

Role Description:

Lived Experience Advisory Panel

About us

We are an independent UK charity working to create a just, humane & effective prison system. We're doing this by influencing decision-makers, opinion formers and the public to:

- Reduce the use of prison.
- Improve conditions for prisoners.
- Promote equality and human rights in the criminal justice system.

Since 1981 the Prison Reform Trust has supported those locked into our prison system – prisoners and their families – to ensure that those without a voice get heard.

We are one of the few organisations willing and equipped to hold the state to account for its treatment of vulnerable people in prison. Our reputation, built on over four decades of knowledgeable, reliable analysis and presentation of the facts, gives us influence behind the scenes that few organisations can match.

What is the Lived Experience Advisory Panel?

Prison Reform Trust is committed to engaging with people with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System and their family members so that these voices can inform to work we do. Without this, it is not possible for us to have a deep understanding of life in prison. We are working towards ensuring that people with lived experience are represented in everything we do. A big part of this is role-modelling from the top of the organisation, where the biggest decisions are made.

As with all UK charities, we are governed by a Board of Trustees, who hold responsibility for the smooth-running of the charity and are expected to hold our Senior Management Team to account to ensure we are doing the best for our staff and for the people we are supporting through our work. On our Board of Trustees, we have people with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System but we would like to increase our engagement further.

We want to create a Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) so that people with lived experience can work together with our Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team. The LEAP will meet with our Senior Management Team and Trustees before every Board meeting to contribute to the discussions happening at Board level.

Aim of the role

- To inform discussion and decision-making*
- To place lived experience perspective at Prison Reform Trust's heart and influence the direction of the organisation
- To support the development of new projects/ideas that will allow us to improve and grow our services and reach

***Please bear in mind, the role of the LEAP is advisory only and it does not have formal decision-making powers or legal responsibility for the governance of the charity.**

Timings: There will be approximately 4 LEAP meetings (1.5 hours) per year. Each meeting also requires a pre-meeting (1 hour). You may also be required to attend additional meetings to work on projects arising from your LEAP involvement.

Location: Meetings are generally held online, however, there may be opportunities to meet in person for those who are able to do so.

Supported by: Grace Barry – Head of Practitioner and Prisoner Engagement

Remuneration: If you are currently based in a prison, we are unfortunately unable to offer remuneration for this role, however, we will work with the prison you're based in to ensure you do not lose money by taking part, for example, if you need to miss work to attend.

If you are based in the community, you will be entitled to claim £30.00 remuneration per meeting, payable via BACS transfer into your bank account.

Core Tasks

- Attend all meetings to the best of your ability for a period of two years
- Read the relevant material between meetings
- Provide feedback, challenge, recommendations and ideas in LEAP meetings
- Work collaboratively with the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees to play an active role in discussions and the development of our work

What you will gain

- Introductory training for the role through a series of induction sessions
- Regular learning sessions to enable you to excel in your role
- Support from the Head of Practitioner and Prisoner Engagement (Grace) through pre-meetings and check ins
- An insight into the role of a Board and how governance works
- An opportunity to be part of a team who are committed to developing our organisation
- An opportunity to really influence the way Prison Reform Trust works with people with lived experience of the Criminal Justice System
- Experience of discussing and influencing a variety of areas of work at Prison Reform Trust
- The opportunity to develop new and existing skills
- Opportunities to meet and network with the Senior Leadership team, Trustees and other Prison Reform Trust colleagues

Who this role would be most suitable for

People who have:

- Lived experience of serving a sentence in prison, in the community or, of having a family member in prison from within the last two years
- Some experience of taking part in meetings and group discussions
- An interest in attending training sessions to prepare for the role
- The ability to attend meetings online via video link
- Confidence to contribute your opinions
- An interest in learning more about prison reform
- The ability to work with others, take part in constructive discussion and respect the views of others

- A willingness to share knowledge and experience and to give open and honest feedback to improve Prison Reform Trust's work
- An understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- Reliability and good time keeping
- Ability to communicate by email (We will use Emates to communicate with those who are currently serving a sentence)

Next Steps:

If you are interested in becoming part of the Lived Experience Advisory Panel please answer the following questions, in no more than 3 A4 pages:

1. Why do you want to take part?
2. What knowledge, skills and experience will you bring to the group?
3. What do you want to gain from your participation in this group?

You can submit an application:

- **Via post:** Grace Barry, Prison Reform Trust, FREEPOST ND 6125, London EC1B 1PN
- **Via Email:** grace.barry@prisonreformtrust.org.uk or, if you are currently in prison, asking your POM or another trusted person to do so on your behalf

Important:

As this role will see successful applicants taking part in various meetings that will happen remotely, co-ordination is key. If you're currently serving a sentence in prison, it will be helpful if you have spoken to a staff member about this role and whether it is something they'll be able to support before applying. Please include their name and contact details with your application.