

# LEADING WITH BRITISH EXPLORING SOCIETY

Leader Recruitment Pack

## FIND YOUR FIRE





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**“I loved every minute of what was a life changing experience with some amazing people. I feel I learnt valuable skills and am now in a position to go on to do a lot more than I would otherwise have been able to.”**

- Young Explorer Isaac



# WELCOME

British Exploring Society is a world class youth development charity with a unique heritage, founded on the belief that challenging experiences can change lives, empowering and equipping young people with the courage, skills, resilience and determination to make the most of their future.

We prepare and take young people on virtual and in-person expeditions and adventures in the UK and overseas where they face challenges, gain skills and learn about themselves - as well as acquiring knowledge relevant to their lives and to the environments that they explore.

The results are transformative – not just in terms of practical skills and resilience, but in a new-found confidence and self-belief which they carry forward to their future life.

About British  
Exploring Society

Learn more  
about us here



# THANK YOU

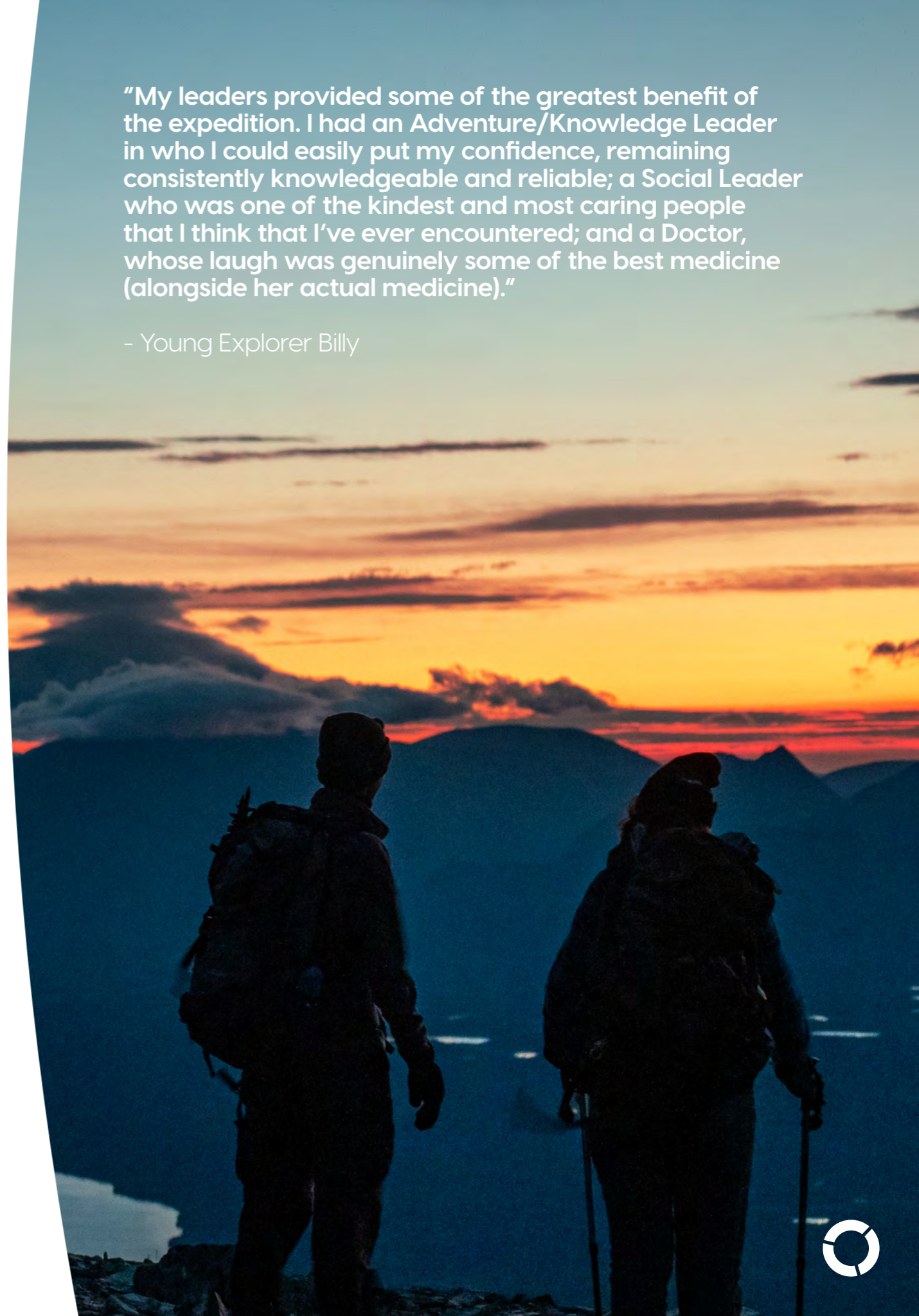
Thank you for your interest in volunteering as a Leader with British Exploring Society. Leaders are at the core of British Exploring Society's community, delivering a high-quality transformative experience for Young Explorers on the ground, and the organisation would not exist without their passion, skill and dedication.

