



Trustee Recruitment Pack

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Introduction



Many Thanks for showing an interest in the role of Trustee at the Culture Trust, Luton. I hope you find this pack informative and exciting and that it helps clarify how you could bring your expertise, advice and knowledge to shape our next chapter.

As you'll see we are a progressive, Luton-based, arts and cultural charity with a mission to inspire and connect communities through culture and creativity. We play a leading role in drawing together culture, heritage and arts for the benefit of the Luton and East of England community – sparking regeneration, pride of place, skills activation & careers. We present diverse and innovative year-round programmes and events across three sites including the Hat Factory Arts Centre, the Hat House creative workspace, Wardown House Museum and Gallery, and Stockwood Discovery Centre. Advocating locally relevant and nationally important arts and culture.

We develop and deliver a wide range of cultural activities. Our website www.culturetrust.com and the What's On area should give you a feel for the breadth of cultural activities that we deliver.

We are also involved in regenerating the town and its cultural fabric, leading the Hat District heritage regeneration project to reanimate and reuse historic hat factories and transform them into inspiring and much needed creative workspace. This is part of our long-term ambition to be financially self-sustaining. We've bought and developed new properties with £7m funds raised by our Executive and we now have a 15-year strategy to fine-tune.

We are also growing the ecology of former hat factory freeholds to build the Trusts heritage portfolio. Equally we are custodian to the Heritage Museums and grounds which we lease from our partner Luton Council.

Being a trustee in this dynamic cultural organisation and working with such a committed and skilled team is an incredible honour and extremely rewarding. I hope you find this pack informative and exciting and that it inspires you to apply for this prestigious and rewarding role.

A. Stark

Andrea Stark
Chair of Trustees

About The Culture Trust, Luton

Established in 2008, the Culture Trust, Luton is a vibrant and progressive independent charity, and our mission is 'to connect communities through culture'. We do this through our accredited museums, theatres, galleries, creative workspaces and Arts Centre in Luton. We attract over 200,000 visits per annum to our five sites: The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House and Hat Works creative workspace, Wardown House Museum & Gallery and Stockwood Gardens & Museum. We connect these local assets with our community through collaboration, co-curation, community engagement and care.

What do we do?

- We animate our venues; The Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat House creative workspace, Hat Works creative start-up; Wardown House Museum & Gallery and Stockwood Gardens & Museum.
- We develop and animate these sites and promote arts, heritage and culture and present multi-cultural and year-round programme of events, exhibitions, workshops and performances.
- We co-produce activity with our community, Museum Makers volunteers and team of cultural experts.
- We support creative talent and skills by providing opportunities, platforms and cultural career progression – particularly for young people, engaging over 15,000 each year.
- We provide free Museum entry and care for a collection of over 2 million artefacts, 1.5 million photographs and maps and hold the most extensive and complete hat and headwear collection in the UK.
- We culturally regenerated the town centre by converting a collection of former hat factories into creative workspace and we actively promote heritage buildings reused for contemporary society.

For further information please visit our website: <https://www.culturetrust.com/>

Our Vision is **Culture as a Sustainable Catalyst for change in Luton**

Our Mission is **To Connect communities through culture**

Our nine Business plan Priorities are:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Priority 1 | Young people's Creative & cultural skills |
| Priority 2 | One mile community Engagement and Wellbeing |
| Priority 3 | Wardown House Museum for co-curation & contemporary collecting |
| Priority 4 | Hat & head ware Collections Development & national reach |
| Priority 5 | Discovery Events, hospitality and Trading services |
| Priority 6 | Hat Factory Arts Centre Contemporary cultures & Commercial Programme |
| Priority 7 | Hat District Creative Cluster Network & ecology |
| Priority 8 | Heritage custodianship, re-use and regeneration enterprise |
| Priority 9 | Stockwood Green capital redevelopment towards net zero |

Our structure:

We are a not-for-profit charity with a turnover of circa £3.66m (2023) and we own a trading company which gifts profit back to the charity. We submit annual returns to Companies House and the Charities Commission. Day to day running of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, Marie Kirbyshaw who reports to the board. We have a Board of Trustees who provide governance and meet quarterly, monitoring performance through HR & Finance Sub-Committees.

Our funding:

We generate funds through our ticket sales and events and also through our trading company profit (retail, catering and hire). We also receive an annual donation from London Luton Airport Limited (Luton Rising). In addition, we have a funding agreement with Arts Council as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). It is our strategic aim to generate over 50% of our costs through trade, property and activity. This will mean that we are not over-reliant on grants to deliver our core work. It is recognized that future financial sustainability requires long-term funding partnerships and greater opportunities for self-generated income

Our team:

We have 45 FTE staff (2023). Our talented, skilled and experienced team are as a group of experts who curate and care for our collections, programme our cultural venues and welcome our visitors. The team look after and maintain our heritage buildings, provide retail and catering services for our visitors, tend our gardens and open spaces and manage our workspaces.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion:

In 2021 we developed an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy which is now embedded into our programming, policies, audience engagement, recruitment and training and development. Our over-arching EDI aim is to mainstream equity, diversity and inclusion both as an employer, programmer, partner, landlord and commissioner within the work that we do. We want to ensure that our approach enables a diverse range of people to work and connect with us and enjoy, inform and benefit from the culture we offer.

