Appointment of

Chair of Trustees

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Chair.

Place Matters is a young, ambitious charity at an exciting point in its life. Incubated within Right to Succeed from 2021, we became an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation in November 2024. Demand for our work is growing fast; the policy environment for place-based change has never been more favourable, and we are now setting out a bolder role for ourselves: helping to build both the social infrastructure for community led change and the field of place-based change in the UK.

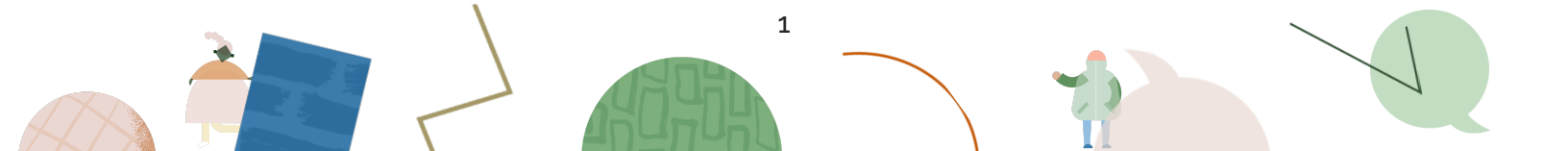
We are looking for a Chair who shares that ambition and can confidently lead our Board through this next stage, combining strong governance with exceptional communication and influencing skills and will be credible with communities, funders and governments alike.

You will bring your strategic reach, deep networks, excellent interpersonal skills, curiosity and optimism to support and develop the Board through a time of change and growth. We are looking for an experienced leader who can challenge and inspire a small team to have an outsized impact. We are proud of our inclusive and collaborative culture, and we are looking for an emotionally intelligent leader who can demonstrate a natural affinity with our mission.

If you are excited by our bold ambitions, we'd love to hear from you.

Best wishes

Avril McIntyre
Chair of Nomco
On behalf of Board of Trustees



Our Mission

Place Matters' mission is to enable community-led, place-based change to thrive by strengthening communities, amplifying good practice, influencing funding, policy, and turning learning into action.

Our purpose is explicitly systemic. We are not seeking to improve a single service but to build capability and change the conditions in funding, policy, practice and culture that hold disadvantage and inequity in place. We do this through three interconnected ways of working:



Build *in places*

We work with communities, funders and policy makers (coaching, advising and as a learning partner) to build the collaboration, capability and confidence to do, fund and support effective place-based work that makes change last.



Connect *between places*

We share learning, knowledge, evidence, and good practice between places through communities of practice, peer networks, learning resources and events, so that what works can travel and learning is open and accessible..



Catalyse *beyond and for places*

We work with funders, policymakers and civic leaders to build the conditions that enable community-led change to scale and strengthen the broader sector of place-based change.

Our Future Strategy

Since December 2024 a new place-based policy architecture has been emerging – English Devolution, Integrated Settlements, Local Growth Plans, Pride in Place, Best Start Family Hubs, Neighbourhood Health, the Local Outcomes Framework and Place-Based Budgets – while national and regional funders are increasing their commitment to place. Together these create a genuine opportunity for communities to tackle challenges that have locked in disadvantage for decades.

We are experiencing significant demand for our work, and in addition to delivering support directly to communities, funder and policy makers, Our role is increasingly about shifting from delivering support directly to making what works explicit and accessible, and to building the conditions in which this way of working can take hold widely. Over the next two years our priorities are:

- **Strengthening social infrastructure for change at local level** (Build) – especially the backbone capacity that convenes partnerships, coordinates shared strategy and manages learning and evidence.

- **Developing the practice of place-based change nationally** (Connect) – shared frameworks, language and evidence, and a much-expanded Learning Hub, resources and events, so that we become the go-to centre for place-based practice in the UK.

- **Investing in a field-building approach for specific areas of impact** (Catalyse) – such as early childhood, neighbourhood health and child poverty – working with funders, policymakers and civic leaders at regional and national level.

Delivering this means growing our own capacity – in coalition and partnership management, sense-making and thought leadership, and capacity building – largely through associates and partners as well as rather than headcount for its own sake, and without losing the agility that has served us well.

Our income is diversified across grants and earned fees from foundations, public bodies and social sector organisations. In our financial year January - December 2025 total income was £450k against expenditure of £417k and is forecast to grow by almost 80% by the end of 2026. Our unrestricted reserves comfortably exceed our policy of at least three months' operating costs, and the trustees plan to invest in organisational capacity, practice development, policy engagement and open learning resources.



Chair Role Profile

Responsibilities

1. Lead the Board in setting and overseeing strategy, ensuring Place Matters stays true to its mission and values and delivers results as it grows.
2. Ensure strong governance, sound financial management and effective oversight of risk, in line with charity law and the Charity Governance Code.
3. Build a cohesive, diverse and skilled Board; run effective meetings; lead trustee recruitment, induction and annual review.
4. Support, challenge and line-manage the CEO, including objective-setting and appraisal.
5. Act as an ambassador, opening doors with funders, policymakers and partners and helping to raise our profile and income.

Person Specification

We are interested in the combination of experience and qualities you would bring, not a checklist. We would particularly like to hear from candidates who have:

1. Experience of senior leadership at board level, ideally in a growing or early-stage organisation.
2. A strong commitment to community-led change and tackling inequity, and an understanding of place-based or systems change approaches.
3. Credibility and networks across one or more of philanthropy, local, regional or national government, health, education or civil society.
4. The ability to build consensus, hold others to account with warmth and candour, and steer a small team through growth without losing its agility.
5. A commitment to equity for all people (and their intersecting identities) and a passion for social change.
6. Personal qualities that include confidence but low ego, an inclusive curious leadership style, continuously learning, motivated by grappling with complexity and optimism.



We want our Board to reflect a broad diversity of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences. In appointing our next Chair, we particularly welcome applications from candidates from groups that are currently under-represented in charity leadership, as well as people with lived experience of the issues our work addresses.

Commitment

Term: Three years, renewable once.

Time: Approximately 2 days per month, including four full Board meetings a year and one Remuneration Committee, half/whole-day events (e.g. Place Matters conference, funder convening), occasional visits to projects, weekly check in with the CEO.

The role is voluntary; reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

How to Apply

Please send a CV and a covering letter of no more than two pages explaining your interest in the role and what you would bring to Place Matters to Lela Kogbara, Director, Place Matters lelakogbara@placematters.co.uk by 24 January 2027.

We would be delighted to arrange an informal conversation with our CEO, Emily Sun, or a member of the Board before you apply. If you would appreciate this please contact Anita Janosi (anitajanosi@placematters.co.uk).

Closing date: 24 January 2027

Interviews with a panel of trustees and the CEO: TBC

Find out more about our work at www.placematters.org.uk and on LinkedIn.