We are an equal opportunities employer and do not discriminate on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability, or age.

We are committed to building an executive and volunteer team that together represent a diverse variety of backgrounds, skills, and perspectives on the world. The more inclusive we are, the better we think we'll be at delivering our charitable aims.

"My leaders provided some of the greatest benefit of the expedition. I had an Adventure/Knowledge Leader in who I could easily put my confidence, remaining consistently knowledgeable and reliable; a Social Leader who was one of the kindest and most caring people that I think that I've ever encountered; and a Doctor, whose laugh was genuinely some of the best medicine (alongside her actual medicine)."

- Young Explorer Billy



# OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Our Young Explorers and Young Adventurers come from a wide variety of backgrounds; from communities facing high levels of economic and social deprivation and from those where expectations of personal and professional success are high. Often, these people would never cross paths in any other way. With us, they rub shoulders and exchange ideas in tents and canoes, up mountains and in the jungle.

You can learn more by visiting the Impact page on our website. To hear from a few Young Explorers directly watch the video to the right or check out the Real Life Story section on our website.

[Learn more about our impact here](#)

[Read some Real Life Stories here](#)



# OUR LEADERS

Our Leaders are a diverse bunch but what they all share is a commitment to challenging and supporting our young people, to sensitively testing their boundaries and to helping them develop key life skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and adaptability, which in turn allow self-confidence to flourish.

For more information about Leading with us, please visit the Leader page on our website and watch the video to the right to hear directly from some of our Leader community about why they volunteer with British Exploring Society.

[Learn more about Leading with us here](#)

[Check out a few Leader Spotlights here](#)



## BASECAMP TEAM

These roles will be primarily situated at the expedition or adventure's basecamp, providing senior leadership and support to up to five Fires in the field and to the programme as a whole.

### Chief Leader

The most senior role on an expedition, heading up the Leadership team.

### Basecamp Manager

Responsible for logistics including equipment, food and transport.

### Deputy Chief Leader

Working closely with and deputising for the Chief Leader.



Click on each button to find out more about the role

## FIRE LEADERS

A 'Fire' is what we call a team on expedition. Each Fire will typically consist of 2 or 3 Leaders and up to 10 Young Explorers. Although Fire Leaders will each bring different specialisms and skillsets to the expedition, they will all work together to lead, support and inspire their Fire.

### Adventure Leader

Technical expertise and qualified to lead in mountainous terrain.

### Paddle Leader

Technical expertise and qualified to lead in bodies of water during paddle activities.

### Knowledge Leader

Facilitation skills to inspire and engage young people in their environment.

### Social Leader

Skilled in youth development, pastoral care and managing behaviour of young people.

# LEADER TEAMS AND ROLES

Each British Exploring Society programme is led and delivered by a multidisciplinary team of skilled volunteer Leaders.

You can read the descriptions for each of the Roles by clicking on the different buttons on this page.

## ADDITIONAL ROLES

### Medical Leaders

The number of Medical Leaders will depend on the expedition location and environment, as well as the number of Young Explorers. Medical Leaders could be either situated at basecamp providing remote medical support to Fires, or could be leading a Fire with other Leaders.

