

Good Law Project

Board Recruitment

Spring 2021

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Our mission is to achieve change through the law. We defend, define and change the law to uphold democracy, protect the environment and ensure no one is left behind.



I am not a lawyer. But I am an engaged, politically conscious and responsible citizen and I could not be more committed to Good Law Project's aims. It was a real privilege to be asked by its founder, Jolyon Maugham QC, to chair the Board of what was then, in 2017/18, a tiny organisation with a huge ambition: to improve our country by working together with the public and using the law as a tool to do so.

I don't think I could have ever imagined how quickly and well this imaginative organisation would take off: how significant its social media presence would become, how successful its legal cases would be, how much financial support the public would be prepared to give it - in such a short time. Or how acutely necessary its work would be. But that is what has happened in three short years.

And so now the Board of Good Law Project needs to evolve. Good Law Project has a tremendously exciting and demanding set of opportunities before it and we need a larger, stronger, more diverse Board to grasp those - and manage the risks that go hand in hand with them, steering the organisation forward.

If you believe in what we do and share our values - if you are bold, honest and decisive - and can bring the perspectives, experience and attributes set out in greater detail below to a non-executive role, in the public interest - then please consider applying to join our Board.

As we have said publicly in other contexts, we are not for or against Government, but we are for good governance. If you are too, as a Board member you can help us ensure we stick to our values, continue to build a positive, collaborative culture and a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect and understanding, and perform to the highest of standards in everything we do. We look forward to hearing from you.

Rupert Evans
Chair of the Board, Good Law Project



About Good Law Project

What we do

Our mission is to achieve change through the law. We are a not for profit campaign organisation that uses the law to protect the interests of the public. We challenge abuses of power, exploitation, inequality and injustice. We use litigation to hold decision-makers to account and campaign to influence change. We are highly innovative users of social media and other digital technologies in pursuit of our goals. Under our current strategy, we have been successfully focusing on three thematic areas agreed by our Board:

Upholding democracy

We push for transparency in the public interest and have just successfully challenged Government's failure to publish contracts for PPE. As the High Court judge said, "...the public were entitled to see who (these vast quantities of public money were) going to, what it was being spent on and how the relevant contracts were awarded." We are upholding fundamental rights such as the right to protest through our work on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021 and have issued a detailed legal briefing to MPs on the problems with the Bill. And we are upholding constitutional rights: it may feel a long time ago now, but in September 2019 we were behind the Supreme Court case that decided that Boris Johnson's extended prorogation of Parliament was unlawful, as it had frustrated Parliament's ability to hold Government to account.

See: <https://goodlawproject.org/issues/upholding-democracy/>

Protecting the environment

We use environmental litigation to strengthen and uphold environmental laws. We've recently been putting pressure on Government to comply with NetZero targets in the Climate Change Act and in relation to the proposed expansion of Heathrow Airport. We sought to compel Government to review its Clean Air Policy and in another judicial review Government had to concede that it must review its Energy National Policy Statement that had been allowing fossil fuel projects to be fast-tracked through the planning system.

See: <https://goodlawproject.org/issues/environment/>

Ensuring no one gets left behind

We use the law to advance the rights of those experiencing injustice or inequality. We seek to amplify and support marginalised and under-represented voices and communities. We have challenged Government's failure to protect low-income families during the pandemic, developed ground-breaking litigation to protect the rights of care leavers and trans people, and are working with grassroots organisations to tackle the injustice of the Windrush compensation scheme. You may also have noticed our Twitter takeover scheme, where campaigners and charities who represent marginalised groups can take over our executive Director Jolyon Maugham's Twitter account and reach his 277,000 followers.

See: <https://goodlawproject.org/issues/no-one-left-behind/>

You can read more detail about our current and past work here:

<https://goodlawproject.org/news/>

Our Strategy Summary is available on request from our governance consultant

Dr Vanessa Davies on:

vanessaldavies@me.com

How we do it

Good Law Project Limited is a private company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. It is a not-for-profit, and was established in 2017 by Jolyon Maugham QC, with three additional directors joining the founder and executive director on the Board in late 2018.¹

Good Law Project's successful trajectory to date has been in a number of respects "meteoric". Although it had already had considerable casework success by late 2018, in organisational and governance terms it was still embryonic at that date. By spring 2021 it had achieved a recurrent donor base of over 17,000 people (from just fewer than 2,000 at the start of 2020), with almost 200,000 supporters in the Good Law Project mailing list by April 2021. By 31 January 2021, Good Law Project had built general reserves of £973,000.

