**GET ON BOARD THE ASN BOARD!**

Abortion Support Network (ASN) is currently seeking new trustees for our Board. Trustees work with ASN’s Director and have specified roles and responsibilities along with providing strategic oversight for ASN. This is an exciting opportunity for someone passionate about reproductive rights to work with a dynamic, creative and motivated group of people to have a direct impact on the lives of women and pregnant people. We are particularly seeking to appoint a new Secretary, as well as trustees with expertise and experience in financial management and fundraising.

***What is the Abortion Support Network?***

ASN provides practical information and financial assistance to people forced to travel to access abortion care. Initially serving the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man in 2009, ASN extended services to Malta and Gibraltar in early 2019, and at the end of 2019 to Poland as part of the Abortion Without Borders/Aborcja Bez Granic initiative. We also provide confidential, non-judgmental information to anyone who contacts us seeking information about travelling for abortions, as well as information about reputable online providers of early medical abortion pills.

ASN was founded by Mara Clarke in October 2009 when we heard from just 4 individuals and gave grants totalling £300. ASN has grown since then and in 2020 we helped over 5,000 individuals and gave grants totalling more than £100,000. ASN’s work is vital and many of our clients are particularly vulnerable due to poverty, migrant status, abuse, poor physical health, and mental ill health. Volunteers staff the helpline 365 days a year and are trained to support individuals over the phone or online.

While other organisations campaign for much needed law reform, ASN provides people travelling for abortions with the thing they need most immediately: money. ASN is a member of the US-based National Network of Abortion Funds (https://abortionfunds.org/) and a registered UK charity, number 1142120.

***Our mission, vision and values***

Vision

A world where pregnant people have the information and means to access safe, legal abortions wherever they live.

Mission

To provide information, financial assistance and accommodation to those who may be forced to travel to access a safe, legal abortion and to support the growth of the abortion funds movement by sharing our knowledge and expertise.

Values

* We believe that all those who need them have the right to safe and legal abortions
* We believe in providing practical support to enable people to exercise this right
* We are compassionate and respectful of abortion-seekers and their decisions
* We believe in sharing our knowledge, expertise and experience with others to grow the abortion funds movement and increase access to safe abortion

***Who can apply to become a Board member of Abortion Support Network?***

We are looking for pro-choice individuals who are passionate about reproductive rights, committed to helping people and interested in dedicating time and expertise to an organisation providing direct support to people seeking abortions. Applicants need not work in or have experience in the fields of abortion or reproductive rights. Our goal is to create and maintain a board with diverse expertise, experience and roles, and with distinct, manageable tasks. Our current board membership has a variety of professional experiences, but there are still areas in which the board needs additional expertise. We are particularly looking for new trustees with a combination of the following skills:

* Financial management
* Fundraising: major donors, small donors and/or grant-writing
* Charity Governance and Organisation

We are hoping that one of our new appointees will take on the role of Secretary. In the future, opportunities may arise to fill other key positions on the board, including Chair or Treasurer.

***What are the responsibilities of all Board Members?***

Key responsibilities include:

* Providing strategic oversight for ASN. This can include helping to shape strategy around volunteer management, referral practices, client assessment, relationships with outside organisations, fundraising, legal issues, event planning, media/comms strategy and other issues as and when they arise.
* Helping develop and implement ASN’s long term strategy.
* Ensuring correct management of the charity’s finances, and fulfilling other legal responsibilities required by the Charity Commission and Companies House.
* Supporting and managing ASN’s Director, other staff and volunteers.

In addition, Board members will be expected to:

* Attend regular meetings. Previously these took place quarterly (four per year) in London. Currently, shorter online meetings are being held more frequently (approx. 8 per year x 90 minutes). The pattern of meeting will be further reviewed after the end of Covid restrictions.
* Attend ASN’s Annual General Meeting and an annual strategy/planning session.
* Be reachable via email and phone for discussing ASN board business and other ASN projects as they arise.
* Attend ASN events (including fundraising events and awareness-raising events) when possible.

***What kind of time commitment is required of all Board members?***

In addition to attending the meetings above, trustees are expected to respond to ad-hoc requests for support and will probably be invited to join a Board sub-group. They should expect to contribute at least one hour per week in addition to participation in meetings.

***What are the legal responsibilities of all Board members?***

Charity trustees have legal responsibilities regarding organisation governance, finance, membership and other matters. These are outlined by the Charity Commission here: [overview](https://www.gov.uk/charity-trustee-whats-involved) and [guidance.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3)

***What are the specific responsibilities and qualities of the Secretary?***

* To support ASN staff to plan and prepare the AGM
* To work with the ASN Chair and staff members to support ASN Board meetings, in particular ensuring that accurate minutes are taken, shared and saved as required.
* To ensure that Board meetings and the AGM are run according to ASN’s Memorandum and Articles of Association and Charity Commission and Companies House requirements.
* To oversee ASN’s membership list.
* To oversee all annual reporting requirements and occasional updating of the list of Directors, in order to ensure ASN is compliant with both the Charity Commission and Companies House.

Specific Qualities of a Secretary

In addition to the general qualities sought in all trustees, we aim to appoint a new Secretary who is:

* Organised, methodical and able to delegate.
* Has knowledge of company and/or charity law relating to governance and the role of a Company Secretary.
* Is prepared to develop a detailed knowledge of ASN’s Memorandum and Articles of Association.
* Can give clear advice on procedural matters.

***Interested?***

Those interested in becoming a member of the ASN Board should express their interest by sending a CV and covering letter that explains how you fill the requirements set out above and specifying whether you are interested in applying to be considered as Secretary to: mara@asn.org.uk. Deadline for applications is 5pm **15 April 2021.**  Interviews will be organised at a time convenient to the applicant, on a rolling basis. For an informal conversation about the roles, contact Jema at chair@asn.org.uk.