### Other Senior Leaders

Some roles have a Senior Leader to provide overarching support in that area. They may be based at basecamp or could be leading a Fire with other Fire Leaders.



# LIFE ON EXPEDITION

## EXPEDITION LIFE

There are no set itineraries for any British Exploring Society expedition as the best adventures need to allow for an element of uncertainty and flexibility, as you and the Young Explorers adapt to the environment and to allow individual interests to lead the direction the expedition takes.

Throughout your time on expedition you will be wild camping, both at Base Camp and while away, sharing a tent with one or two other Leaders. You'll spend your days supporting Young Explorers to plan and lead their own adventures. Braving the elements with relatively limited resources, you will be facilitating activities to help them engage in and learn about the unique and incredible environments that they are moving through, to develop and reflect, and capture their experience through science and media projects. You'll be cooking in teams on camp stoves and collecting water from local natural sources. At the end of the day, you'll retreat to your tent for some well-earned rest where you can debrief with your fellow Leaders and plan ahead for the next day.

## PHYSICAL FITNESS

Even though there are no formal fitness criteria, you will need an appropriate level of mobility and fitness to carry you through the expedition. On some expeditions teams will complete 'tours' spending between 2-5 nights away from Base Camp at a time. On others, they will be on the move the entire time and only return to Base Camp at the end of the programme. This may be carried out through trekking on rough and rocky ground, ascending mountainous terrain or canoeing in bodies of water.

## BASECAMP

We work with experts and landowners to identify suitable spaces in wilderness locations, which Leaders transform into their 'Base Camp' upon arrival. A home-away-from-home, the Base Camp is often the heart of the expedition and is used as a logistical hub and a launchpad for carrying out explorative excursions. Construction of a Base Camp may include erecting infrastructure such as large mess tents for cooking and shelter, and smaller tents for equipment storage, digging pit toilets and constructing makeshift shower spaces. Check out this video of our Kyrgyzstan 2022 basecamp to see an example of what a Base Camp might look like.



# THE LEADER JOURNEY

Below outlines a rough timeline of the stages of leading with British Exploring Society. Our different Wild Pathways (programmes) require different levels of time commitment from both our young people and Leaders. This calendar is based on our summer programmes; programmes in other seasons will follow a similar but adapted timeline.



KEY:

LEADERS ONLY	WELCOME TO ADVENTURE	FINDING YOUR FEET	HITTING YOUR STRIDE	READY TO EXPLORE
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AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV
RECRUITMENT															
			PLACEMENTS												
		ONBOARDING													
						LEADER TRAINING							LEADER DEBRIEFING		
					WILDESTAN (ONLINE ADVENTURES)										
								ADVENTURE WEEKEND							
									ADVENTURE WEEK			ADVENTURE WEEK			
								YOUNG EXPLORER TRAINING			EXPEDITION			EXPLORER CELEBRATIONS	



# RECRUITMENT

The first step of your Leader Journey is to submit an Expression of Interest.

