

**Transitional Steering Committee member role description**

Organisation of Akwaaba and restructure

Akwaaba is a volunteer-run social centre for migrants. We are committed to actively opposing racism and all other forms of discrimination and oppression. As a community, we try to make decisions collectively and give all members an equal say in how the social centre is run.

Until recently, day-to-day management and coordination of Akwaaba was undertaken by a steering committee of between three and six volunteers. The steering committee worked alongside Akwaaba’s board of trustees who are responsible for legal and financial oversight, and safeguarding the development of Akwaaba. The steering committee also worked with a team of project coordinators, who are responsible for project areas including Welcome, Children’s, English teaching and Storytelling projects.

Akwaaba is in the process of restructuring in order to organise in a way which better represents our principles and actively seeks to overcome racist structures in its own governance. This restructure aims to decentralise decision making and empower new groups of Akwaaba volunteers to be responsible for key aspects of the organisation. Ultimately, the aim is to abolish the steering committee and replace it with a new coordinating group, which will have time-limited membership and a reduced role within the project.

So far, the restructure has involved:

* founding new Akwaaba groups to take on project work outside of Sunday sessions, including anAnti-racism group, Accountability group, Ongoing Learning group and Budgeting group
* holding two volunteer days during which Akwaaba volunteers worked together to agree on collective values for the project and increased their knowledge about the organisation of Akwaaba
* delegating roles that were previously performed by the steering committee to these new groups and to other volunteers

We expect that it will take between six months and a year to reach the point where the steering committee can be replaced by a coordinating group. In the meantime, the steering committee (currently Lisa, Mike and Kasia) needs support to bring about that transition. We are looking to recruit 1-2 volunteers to join the transitional steering committee for a maximum period of 1 year, before we all step into other roles at Akwaaba.

Responsibilities and expectations of each steering committee member

*Ethos:*

To represent the values of Akwaaba and make decisions according to those values. These include a commitment to social justice, migrants’ rights, antiracism and decentralised organising.

*Time commitment:*

Around 2 hours per week for up to 1 year, in addition to the time you otherwise commit to Akwaaba sessions.

This time commitment includes one, two-hour meeting per month, at a time/venue that suits all members. In the past we have met on weekday evenings.

Shared responsibilities of the transitional steering committee

Our vision is that the following roles will be performed by the coordinating group that will replace the steering committee. As the transitional steering committee member comes on board we would seek to distribute the following tasks to complete the re-structure:

* Supporting volunteer teams to ensure that Akwaaba sessions run from week-to-week and that project supervisors are able to run safe sessions according to Akwaaba’s ethos with a view to decreasing reliance on a central steering committee.
* Establishing a coordinating group that would eventually replace the steering committee.
* Supporting the development of Akwaaba’s existing groups and founding new groups to take over more of the steering committee’s current responsibilities

In the meantime, the transitional steering committee will be responsible for the following roles:

* Supporting the supervisors team to maintain Akwaaba’s relationship with our premises managers; renewing our rental contract, negotiating regarding rent and use of space and overseeing the search for new premises if necessary.
* Promoting collective decision-making by arranging, facilitating and attending general meetings, pre-session briefings, in-session meetings and debriefs. Taking steps to encourage the participation of Akwaaba’s migrant members in decision-making processes and responding proactively to suggestions from the community.
* Coordinating Akwaaba’s fundraising activities in coordination with the finance and budget group.
* Overseeing and updating internal and external communication channels including Akwaaba’s policies, the volunteer rota, website, physical flyers, social media, mailing list and newsletter.
* Maintaining productive and mutually supportive working relationships between Akwaaba trustees, coordinators, volunteers, members and key external stakeholders (lettings company, referral partners, local community organisations etc).
* Supporting the community to implement new policies or decisions made by groups or in volunteer meetings
* Responding to crises

**Want to apply?** If you are interested in applying, please email [hello@akwaaba.org.uk](mailto:hello@akwaaba.org.uk) explaining your motivation and experience, or have a chat with Kasia, Lisa or Mike. The closing date is the 30 September 2019.

*All volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults. Volunteers will undertake the appropriate level of training and are responsible for ensuring that they understand and work within the safeguarding policies of the organisation.*