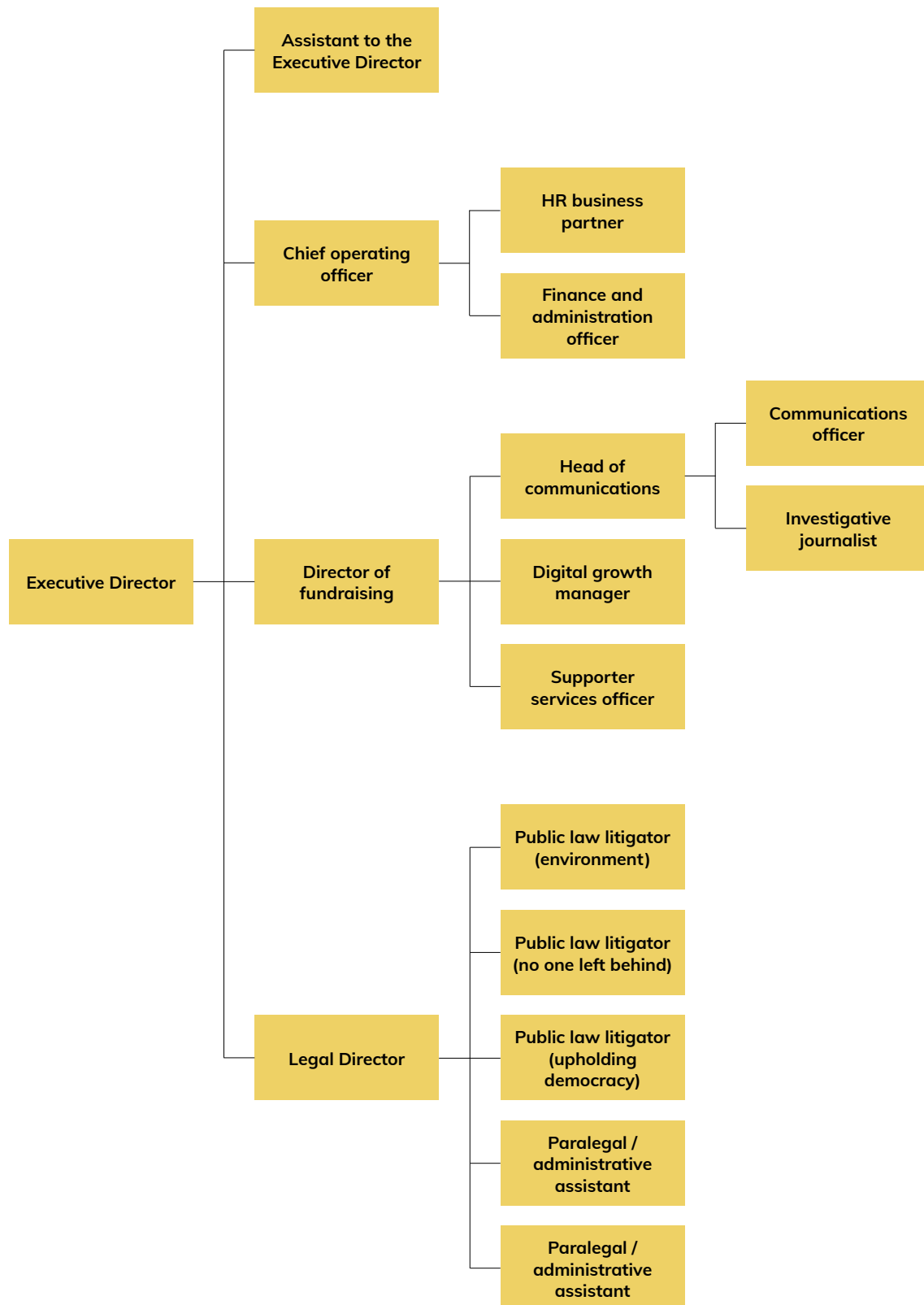
Good Law Project had taken on nine staff by the end of 2020 and a further four early in 2021. From April 2021 there are 17 roles in the plan, almost all of which are filled or actively in recruitment. A further three to five roles are expected to be created during 2021, taking the established team to 20-22 by the end of the year.