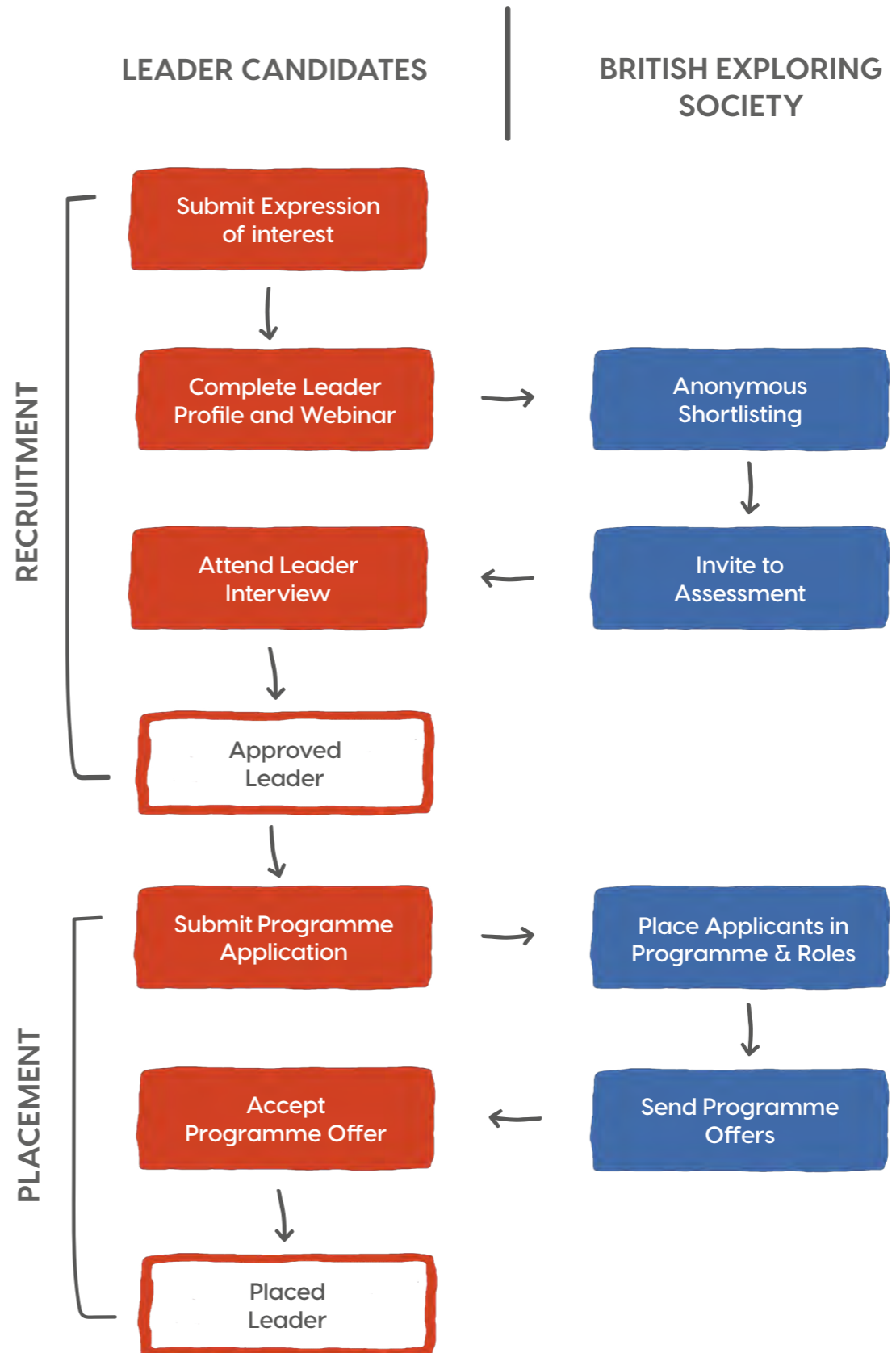
Next, we will ask you to complete your Leader Profile. This is your opportunity to tell us why you want to become a volunteer Leader for British Exploring Society, as well as how your unique skills and experience will support the development of young people on our programmes.

At the same time, we will invite you to attend an online Introductory Webinar. This is a chance to meet the Programmes Team and learn more about British Exploring Society and life on expedition.

Once you have filled in your Leader Profile and attended an Introductory Webinar, your Leader Profile will be reviewed by the Programmes Team. This shortlisting process is anonymous and your name, personal details and CV will not be visible to the assessors at this stage.

If your Leader Profile is shortlisted, then you will be invited to book an interview with one of the team. If you are successful at interview, then you will receive an email confirming that you are now an Approved Leader with British Exploring Society. Your status as an Approved Leader lasts for 4 years after assessment or since you last led with us.

Congratulations! You can now apply to join any of our adventures and expeditions.



# PLACEMENTS

Applications to be placed on an programme season will open in the preceding autumn. All Approved Leaders will receive an email inviting them to apply. There will be an opportunity to express a preference of programme location and to inform us of any dates you are unavailable for.

After applications have opened, we place Leaders on to programmes on a rolling basis. We work to ensure that we have a diverse spread of skills and expertise on each programme, therefore you may be placed in to a role or programme that is not your first preference.

If and when you have been placed in to a role, you will receive an offer email which will be the start of your onboarding process.

