

BGEN Fundraising and Development Trustee



ROLE	Fundraising and Development Trustee, Botanic Gardens Education Network
LOCATION	Home-based, with occasional face-to-face meetings if required
CONTACT	Pre-application enquiries to the BGEN Chair - lauren.daly@obg.ox.ac.uk Application to the BGEN Coordinator: info@bgen.org.uk
CLOSING DATE	11.59PM, Tuesday 24th November 2026

Help Shape the Future of Plant and Environmental Education

BGEN is seeking a Fundraising & Development Trustee to join its Board and help deliver the organisation's Strategic Plan by strengthening our long-term financial sustainability and supporting BGEN's strategic development.

This voluntary role will sit in the Treasury Workstream, working closely with the Treasurer, BGEN Chair, BGEN Coordinator and fellow Trustees to help develop a realistic, robust and sustainable strategic approach to fundraising, identify new income and partnership opportunities, and support the organisation to develop in ways that increase its impact and strengthen its financial and operational future.

BGEN is looking for someone with significant strategic and delivery experience, preferably gained in a related sector. This role is particularly well grounded in Strategic Goal 4 of BGEN's Strategic Plan 2026-2030, which commits BGEN to securing grant funding, developing ethical sponsorship

and partnership income, and creating a sponsorship/partnership strategy, with the ultimate measure of achieving at least 40% non-membership income.

About BGEN

Founded in 1989, BGEN (Botanic Gardens Education Network) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and the professional network for plant and nature educators across the UK and Ireland.

We connect educators and community engagement professionals, build professional capacity and provide opportunities to share knowledge, experience and best practice through our Annual Conference, training, networking and wider member activities.

BGEN also advocates for its members, helping strengthen the voice of plant and green-space education on matters that affect the sector.

Why Become a Trustee?

As a BGEN Trustee, you will help shape the future of the organisation and contribute to its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, including strengthening and connecting the sector, increasing the visibility and collective impact of members, developing BGEN's role as a recognised sector voice, and building a financially sustainable and resilient organisation.

Trustees bring different skills, experiences and perspectives to the Board. You do not need previous Trustee experience or to work in a botanic garden. We welcome people with relevant professional or transferable skills who share BGEN's commitment to strengthening plant and nature education.

About the Treasury Workstream

The Treasury Workstream supports the Board in ensuring BGEN remains financially sustainable, resilient and appropriately resourced to deliver its charitable aims and Strategic Plan. It provides oversight of BGEN's financial position, supports effective financial planning and management, and helps the Board consider the financial implications of its strategic decisions.

As BGEN develops, a key priority for the workstream is to strengthen and diversify the organisation's income. Our 2026–2030 Strategic Plan sets an ambition to increase income from sources beyond membership, including grant funding, ethical sponsorship and strategic partnerships, enabling BGEN to invest sustainably in its members, programmes and wider charitable impact.

The Fundraising & Development Trustee will bring additional expertise to the Treasury Workstream, helping BGEN develop a proportionate fundraising approach, identify appropriate funding and partnership opportunities, and consider how these can support the organisation's longer-term strategic development, including supporting advocacy work.

About the Trustee Role

The Fundraising & Development Trustee will play an important role in strengthening BGEN's long-term financial sustainability and helping the organisation develop the resources needed to deliver its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan.

BGEN currently relies significantly on membership subscriptions, alongside income from training and our Annual Conference. Over the coming years, we want to develop a more diverse and resilient funding model, reducing our reliance on membership income and increasing income from grants, sponsorship, partnerships and other appropriate sources. Our Strategic Plan sets an ambition for at least 40% of BGEN's income to come from sources other than membership by 2030.

This growth must be responsible and aligned with BGEN's values. The Fundraising and Development Trustee will help BGEN identify and assess potential funders, sponsors and partners, ensuring that opportunities support our charitable objectives and do not compromise our environmental, social or ethical principles. In line with BGEN's existing approach to responsible investment, we will seek transparent and accountable relationships and avoid funding relationships that conflict with our commitment to biodiversity, environmental responsibility and ethical practice.

Working collaboratively with the Treasury Workstream, Chair, Coordinator and fellow Trustees, the Fundraising & Development Trustee will help develop a realistic and proportionate fundraising strategy, identify appropriate opportunities and strengthen BGEN's capacity to secure sustainable income. The role will also contribute to BGEN's wider strategic development, helping the Board consider how new funding, partnerships and opportunities can enable the organisation to increase its impact without exceeding its capacity.

About You

This role will appeal to someone who enjoys identifying opportunities, developing ideas and building relationships that help organisations become more sustainable and increase their impact.

You will have experience in fundraising, grant funding, sponsorship, partnerships, business development or organisational development, or bring relevant transferable skills from another sector. You do not need to be an expert across all of these areas.

You will enjoy thinking strategically about where an organisation wants to go and identifying realistic operational ways to help it get there. You will be comfortable balancing ambition with available resources and capacity, and considering not only whether an opportunity could generate income, but whether it is right for BGEN and aligned with our values.

If you enjoy building relationships, developing opportunities and helping a small charity turn its ambitions into sustainable growth and greater impact, this could be a rewarding Trustee role for you.