Our staff are organised into three closely integrated teams and have a hugely energetic and positive working culture, much of which has been developed despite the fact that the majority of colleagues have not yet met in person due to the pandemic.

Good Law Project also works closely with a select group of solicitors and barristers, who advise on issues and on the merits of possible cases, and who in due course handle that litigation and "represent" us in court: Good Law Project is their client in those instances. Many of them provide their services at below full market rates, and sometimes *pro bono*. We have qualified solicitors amongst our staff, as well as our own research capacity with an investigative journalist on our team. We employ communications and fundraising staff as well, and a part-time Chief Operating Officer who oversees our corporate support and governance functions with the help of a small team and some outsourced service provision.

1. Its Articles of Association under the 2006 Companies Act can be found here:
<http://goodlawproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Good-Law-Project-articles-2019.pdf>

Our team



Although Good Law Project has existed for four years it was only fifteen months ago that we hired our first employee. In that short period of time we have become one of the fastest growing and most impactful not-for-profits in the country. Our people-powered funding model provides the foundation for work that is brave and uncompromising. And, we believe, we are hardly scratching the surface of what the law can do to promote the better society for which we, and all progressives, yearn. We would love you to join us - and help us realise our ambitions.



Jolyon Maugham, Executive Director



Over the last twelve months it's been a privilege to watch Good Law Project go from strength to strength, achieving explosive growth and most importantly outsized impact. This is the result of a deeply committed staff team and Board, coupled with an ability to move quickly and decisively to tackle the biggest injustices of the day.

What I value most in Board members is the ability to draw on expertise and experience to guide the staff team as we consolidate our early successes, whilst we also pursue bold, innovative ideas as to other ways we can achieve the change we want in society.

Trish Murray, Director of Fundraising

The law is what stands between truth and chaos. It is the framework of society which ensures our leaders can only do what we have authorised them to do. In a time of would-be dictators and disruptors who see opportunity in chaos, upholding the law has never been so important. It prevents the weak being abused by the strong. There can be no better gift from an old man to the next generation than to help ensure that the law can protect them.



John, Good Law Project Supporter

Funding

We derive our income from regular and one-off general donations from members of the public and crowd-funded donations to cover the costs of specific litigation. We also apply for philanthropic grants and high value donations for particular projects, but this is to date a small proportion of our income. The money we raise covers the costs of our own staff team and of the legal teams we instruct to develop and run our cases, as well as our corporate overheads. We take 10% from crowdfunded case-specific income and project grants and donations as a contribution towards those core costs. When we win a case, where it is appropriate we will recover costs from the other side. We plan to match income with expenditure and maintain a reasonable level of reserves to ensure we can respond to opportunities and adapt in the face of adverse events. We do not exist to generate a profit. We have clear Board-agreed criteria for deciding which cases to run and what, if any, our levels of exposure to costs (our own and adverse) should be. We have also set aside monies into a Legal Defence fund to underwrite our adverse costs risks.

Our income amounted to £2.9m in 2020/21 and our expenditure to £1.8m. In 2019/20, those figures were £0.7m and £0.6m respectively.

The Board is responsible for agreeing our donations policy and we are committed to transparency in our finances. Our Annual Report gives further details:

<https://goodlawproject.org/annual-report-20-21/>

Governance

The staff team has worked intensively to develop the governance infrastructure underpinning Good Law Project, ensuring as far as possible that it keeps pace with Good Law Project's front-line casework, fundraising and campaigning success. In autumn 2020, the conjuncture of rapid growth in scale, impact and reputation, with a vacancy on the Board, represented an appropriate point for Good Law Project to strengthen its governance. A light-touch review of its Board membership arrangements and wider governance was undertaken, and the recommendations are now being taken forward – they include the current Board recruitment exercise. Good Law Project is adopting a straightforward, proportionate approach to governance processes, aligned with its developing strategy and values. It is committed to the principle that robust and transparent processes are an important foundation for building successful outcomes in case-work and campaigning.

