volunteers. The contracts of these freelance staff will cease at the end of June 2021. After the recruitment of the Executive Director post, we will begin the recruitment of a full-time Operations Manager post.

## **The Position**

Thank you for considering applying for the Executive Director position. We hope that you will feel inspired to join us and to play a key role in the development and growth of our organisation so that we can continue and develop our support to those in our community who are in food poverty crisis.

This is a new position and we intend further recruitment with the advice of the Executive Director when in post. The need is to introduce a staffing structure to meet our current and future operational needs.

We are a diverse organisation serving a diverse client group, and we actively encourage the widest possible range of candidates and welcome applicants regardless of race, age, disability, faith, gender and sexual orientation.

We encourage candidates with lived experience of poverty, exclusion and homelessness.

## **Role overview**

We are looking for an Executive Director to lead strategic development and senior management functions. These include volunteer management, finance, fundraising and communications. There are several teams of volunteers operating in different roles, such as foodbank and packing sessions, stock management, and communications, and the Executive Director will be responsible overall for overseeing an effective management structure. The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring the smooth running and development of the services offered by the Foodbank.

The successful applicant must have the qualities and experience necessary to lead our committed and dedicated diverse volunteer team. They will have proven experience in creating clear strategic business plans, in financial responsibility, and in fulfilling goals.

## **Key Job Responsibilities:**

- To take overall responsibility for the operational management and future development of BFBL;
- To be engaged with the Board in the development of an appropriate staffing structure, including both paid and volunteer positions;
- To manage and oversee the large number of volunteers including the establishment and management of a volunteer team structure;
- To be responsible for fundraising in conjunction with the Treasurer to ensure long term financial stability for the organisation;
- To ensure Health and Safety compliance, appropriate training of staff and volunteers, and understanding of and adherence to the charity's policies
- To be engaged with the Board in securing suitable, long term premises;
- To take responsibility for developing a network of donors of food and services;
- To take overall responsibility for BFBL's finances in conjunction with the Treasurer;
- To develop and manage a clear social media and communications strategy;
- To ensure compliance with company and charity law, including attendance at, and reporting to, Board meetings and other committees as agreed;
- To build professional relationships with local government and other agencies in Tower Hamlets and neighbouring boroughs advocate on behalf of clients on issues negatively impacting them; and
- To advocate for equality and diversity within the organisation, developing our culture of inclusion

## **Person Specification**

### **Knowledge, Skills and Experience (essential):**

- Experience of operating in a senior management role within a charity organisation or relevant sector (e.g. unemployment, food poverty, mental health, local government).
- Experience of working with volunteers and understanding of the volunteer culture.
- Fundraising skills including bid-writing, donor acquisition and donor management.
- A strategic thinker able to plan ahead, anticipate, lead and adapt to operational and transformational change.
- Able to demonstrate understanding of and commitment to the organisation's core values.
- Good IT skills, with a working knowledge of MS Office applications and Google Docs

### **Knowledge, Skills and Experience (desirable):**

- Knowledge of reasons why people suffer food poverty and related legislative, benefit system and other issues.
- Knowledge of local government and local voluntary and statutory services.
- An effective networker.
- Experience of working across a spectrum of cultures.

## Personal Qualities:

- Commitment to the goals, ethos, values, and vision of BFBL, including a belief in the importance of all people of different backgrounds working together and respecting and valuing each other's contributions.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the understanding to deal with vulnerable people.
- Flexible to work at different times and in different places, with the ability to organise work, take responsibility and work on own initiative, adapting to the circumstances as and when required.

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**Reports to:** The Chair of Trustees of The Bow Foodbank Limited

**Salary:** circa £42,000 pa

**Contract:** 1-year fixed term, with continuation subject to securing funding. There will be a three-month probationary period.

**Hours:** 35 hours per week (days and hours to be agreed). Some weekend and/or evening working may be required.

**Holidays:** 25 days plus public holidays.

**Pension contribution:** 3% of gross salary.

**Location:** Initially home based, with travel to the foodbank locations. We are planning to secure office premises in proximity to the foodbanks.

The position is open to a suitable job share.

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## Application process

To apply for the post we are looking for a CV and, separate to that, answers to the following questions on no more than two pages.

1. Why do you want to work for Bow Foodbank?
2. Provide examples of your experience related to the post.
3. Talk us through a related achievement that you are proud of.

Please send your CV with the covering statement to [foodbankbow@gmail.com](mailto:foodbankbow@gmail.com) by 0900 on Monday 26 April.

First stage interview: this will take the form of a remote discussion on 3 – 7 May, probably during an evening.

Second stage: you will be asked to visit Bow Foodbank on the morning of Monday 10 May, and if possible, to visit Bethnal Green Foodbank on the afternoon of Wednesday 12 May, where you will meet volunteers and see the operations. Those you meet will feed back to the Appointment Panel.

Third stage interview: there will be a final interview with the Appointment Panel, if possible in person, in week beginning 17 May. In preparation for this you will be asked to write a proposal, in no more than two pages, and making reasonable assumptions, about how you would go about obtaining sufficient funding to secure the charity's future and the onward direction of the foodbanks.

It is hoped that the offer will be made informally by 21 May, and it is hoped that the successful candidate can take up the post before the end of June.

Thank you. We look forward to receiving your application.