# ONBOARDING

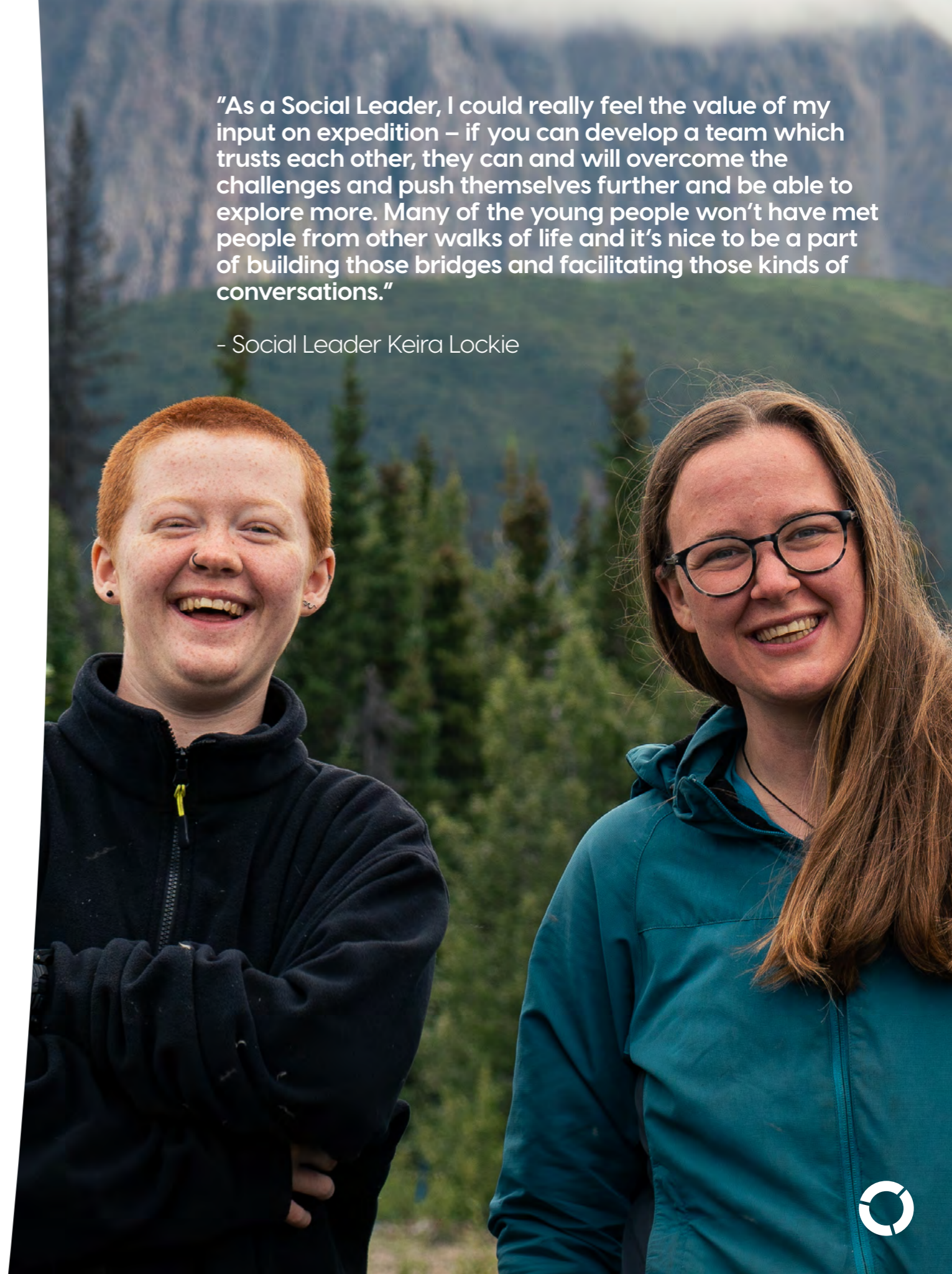
Once you have accepted your offer, there will be a number of administration and personnel actions that you need to complete to get yourself ready to lead. This will include:

- DBS & references to work with young people
- Submission of relevant qualifications
- Completion of your Supporting You form (medical form)
- Familiarisation with British Exploring Society's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

You will be sent a link to an Onboarding Pack which details each of these actions with deadlines.