Looking ahead

There are many exciting challenges ahead for Good Law Project. We have more work to do to develop and articulate our goals and strategies. We will be working on refining our approach to our thematic workstreams, to make sure we either occupy a clear and unique space on an issue, or partner effectively with other organisations and individuals working in a similar area to bring about change. We know that the issues brought into such sharp focus by the pandemic and Government's handling of the response to it have created (and will continue to create) almost inexhaustible scope for our immediate work in making sure no one gets left behind and in upholding democracy. At the same time, we want to ensure that the medium and longer term need to campaign for the right response to climate change is not forgotten and that decision makers are held to account and the law changed where it needs to be. In future we may use litigation to challenge other "bad actors", such as big companies.

Over the coming year we'll also be developing our digital campaigning and audience development approach, and implementing a new customer relationship management system and website. We also have important plans to develop our HR policies and processes.

Our Board needs to help us navigate through this huge range of strategic and tactical possibilities, whilst also ensuring oversight of the development of the organisation, and its efficient operation to the highest of ethical standards, in a context of incredibly fast growth. That will mean addressing whether, for example, our structural business model is best suited for achieving our goals, and so our future plans could include adding new, separate but linked entities to a possible "Good Law Group."



What's involved in the role and who we are looking for

The work of our Board

Good Law Project is not a registered charity but it does adhere to all of the principles of good governance laid down by the Charity Commission which are relevant. We have formally adopted the Charity Governance Code and we regularly review our practices to ensure compliance.

Board members are specifically engaged in the following areas:

Leadership, mission and strategy

Our Board has ultimate responsibility for leading Good Law Project. It sets the direction for the organisation and approves policy and strategy, including our thematic workstreams and our objectives. It takes account of short-term pressures but also maintains sight of broader long-term trends.

The Board represents the organisation with external stakeholders and accepts collective accountability for the organisation's work in the public interest.

Board members have particular expertise, wisdom and experience that they use to provide support to the SMT.

Values and culture

Our Board upholds and supports our values and identity. Members (and staff) will adhere to the Good Law Project Code of Conduct. The Board leads by example and ensures that Good Law Project's culture and values are developed and adopted appropriately.

You can read our Code of Conduct here:

<https://goodlawproject.org/good-law-project-code-of-conduct/>

Oversight

Our Board monitors the work and performance of the organisation and holds the Senior Management Team to account for its delegated responsibilities. Board members are sufficiently knowledgeable about the workings of the organisation to be answerable for its actions, yet able to stand back from the day-to-day management of the organisation in order to retain an objective, longer-term view. Board members offer support and challenge to the staff team.

Good governance

Our Board ensures that sound and effective governance arrangements are in place so that the organisation can operate in accordance with the good governance principles and organisational values agreed by the Board. Each Board member is expected to contribute personally to the successful implementation of our governance principles and the achievement of the organisation's aims, objectives and mission, and to accept collective responsibility for the Board operating in accordance with its agreed role.

We have published longer statements on the role of our Board and its Chair here:

<https://goodlawproject.org/good-law-project-role-of-board-and-chair/>

Our Board meets up to six times a year formally – either virtually or in person in central London as circumstances allow. Board members also offer support and advice on request from senior staff and are kept involved through regular communications and the chance to feed into specific workstreams. One of the formal meetings is devoted to steering the development of future strategy and business plans for Good Law Project. The Board also agrees the annual report and accounts, looking back at our achievements over the past year.

The time commitment needed is variable but not onerous, and amounts to between half and one day a month, flexibly given. But we are a small and young organisation and are developing quickly in a fast-paced environment, and we look to our Board members for agile wisdom and guidance as we do.

A role as a Board member is unremunerated but Good Law Project will reimburse all reasonable expenses occurred in being a member of the Board, in accordance with our approved expenses policy.

