

## The Listening Fund Manager

### Job Description and Person Specification

Location:	London (Angel) minimum 1 day per week in the office with some national travel
Hours:	<p>This is offered as a part-time role with flexibility offered and required according to the demands of the work. We anticipate the work averaging 2-3 days a week.</p> <p>Office hours but some flexibility will be necessary, including occasional evenings and weekends.</p>
Salary:	Your basic consultancy fee will be calculated based on an annual salary of £40,000 per year, pro rata working a maximum of 3 days per week depending on the workload in any given month i.e. there may be some months where you will work less and your invoices will need to reflect the number of days worked each month.
Length of contract:	Until end of December 2024
Application deadline:	We will be accepting and reviewing applications on a rolling basis with the application deadline of 5pm Monday 22nd May 2023.
Interview Date:	Interviews will take place on the afternoon of Thursday 25th May in person at our office in Angel.
Start date:	The start date of the contract will be Monday 3rd July, however we will need the successful candidate to have 3 contact days between 19th - 29th June for handover purposes.

#### About the Blaggrave Trust

We are an independent charitable trust dedicated to enabling young people to transition to adulthood successfully. We hold investments of c.£44 million, which along with other income sources, funds all the work we do including grant-making. We fund work nationally, as well as having a specific focus on several counties in the South West and South East of England.

Our mission is to promote and empower young people as powerful forces for change, and support work that ensures their voices are heard in matters that affect them. We do this primarily by providing grants to organisations working with young people, influencing youth policy alongside them and investing directly in young changemakers. We also increasingly act as a facilitator and agent for change, bringing groups of young people and partners together to explore, share and learn together.

You can read our full 2022 – 2026 strategy [here](#).

We are committed to having young people drive our mission at every level of the organisation – we currently have a young and diverse trustee Board, including four trustees under 26, that reflects diversity of class, lived experience and ethnicity. We also currently have c.18 paid advisors working with us to develop strategy and make decisions on who we fund.

## **The Listening Fund**

The Listening Fund is an England-wide partnership whose ambition is to make the youth sector more accountable to young people. There are two key strands to its work. The first is giving youth organisations funding to improve their listening practice and cultures. The second is sharing what these partners – as well as contributing funders – are learning about how to become listening organisations.

The Fund works with 25 partners, 10 advisers (supported by an external facilitator), five funders, and a learning partner. You can read more about the Fund's stakeholders on The Listening Fund website: [www.thelisteningfund.org](http://www.thelisteningfund.org).

### **The history of The Listening Fund**

There have been two phases to The Listening Fund. The first, running between 2018 and 2020, focused on the work of 22 partners who used multi-year grants to explore how they could improve their listening work. The partners explored a variety of different approaches and worked with young people facing very different challenges. Over the two years of The Listening Fund's first phase, it became apparent that what united all stakeholders, including funders, was a need to examine their listening cultures, not just their practices.

This required time. The second phase of The Listening Fund therefore offered first phase partners a further three years of funding, giving them the opportunity and resources to deepen their listening work. However, rather than simply funding the same 22 organisations throughout, we wanted young people to make decisions about what listening work we should support. This was in part an effort to live The Listening Fund's values, centring young people's expertise and experience, and also because we wanted to explore whether there were approaches to accountability which we – embedded in professional-led organisations and systems – had been unable or unwilling to see.

Phase two of The Listening Fund now has three cohorts of funded partners. The first cohort consists of nine partners who received continuation funding at the end of phase one. The second and third cohorts were chosen by our ten advisers, with both cohorts having a focus on creating youth leadership opportunities as a means of sharing power and improving accountability. Cohort two is primarily made up of larger, more established youth-facing organisations. The third cohort is focused on grassroots work.

### **How the Fund is structured**

The Listening Fund is managed and led by The Blaggrave Trust. There are four other contributing funders – BBC Children in Need, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund and The Tudor Trust – who collectively form The Listening Fund’s Programme Board. However, it is the responsibility of The Blaggrave Trust and the post-holder to drive the Fund forward, manage all grant and contract relationships and produce events and content for The Listening Fund website and social media platforms.

The post-holder is supported in this work by a learning partner, Collective Discovery, and by ten advisers. Collective Discovery work across all three cohorts of partners, and with the five funders, to support their work and to draw out interesting lessons which can support improvements to listening practices and cultures across the sector.

The Listening Fund’s ten advisers have designed funding call-outs and made decisions about which applications they want to support. They are now in a process of defining their post-grant-making roles which will include supporting the Fund’s ongoing relationships with partners, evaluating their experience of being involved in grant-making and working with the Fund to promote its work and emphasis on using listening to improve accountability to young people.

## **The role**

### **Summary**

As the host and lead funder of The Listening Fund, the Blaggrave Trust is looking for an experienced project manager to deliver the second phase of the Fund until its scheduled completion at the end of 2024. The post-holder will be responsible for managing all of the Fund’s grant and contract relationships, and they will take responsibility for leading conversations about potential future iterations of the Fund.