**"As a Social Leader, I could really feel the value of my input on expedition – if you can develop a team which trusts each other, they can and will overcome the challenges and push themselves further and be able to explore more. Many of the young people won't have met people from other walks of life and it's nice to be a part of building those bridges and facilitating those kinds of conversations."**

- Social Leader Keira Lockie



# LEADER TRAINING

## LEADER INDUCTION WEEKEND

Your training will kick off with an induction weekend held on Zoom. We will be welcoming you to British Exploring Society and covering essential content on principles of risk and incident management, safeguarding, behavioural management and personal development. This training is compulsory for all British Exploring Society Leaders on all expeditions in the upcoming cycle, and will also be your opportunity to virtually meet the British Exploring Society Expeditions Team and your other Leaders. The event will take place from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

## LEADER TRAINING WEEKEND

Designed and delivered primarily by Chief Leaders and their senior leadership teams, this residential weekend includes elements of training specific to your programme including location specific hazards, training on equipment used on your adventure or expedition and a chance for teams on the Ready to Explore pathway to work together to plan for Young Explorer training. The event will take place from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING FOR LEADERS

All Leaders must also complete (or hold a valid):

- 16-hour Outdoor First Aid Training course
- An online Mental Health Awareness course (or equivalent)

You may also be invited to additional necessary training courses dependent on your role.



## ROLE-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Adventure Leader

Paddle Leader

A one-day in person event to assess your technical competence and currency.

Knowledge Leader

Social Leader

Medical Leader

Basecamp Manager

A two-hour evening briefing on Zoom, will provide an opportunity to start planning and preparing for delivering your role on the expedition.

[Review our Key Dates for Leaders](#)

Click here to see training dates for our upcoming expedition season



# OUR WILD PATHWAYS

At British Explorign Society, our programme activities for young people are categorised by the following four Wild Pathways:

**WELCOME TO ADVENTURE**

**FINDING YOUR FEET**

**HITTING YOUR STRIDE**

**READY TO EXPLORE**



## ON ALL OUR WILD PATHWAYS...

- 1** Young people learn from making choices and decisions for themselves, doing things for the first time and being stretched.
- 2** Young people connect and communicate with other young people, sharing different life experiences.
- 3** Young people enhance their curiosity, skills, knowledge and personal development through engaging, real-life learning.
- 4** Young people connect with wild, remote places and the natural environment.
- 5** Young people are coached intensively by exceptional volunteer Leaders and Experts who also act as remarkable role models.



## WELCOME TO ADVENTURE

Welcome to Adventure is our most accessible pathway, requiring no travel and no specialised equipment; it introduces young people to the excitement and challenge of exploration and the outdoors.

### EXPEDITION WORKSHOPS

Our half-day Expedition Workshops not only provide a glimpse of what a British Exploring Society expedition entails but they also offer opportunities to develop decision-making and team-building skills through engaging tasks.

### WILDESTAN ONLINE ADVENTURES

Our virtual continent, Wildestan, allows young people to explore wild places from their own homes, encouraging them to get outdoors and explore their local areas. This innovative approach 'transports' them to remote locations like Antarctica, which are otherwise inaccessible due to risk, cost, and/or environmental impact.

## FINDING YOUR FEET

Finding Your Feet offers residential adventure weekends for young people.

### ADVENTURE WEEKENDS

These weekends provide an immersive outdoor experience, helping Young Adventurers develop essential life skills in a supportive environment. The high leader-to-participant ratio ensures each young person feels safe and encouraged - building their resilience and self-belief.

## HITTING YOUR STRIDE

Hitting Your Stride is a five or seven-day adventure that takes Young Adventurers on their first 'wild' adventure.

### ADVENTURE WEEKS

The adventures are built around wild camping; this means no access to cabins/existing buildings and no washing facilities or running water. They'll spend several nights 'under canvas' in locations like Exmoor or the Scottish Highlands, where they will develop their expedition skills and be empowered to make decisions and take on challenges.