Key Responsibilities of the Role

Working with the Treasury workstream, the BGEN Chair, BGEN Coordinator and fellow Trustees, you will:

- Help develop and review BGEN's fundraising and income-generation strategy, supporting the Strategic Plan ambition to diversify income and reduce reliance on membership subscriptions.
- Identify and assess appropriate funding opportunities, including grants, charitable trusts and foundations, sponsorship, partnerships, and other sustainable sources of income.
- Lead the development and submittance of strong funding applications and proposals, working with Trustees and the Coordinator to bring together the information, evidence and budgets required.
- Help develop BGEN's approach to ethical fundraising and sponsorship, including reviewing the existing policy, ensuring prospective funders, sponsors and partners are considered against BGEN's charitable objectives, values and environmental and ethical principles.
- Develop and strengthen relationships with potential funders, sponsors and strategic partners, helping BGEN build sustainable relationships rather than relying solely on individual funding applications.
- Support BGEN's strategic development, helping the Board identify and assess opportunities that could increase the organisation's reach, impact or financial resilience.
- Monitor progress against agreed fundraising and development objectives, helping the Board understand what is working and where priorities or approaches may need to change.
- Bring relevant professional knowledge, networks and connections to BGEN, and help build the organisation's confidence and capability in fundraising and development.
- Promote a collaborative approach to fundraising across the Board, recognising that successful fundraising requires appropriate input and support from Trustees and the wider organisation.

Core Trustee Responsibilities

- Contribute to BGEN's vision, mission and strategic priorities and act in the best interests of the charity and its members.
- Ensure BGEN complies with its governing document, charity law and relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Support sound financial management, financial sustainability and effective risk management.
- Contribute to effective, transparent and evidence-based Board decision-making and agreed actions.
- Work collaboratively with fellow Trustees and the BGEN Coordinator, supporting a positive and constructive Board culture.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality and uphold the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

Candidate Skills, Experience and Knowledge

Essential

We are looking for someone who can demonstrate:

- Relevant experience in fundraising, income generation, business development, sponsorship, partnerships or organisational development, gained within the charity, public or private sector.
- Experience of identifying and developing funding or income-generating opportunities, with an ability to assess which opportunities are realistic and appropriate for an organisation.
- Experience of developing persuasive proposals, funding applications or business cases, bringing together a clear case for support utilising impact data or evaluation, and communicating the value and impact of an organisation's work.
- Strong relationship-building and communication skills, with the confidence to develop productive relationships with potential funders, sponsors, partners and other external stakeholders.
- Strategic thinking and sound judgement, including the ability to consider opportunities in the context of organisational priorities, resources, capacity, risk and long-term sustainability.
- An understanding of ethical and values-led fundraising, with the ability to consider whether prospective funding, sponsorship or partnerships are appropriate for BGEN and consistent with its charitable aims and values.
- A collaborative approach, with the ability to provide expertise and guidance while working effectively with fellow Trustees, the Coordinator and other workstreams.
- A commitment to BGEN's charitable aims and to strengthening plant and nature education.
- Sufficient time and capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of the Trustee role.

Desirable criteria

- A track record of successfully securing grant or trust funding, including developing applications and managing relationships with funders.
- Experience of developing sponsorship or corporate partnership opportunities, particularly within a charity, membership organisation or values-led organisation.
- Membership of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising (CIOF).
- Experience of developing or implementing an income-diversification strategy, helping an organisation reduce reliance on a single source of income.
- Experience of organisational or strategic development within a small or growing organisation, including helping translate strategic ambitions into realistic and sustainable plans.
- Knowledge of the funding landscape relevant to education, environment, biodiversity, sustainability or the natural world, including relevant funders, trusts, foundations or networks.

- Knowledge of, or experience working across, the UK and Ireland, including an understanding of the devolved education contexts and/or funding opportunities in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.
- Experience of working at Board, committee or senior strategic level, particularly within a charity or not-for-profit organisation.
- Experience of using evidence, impact data or evaluation to develop a compelling case for support and demonstrate organisational need and outcomes.

Availability and Commitment

- Board meetings: 4 online meetings each year, 90 -120 minutes each.
- Workstream meetings: approximately 4–6 online meetings each year, 90 – 120 minutes each.
- Annual General Meeting: usually held between January and February, within the BGEN Conference.
- BGEN Conference: 2 full days each year, usually held in January or early February.
- Administrative time: typically 3 days per quarter, including meetings, preparation, reading papers and agreed follow-up actions. Commitment may vary depending on Board priorities and the event calendar.
- Trustees are appointed for an initial three-year term, with the opportunity to serve one further term, in accordance with BGEN's governing document.

Support and Induction

New Trustees will receive an induction to BGEN's charitable objectives, governance arrangements, strategic priorities, financial position, current projects and workstreams. Ongoing support will be provided by the Chair, fellow Trustees and the BGEN Coordinator.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

BGEN is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive Board. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, identities and lived experiences and believe diversity of thought, experience and perspective strengthens our governance and helps us better support our members. We will consider reasonable adjustments throughout the recruitment process.

How to Apply

If you would like to join the BGEN Board of Trustees as our Fundraising and Development Trustee, please send your CV and a covering letter (maximum two pages) outlining why you are interested in becoming a Trustee, your relevant skills and experience, and how you believe you could contribute to BGEN and this role.

Contact: Samantha Bowden, BGEN Coordinator

Email: info@bgen.org.uk

Opening Date: Tuesday 29th September, 2026

Closing Date: 11.59PM, Tuesday 24th November, 2026

Interviews: Early December

For an informal conversation about the role, the Board or the different workstreams, please contact Dr Lauren Daly, Chair of BGEN, at lauren.daly@obg.ox.ac.uk

Thank you for considering becoming a BGEN Trustee.