

Alumni Policy

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Patchwork Foundation's Mission

Patchwork Foundation promotes and encourages the positive integration of under-represented, underserved, and minority communities into public life and civic engagement. Our mission is to empower individuals from diverse backgrounds through training, education, and exposure to leadership opportunities, enabling them to become active citizens and leaders in society.

Alumni support programme

Patchwork values the continued engagement of its alumni and offers structured opportunities to ensure that alumni can continue to develop their skills and broaden their experience. This policy sets out how such support will be provided and managed.

Commitment to creating a safe space

Patchwork Foundation is deeply committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all alumni. We believe in the power of community and understand that the success of our mission depends on the strength and unity of our alumni network. If, at any point, any alumni have any concerns to raise, please raise them directly with the Patchworks operation team via email on alumni@patchworkfoundation.org.uk.

Our commitment to creating a safe space for alumni is grounded in two core values:

1. **Respect.** We expect all members of the Patchwork community to treat one another with dignity and respect. Discrimination, harassment, or any form of disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated. Every voice matters, and every opinion deserves to be heard in a manner that is constructive and considerate.
2. **Responsibility:** We expect all alumni to take responsibility for their actions and to contribute positively to the Patchwork community. This includes upholding the values of the Foundation, supporting fellow alumni, and contributing to the ongoing mission of Patchwork through active and meaningful engagement.

Commitment to creating a supportive network

Patchwork Foundation is committed to providing ongoing support and networking opportunities for its alumni. We recognise the importance of maintaining strong connections and fostering continuous growth even after the completion of our programmes.

To this end, we will:

- **Host an Annual Networking Event:** Patchwork will organise one major networking event each year, providing alumni with the opportunity to

connect, share experiences, and build professional relationships. Patchwork will also organise one virtual event for Alumni to come together.

- **Deliver exclusive Alumni opportunities:** Patchwork will organise the following opportunities for alumni:
 - Masterclasses: Patchwork organises alumni-specific masterclasses. Opportunities to attend these will be shared via the newsletter.
 - International Visitors Leadership Programme (IVLP): Patchwork has collaborated with the US Embassy to deliver our IVLP Exchange exclusively for Patchwork Alumni. Applications usually open in spring, with successful candidates spending 10 days on a fully funded trip to the USA. Opportunities to apply for this will be shared via the newsletter and website.
 - Alumni Leadership Council: We welcome applications to join our Alumni Leadership Council, contributing to the continued development of Patchwork. Members of the Council will also be offered exclusive opportunities designed to leverage their experience and leadership skills to further the mission of Patchwork Foundation and to mentor newer alumni.
 - Other *ad hoc* opportunities. Patchwork is often approached to extend invitations to events and other opportunities delivered by third parties. Opportunities to attend these events will be shared via the newsletter, LinkedIn page, WhatsApp groups or the website or via email.
- **Provide career and other developmental opportunity updates.** Patchwork will share details of job opportunities, events and other relevant development opportunities with the alumni community.
- **Foster alumni communities.** Patchwork will provide channels for alumni to remain connect following completion of their programmes to enable mutual support and contact.

Share opportunities through multiple channels

We will ensure that our alumni are informed of relevant opportunities through:

- Monthly Newsletters: A comprehensive update on events, job opportunities, and news relevant to the Patchwork community.
- WhatsApp Groups: Real-time communication and quick updates on pertinent information.
- LinkedIn: Professional networking and job opportunities are shared through the Patchwork Foundation LinkedIn page.
- Patchwork Foundation Website: A dedicated section for alumni resources, including event announcements and alumni-specific opportunities.

Eligibility

All participants who complete one of Patchwork's programmes will be eligible to participate in alumni activities such as Masterclasses for up to 18 months after programme completion.

Selection criteria

All alumni opportunities will be shared with the alumni community as set out above and it will be for individuals to apply for specific opportunities.

For each opportunity, Patchwork will set out details of the opportunity, the benefits expected to accrue from the opportunity, the time commitment and other logistical details, and the application process.

It is important to note that alumni opportunities are usually heavily-oversubscribed and, therefore, that selection criteria are applied to ensure that those who will benefit most (for an individual opportunity and more generally) are selected.

The criteria used for selection are:

- the extent to which the opportunity will support the identified development needs of the alumnus;
- the suitability and skills fit of the alumnus to the opportunity, recognising that such opportunities are of a high profile and have implications for the charity's reputation;
- the number of opportunities already undertaken by the alumnus - we seek to provide opportunities to as many alumni as possible, so may favour applicants who have had fewer opportunities than others;
- conduct on previous opportunities;
- any specific criteria relevant to the opportunity (which will be set out in advance); and,
- logistical factors and time availability.

Selection will be undertaken by the relevant member of staff managing the specific opportunity.

Monitoring and reporting

On a regular quarterly basis, the CEO will review participation of alumni in opportunities to monitor participation and the application of the above criteria, as well as operation of the alumni support programme more generally.

Every six months, the Alumni Leadership Council will review the operation of the alumni support programme and provide a report to the CEO and trustees.

The trustees will review the operation and management of the alumni support programme at least annually.

Volunteering and Patchwork alumni

Patchwork's alumni programme seeks to provide opportunities to support the ongoing development of individuals who have previously participated in one of our core programmes.

Separately, Patchwork volunteering opportunities provide an opportunity for individuals to support the charity. Whilst there may be some benefits for the individuals concerned, such as building understanding of working in the charity sector or broadening engagement with democratic institutions, the primary intention of these opportunities is to help the charity to deliver its core programmes. The Volunteer Policy sets out how we manage volunteers at Patchwork.

Patchwork welcomes the support provided by its alumni through volunteer opportunities to contribute to the Foundation's mission. Whilst most of our volunteers are drawn from Patchwork alumni, it is important that individuals recognise the difference between our volunteering and alumni support opportunities.

Code of Conduct

To ensure the smooth running of the alumni support programme, the following Code of Conduct has been established for the benefit of participants.

- We expect those participating in alumni support opportunities to act as ambassadors of Patchwork and to behave in a professional manner at all times and in a way that will reflect positively on the charity's reputation.
- Arrive on time - timings will be clearly stated on your briefing paper.
- If you can no longer attend, or are running late, you should first email masterclass@patchworkfoundation.org.uk immediately. If for any reason you cannot email, you should call or WhatsApp the point of contact listed in the briefing document. Ensure you know who this is ahead of the session.
- If you do not contact us, or do so with little or no justification as to why you were late or could not attend, this may impact whether you are invited to participate in alumni support opportunities in the future. The same applies to any poor behaviour exhibited.
- As with all Patchwork events, we ask that you remain non-partisan.

Conclusion

Patchwork Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that our alumni feel supported, respected, and, engaged long after their initial participation in our programmes. Through our commitment to these principles and policies, we aim to build a lasting, positive impact that empowers our alumni to lead and contribute meaningfully to society.