# READY TO EXPLORE

Ready to Explore offers young people multi-week expeditions to some of the most remote locations in the UK and overseas, where together they face the extraordinary every day. These programmes involve multiple activation points - as a Leader you would be responsible for the delivery with support from our HQ Team.



## YOUNG EXPLORER INDUCTION WEEKEND

**(International Expedition Programmes only)**

The first opportunity to meet their team and learn more about their expedition. They will cover kit and equipment, packing, safety procedures and be introduced to projects they might take part in. For UK expeditions, this training will also include a day walk and practice with offsite camping.

## YOUNG EXPLORER TRAINING EXPEDITION

A 5-day training expedition based in the UK where Young Explorers will get to practice and build upon their expedition skills. It will incorporate periods of wild camping, project and route planning, personal development and experiencing first-hand the challenges and opportunities of expedition life.

## EXPEDITION

Expeditions take place during the school holidays. Some Leaders will be asked to join the Advance Party a week before the main expedition starts, to begin in-country planning, purchasing and area recces.

For the rest of the Leaders, your expedition will begin at the airport (or other meeting point for UK expeditions) and you will be travelling to and from the expedition with Young Explorers.

## DEBRIEFING

After you have settled back home, you will be asked to contribute to post-expedition reporting and to share any feedback.

Explorer Celebrations is a one-day event held in person to reunite, celebrate the successes of the expedition season and consolidate learnings. Leaders will be invited to celebrate, facilitate workshops for Young Explorers and participate in a strategic focus group.



# EXPENSES

We recognise the incredible and significant contribution that our volunteer Leader community gives to our Young Explorers and the charity, and we work hard to keep costs for Leaders as low as possible. Where costs are included, we will either provide this upfront or reimburse Leaders upon receipt of an expense form.



**“many times I’ve heard that ‘problems are like climbing a mountain’, and there is something so rewarding and freeing knowing I’ve actually done that!”**

- Young Explorer Grace

- Screening to work with young people
- External training, qualifications & certifications
- British Exploring Society UK Training Events
- Expedition & Travel
- Kit & Equipment

## WHAT IS INCLUDED

## WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced DBS Check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Police Checks where these are required</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 hour Outdoor First Aid course (up to £200 every 3 years)</li> <li>• Online Mental Health Awareness course (every 3 years)</li> <li>• 4x4 driving training where necessary for your role</li> <li>• Medical indemnity for Medical Leaders (up to £300)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel expenses to/from external training courses</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training resources</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Travel expenses (up to £100 per event)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flight / travel costs for returning and Senior Leaders</li> <li>• All travel during the expedition</li> <li>• Any necessary accommodation</li> <li>• Food and sustenance on expedition</li> <li>• Comprehensive travel and medical insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flight costs for new Leaders</li> <li>• Visa costs</li> <li>• Vaccination costs</li> <li>• Travel to/from the airport</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPE and safety equipment</li> <li>• Tents and stoves on expedition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All personal kit including sleeping bag, boots and clothing</li> </ul>



# CURRENT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Applications to be placed on a programme season will open in the preceding autumn. All Approved Leaders will receive an email inviting them to apply. There will be an opportunity to express a preference of expedition location and to inform us of any dates you are unavailable for.

WELCOME TO ADVENTURE (WILDESTAN)	x5 ONLINE SESSIONS
FINDING YOUR FEET (ADVENTURE WEEKENDS)	x3 DAYS
HITTING YOUR STRIDE (ADVENTURE WEEKS)	x5 DAYS / x7 DAYS
READY TO EXPLORE (EXPEDITION PROGRAMMES)	x2 WEEKS / x4 WEEKS



Click here to start your journey today

**“My advice? Be prepared to be flexible. The Young Explorers are diverse and come from all walks of life, and you will need to be adaptable and ready to support everyone in your Fire. While that may initially seem daunting, remember that you ain’t alone. You will have the back up of Social, Adventure, Knowledge and Medical Leaders as well as the Base Camp and British Exploring Society HQ Team. Your skills and abilities as a Leader, regardless of the title you have, are as important as everyone else’s. So be prepared to pull your weight, make decisions, and be part of a team.”**

- Adventure Leader Alasdair Brock