The people we are looking for

We'd like to appoint two new Board members, with skills, perspectives and experience both to complement those of our current Board members and to expand the Board's capacity and capability to meet the exciting times ahead for Good Law Project. Although very much a not-for-profit we would not want applicants who come from an entrepreneurial, start-up, background to be dissuaded from applying. We are looking for a wide range of attributes and hope very much to appoint people who can demonstrate their talents, personal attributes, track record or potential in one or more of the areas set out below.

Organisational expertise - essential

The speed and scale of Good Law Project's growth since the Board was established in late 2018, especially financially, mean that it is vital the Board can support and scrutinise the organisation's management and governance adequately: this is especially significant as our most recently departing Board member, a seasoned chief executive, had important experience in this area. Most organisational functions are of course delegated from the Board to our executive team on a day to day basis. But collectively, the Board needs to maintain a sufficient understanding of those functions to exercise proper oversight of the management of Good Law Project, and to support the Senior Management Team to develop the organisation sustainably, maintaining its values and positive culture. So we are looking for candidates who have the knowledge and experience to help us build a sustainable, resilient organisation which will thrive in the face of future challenges.

Candidates need to embrace positively the notion that good management and governance are the launch-pad for executing our values of bravery, honesty and decisiveness, and that successful outcomes in our front-line work are more likely to be achieved if what gets done behind the scenes is working well. We think the following areas are likely to be needed over the coming years and so candidates should be able to demonstrate a successful track-record in relation to one (or more) of them:

- Organisational management and development, including (for example) change management, compliance or corporate support
- Community or grass roots capability building
- Digital technology expertise, especially in relation to (for example) marketing, campaigning and social media, ethical management of data
- Fundraising and communications.

Personal attributes - essential

We are absolutely committed to ensuring our Board is more diverse than it currently is, and we don't only mean in relation to statutory protected characteristics.

We want, for example, to be able to shape our “no one left behind” theme with authenticity, and clearly signal the seriousness of our intent here. So candidates who bring lived experience in the areas of race or disability, or come from or represent diverse communities or minority groups would be especially welcome. We include socio-economic diversity here as well, and believe that candidates with lived experience of poverty or structural inequality could also make a particularly important contribution to the Board. We are prepared to offer mentoring support to a relatively inexperienced Board member who demonstrates great future potential.

Any prospective Board member must be able to demonstrate understanding of and adherence to Good Law Project's values and a confident and well-honed set of ethical behaviours. Board members need to inspire and motivate the executive team to learn and develop: this is important for our staff in a small, flexible organisation that punches above its weight in recruitment terms but has relatively few career pathways internally.

We are looking for Board members with a consensual style of working, and who can bring both a forensic capacity for scrutiny and challenge and a clear vision of the bigger picture and the longer term. We are keen to guard against “group think” on the Board and so candidates will need to demonstrate their independence of thought, as well as their sensitivity to the perspectives of others. We want Board members to be energetic and passionate advocates for what we do, basing that on excellence in the execution of their governance role.

Thematic expertise - desirable

It would be helpful if new Board members are able to lead and support us in relation to two of our current strategic themes: protecting the environment, and ensuring no-one gets left behind.

Candidates who can demonstrate a track record of expertise and involvement in one or other of these areas are therefore welcome, but need also to be able to demonstrate some of the organisational expertise set out above.



How to apply

If you think you fit the requirements set out above in section 2, you need to send

- A CV (no more than 2 pages)
- A personal statement setting out how you meet the requirements and what you will bring to Good Law Project. This should be no more than 2 pages long.

Send to: jobs@goodlawproject.org

Please use the message subject header “Board member recruitment.”

If you would like a confidential informal discussion about the role before applying, please get in touch with our governance consultant, Dr Vanessa Davies at vanessaldavies@me.com. We are committed to inclusive working practices. If there are any reasonable adjustments you think we could make to the application process, please do get in touch.

We need to receive your application by 11.30pm on 1st June. Preliminary interviews for long-listed candidates with the Executive Director and Senior Management Team will take between 9th and 16th June. Final interviews for shortlisted candidates with the current Board will take place on 21st or 22nd of June. If you are unable to make any particular dates in the windows for interviews, please let us know in your cover letter.