

Board Fellow

DATE:

May 2026



About

Spark Inside is an award-winning charity that has transformed the lives of over 2,000 people living and working in our prisons. We have pioneered coaching in prisons, showing the value of coaching to change lives and systems. In the next decade, we set out to make coaching available to anyone who wants it in the justice system.

OUR VISION

The futures of people affected by the criminal justice system are determined by their potential, not their past.

OUR MISSION

We use coaching to unlock the potential of individuals and drive culture change in the criminal justice system so that rehabilitation is possible.

We are one of the first organisations to take life coaching to people living and working in prison and to use systems coaching to bring together staff and prisoners in UK prisons. Our expert coaches are qualified and trained professionals. In addition to developing and delivering innovative coaching programmes, we are also committed to working with parliamentarians and government officials to influence criminal justice policy, and shift the perception of people in prison, platforming their voices and highlighting their unlocked potential.

In addition to our coaching programmes for people in prison, we have also begun coaching prison staff and young people in the community.

You can find out more about what we offer, and the impact of our coaching programmes at www.sparkinside.org and on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sparkinside).

SPARK
INSIDE
COACHING IN PRISONS®

"I have built a lot more confidence, even looking for promotion or progression. Had I not done the coaching, I wouldn't be in the headspace to be able to deal with trying for promotion."

Prison staff member receiving Spark Inside coaching



"The life coaches saw the spark in me that I hadn't seen in myself for a long time, and it gave me hope that it wasn't too late to change. Now I've left prison for the last time and I'm not going back. I know I can make it."

Michael, 20, Hero's Journey™ participant*

About the position

Spark Inside is excited to be recruiting two new Board Fellows (aged 18-30) to join our skilled and values-led Board.

Our Board Fellows Programme is designed as an emerging leaders' opportunity for people aged 18-30, combining meaningful participation in governance with structured professional development. Fellows contribute to Spark Inside's strategic discussions, bringing fresh perspectives while building their skills, confidence and experience.

About Spark Inside's Board of Trustees

Chaired by Erica Handling, Spark Inside's Board of Trustees is the charity's governing body, responsible for stewardship of its resources and oversight of its strategy, operations and financial management. Find out more about our current trustees [here](#).

Trustees work closely with CEO Vicki Cardwell and the Senior Management Team, providing support, guidance and constructive challenge.

Board Fellows sit alongside Trustees, contributing insight, challenge and support to strategic discussions. While Fellows do not hold formal legal or financial responsibilities, their contributions are valued equally in Board conversations.

You will gain experience by working alongside Trustees across the following areas:

- Governance: ensuring compliance with governing documents, charity law and relevant regulations
- Strategy: shaping and approving organisational direction and business plans
- Financial oversight: reviewing budgets and supporting strong financial management
- Guidance: advising on strategic, operational and organisational matters
- Networks and influence: spotting opportunities and connections to support growth
- Leadership: appointing and supporting senior leadership

Many of our former Board Fellows go on to become trustees, both within Spark Inside and at other charities.

Board Fellows

Board Fellows roles are for 12 months (extendable for one further year) and offer a high-quality learning experience for those interested in governance and leadership.

This programme is designed to develop future sector leaders, offering hands-on governance experience alongside structured training, mentoring and coaching. Fellows may go on to become Trustees of Spark Inside.

Benefits to becoming a Board Fellow

Spark Inside and, ultimately, the young people we coach, will benefit from your insights and perspectives on our Board. This programme is designed to benefit you in the following ways:

Professional development

- Gain first-hand experience of charity governance through active Board participation
- Build confidence in strategic thinking, leadership and communication skills
- Develop understanding of the criminal justice and voluntary sectors

Personal and career growth

- Access up to four one-to-one coaching sessions with a professional coach
- Be matched with a Trustee mentor of your choice
- Receive a training budget of up to £250 for the development of skills to support your Board work
- Access additional learning opportunities (e.g. finance, safeguarding, impact)

Purpose and impact

- Help shape the direction and impact of a charity supporting people in prison
- Contribute to a mission-driven organisation at an important stage of growth
- Bring perspectives often underrepresented in Board spaces



Person specification

We are looking for people who:

- Are aged 18–30 at the time of application
- Are passionate about Spark Inside's mission and values
- Are interested in developing their skills in leadership and governance
- Bring curiosity, with a willingness to learn and to contribute to discussions
- Can commit the time required to participate fully in the programme

We particularly encourage applications from people from underrepresented backgrounds, including those with lived experience of the criminal justice system; and people from Black and minoritised backgrounds.

Time commitment and fees

Board Fellows are expected to attend the following:

- Four in-person Board meetings each year (weekday evenings, Central London)
- One annual Board Away Day
- Preparation time (reading papers, pre-meetings)

To support accessibility and inclusion, this role offers a fixed annual stipend of up to £540, recognising Fellows' time and contribution. This is not an hourly rate, but a contribution towards participation.

The fee is structured as follows:

- Board meetings: £80 per meeting (covering preparation and attendance)
- Annual Board Away Day: £140 (covering preparation and attendance)
- Induction: £80 (covering initial induction meetings and reading)

Additional information:

- All travel costs are covered. We can also support with childcare costs
- Ad hoc calls, site visits and additional engagement are optional and unpaid
- Additional investment is made through training and coaching beyond the stipend

How to apply

If you think this role might suit you, we would love to hear from you!

1. Please send your CV (max. two pages) and a cover letter (max. two pages) outlining your interest in being a Board Fellow, relevant experience and your values to Lee-Ann Jacobson at lee-ann@sparkinside.org
2. When telling us about your interest in Spark Inside, do make sure you tell us why you would like to be a Board Fellow and gain Board experience specifically (this is as important as why Spark Inside!)
3. The closing date for applications is **9:00 Monday 8 June**.
4. Our existing trustees and our CEO, Vicki, are available to answer questions and discuss the role. Please do email Lee-Ann if you would like an informal chat before applying. We understand this can help make it easier to apply.
5. Final candidates will be invited to an interview with the CEO and two members of the Board. The interview will include the chance to look at example Board papers ahead of time, and to ask us any questions.
6. Interviews will be held in person in London on **18 or 19 June**.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Our values

SPARK

We want to feel a strong sense of passion and 'spark' for everything we do. We commit to people, projects and partnerships that align with our values.

HEART

We maintain an open mind and an open heart, and we always act with kindness and consideration.

STICKABILITY

When the going gets tough, we stick with our participants, our projects and our commitments. We channel our grit and resilience to make it through challenges and we don't give up easily.

IMPACT

Our impact on our participants is at the heart of every decision we make and it is how we judge our success, so we take evaluation seriously.

LEARNING

We are humble, curious and constantly developing. We apply and share our learning to amplify our impact.

INNOVATION

We celebrate creativity and design new ways of doing things, based on evaluation data and stakeholder feedback. We innovate to remain relevant to our participants' needs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Spark Inside is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. Job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We strongly encourage applications from people with lived experience and especially welcome applications from people from Black and minoritised communities.





Thank you

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN WORKING WITH US

To find out more about Spark Inside and the work we do, please visit our website or contact us below.

www.sparkinside.org | officeadmin@sparkinside.org | 020 3468 0706 | [@spark_inside](https://www.linkedin.com/company/spark_inside)

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