### **Reflections from the current post-holder**

The Listening Fund is a powerful example of the benefits of collaboration: between different funders, between partner organisations, between young people and, of course, between all three of these groups (and more!) when we have been able to bring them together. Even without the expert insight of those who have helped evaluate the Fund’s work, it has been clear from very early on that there is not one path to becoming a ‘good’ listening organisation. There is no silver bullet. It has therefore been a great privilege to work with organisations and individuals who have shared their knowledge, time and experiences freely, both good and bad, in the belief that getting this right, improving accountability to young people through stronger listening practices and cultures, is essential: whether that’s

because they think effective accountability is a right; because they think good accountability can improve services for those who rely on them; or whether it's because involving young people in this work gives those individuals greater opportunity in their futures.

This collective belief in the Fund's work is arguably its biggest asset and this role is a fantastic opportunity to work with colleagues from across the sector who are committed to creating sustainable listening cultures which value the expertise and experience of young people.

## **About you**

We are looking for an experienced and enthusiastic project manager to deliver the second phase of The Listening Fund until its scheduled completion in December 2024. You will be confident in working independently and have the drive to maximise the opportunities for positive change created by The Listening Fund. Successful collaboration is at the heart of the Fund's work and you will be comfortable in holding and building relationships with multiple stakeholders, both internal and external. You will recognise where your leadership and decision-making are required and also when and how you need to share power with others.

You will be comfortable in producing written content, organising events and speaking publicly. Above all else, you will be excited about exploring how better listening practices and cultures amongst organisations and systems can improve their accountability to young people.

## **Key tasks**

- Proactively manage grants with the Fund's 25 grant partners, establishing strong, trust-based relationships while also handling all related administrative work
- Working with Hudl, continue to support the Fund's 10 advisers in their work, including helping to develop their post grant-making roles and responsibilities
- Work with the Fund's learning partner, Collective Discovery, to surface and widely share learning across the sector on:
  - Partners' work and how they have improved their listening and accountability to young people
  - Our experience of working alongside advisers including how they have shaped funding processes and decisions
  - Common points of interest and challenges for organisations in improving accountability
  - Funders' efforts to improve their own accountability and listening
- Lead on relationships with all relevant funders, including providing timely reporting according to the relevant grant agreements and supporting conversations about funders' listening practices and cultures
- Manage the Fund's budget and provide financial reporting to Blaggrave's Trustees and funders as necessary

- Maintain, update and promote the TLF website and social media as key platforms for sharing learning
- Develop plans for the future/legacy of The Listening Fund
- Integrate with the Blaggrave team, attending relevant team meetings and sharing learning from the Fund with colleagues, as well as providing updates to Blaggrave's board of Trustees as required, including summaries of partners' progress
- Be a figurehead for the Fund, proactively looking for opportunities to promote the work and principles of the Fund and influence the wider sector

## Person specification

### Essential

- At least five years of project management experience, including:
  - Working alongside a variety of internal and external stakeholders
  - Managing multi-year project budgets
  - Managing relationships with external contractors
  - Producing written and verbal reports as required
- Grant management experience, including:
  - Supporting partners in their work as it develops and changes
  - Providing annual reports on partners' progress
- Providing strategic project oversight including reviewing project goals, progress towards them and adjustments required
- Experience of project scoping, designing and planning, including involving other stakeholders in the process in an equitable way
- Commitment to working in partnership and valuing others' opinions, ideas and perspectives
- Experience of listening to and working alongside young people as key stakeholders
- Confidence in commissioning, producing and editing written and verbal reports to a variety of internal and external audiences
- Knowledge of maintaining an online presence: managing a website and social media feeds

### Desirable

- Experienced in conversations around power and power-sharing, and confident in navigating the related complexities
- Knowledge of where The Listening Fund sits alongside similar pieces of work, how it is different and where opportunities for further collaboration exist

## How to apply

To apply for this role, please upload your CV along with a covering letter (maximum two pages of A4) outlining your interest in the role and how you meet the role specification, sending your email to [HR@blagravetrust.org](mailto:HR@blagravetrust.org). Please note that the covering letter is an important part of your application and will be assessed as part of your full application.

Please also ensure that you have included:

- your contact telephone numbers
- any dates when you will not be available for interview, or any difficulties you might have with the recruitment timetable
- details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.

Please also complete a diversity monitoring form. This will be stored separately from your application and will at no time be connected to you or your application.

### **Recruitment Timetable**

Deadline for  
applications: 5pm, Monday 22nd May 2023

Interviews  
with Blaggrave: afternoon of Thursday 25th May 2023

Start date: The start date of the contract will be Monday 3rd July, however we will need the successful candidate to have 3 contact days between 19th - 29th June for handover purposes.

The successful candidate will be appointed subject to an enhanced DBS check and references.