Hat District Creative Cluster



In 2017 we started the growth of a creative industry cluster in the heart of Luton called the Hat District. We now have three former Hat Factories offering inspiring work, study and show spaces. The Hat District Creative Cluster consists of: Hat Factory Arts Centre, Hat Works and Hat House. This ecology also includes the Storefront Gallery.

We are building on our expertise in bringing creative and talented people together so that they can innovate and collaborate. Learning from the town's important history of hat making and manufacturing, the creative cluster will once again contribute to the local economy by increasing job opportunities, visitors and spend whilst regenerating the area and boosting pride of place.

We developed a business model that aims for a critical mass of additional arts and cultural venues and workspace so that the Hat District will be self-funding. This project will strengthen the Trust's position, pay for itself and return a surplus for further investment. The Hat District cluster project is the first step towards stabilising and sustaining the Trust's long-term position.

The Hat District:

- Supports, develops and enables 133 additional Creative and Digital Industries jobs
- Will have an economic impact of £29m by 2025
- Boost the local economy by attracting 135,000 more visits
- Is growing a vibrant creative ecology and 'life-style brand'

For more information please visit www.hatdistrict.co.uk

Hat Factory Arts Centre



The Hat Factory Arts Centre is one of Luton's leading arts and entertainment venues, featuring live music, club nights, theatre, dance, films, workshops, talks, networks and exhibitions. The Hat Factory Arts Centre was refurbished in 2019 after a £2m investment to open up spaces in order to engage more people in Arts and Culture.

We welcome everyone to be inspired by local and global artists, performers and events and also to develop creative skills and talents. Complementing our programming, we welcome local/regional promoters to the venue, broadening our music offer and at the same time supporting young and emerging talent. We offer live music, contemporary theatre, visual art, comedy, film, gaming, digital and dance with a focus on locally relevant and nationally important work.

The Hat Factory Arts Centre also provides inspiring workspaces for creative, design and digital businesses and artists. We bring creative industries and talented people together so that they can innovate, collaborate and generate new ideas. The Hat Factory Arts Centre comprises of a café-bar, live music venue, 100 seat studio theatre, basement venue, 13 creative studios and workspaces, meeting rooms and offices.

Most recently we have developed a new evening programme of Thursday night lates alongside partners in the town Center to contribute to the night-time economy and to animate this are of town with local businesses and other venues.

For more information visit <https://www.culturetrust.com/venues/hat-factory-arts-centre>

Stockwood Discovery Centre



Stockwood Discovery Centre is located in the Georgian Grade II listed stable block and walled garden of the former Stockwood House. It reopened in 2008 after a £6m investment programme and includes interactive displays exploring local history from prehistoric times to the present, a temporary exhibitions programme, an award-winning carriage display, a visitor centre with a shop selling locally sourced products, a large café with outdoor children's discovery area.

The newly listed Grade II Garden is a walled secure garden with woodland, beautifully designed formal gardens and an array of specialist 'medicine' plants, shrubs and trees. A popular place for mindfulness, wellbeing and contemplation. The garden is one of the few places in the country where the work of acclaimed artist Ian Hamilton Finlay can be seen on permanent display. The site is free to access as are the Museums and so Stockwood is very popular with people of all ages throughout the year. The Garden Café provides an exceptional variety of food and drinks to the many thousands of visitors every week.

Our Museum galleries present local history, carriage and car collections and tell the stories of real people behind the collections, exploring the history of the region from prehistoric times to the modern day. Highlights include the Wenlok Jug - a rare medieval masterpiece with strong links to Luton's history and development, the town's last tram, and the famous Mossman collection of carriages - the largest collection of its kind on display in the UK.

For further information visit: <https://www.culturetrust.com/venues/stockwood-discovery-centre>

Wardown House, Museum and Gallery



Wardown House, Museum and Gallery is a mid-Victorian, Grade II listed building situated in the beautiful landscaped Wardown Park on the outskirts of Luton town centre. Entry and parking is free and the House provides inspiring, eclectic and beautifully curated collections for people of all ages. The museum underwent a £3.5m redevelopment during 2016, reopening in April 2017 following a £1.8m grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to conserve the historic building and transform the way its story is told.

Wardown House gives visitors an insight into how it operated as a home during the Victorian period; the original use of each room is communicated through the collections including the Billiard Room, Smoking Room, Library and Kitchen. With an exemplary hat collection, local and social historical collections, the displays chart the development of Luton and celebrate its diverse communities with temporary and permanent artefacts. Originally designed in 1872 as a private residence for Frank Scargill, a local solicitor, the house was bought by two local Councillors in 1903 who opened up the grounds as a public park. The house was used as a military hospital during the First World War before becoming a museum in 1931. A very popular café provides direct access to the park and the Morning Room is an art gallery as well as venue for weddings and functions. Extensive work has made the building fully accessible.

For further information visit: <https://www.culturetrust.com/venues/wardown-house-museum-gallery>

The role and responsibilities of Trustees

Trustees of the Board are charged with ensuring that the Trust operates in accordance with company and charity law and is prudently financially managed. Trustees contribute their experience and expertise to the Board's role of determining the strategic direction, policies and planning of the Trust.

The Board:

Under the leadership of the Chair and delegations to the Chief Executive, the Board shall develop the Trust's long-term strategic direction, ensuring the organisation keeps to its charitable objectives. The Board sets policy, defines high-level goals, manages risk and evaluates performance against agreed targets. The Board is professional, decisive and collective in its approach to governance by discussing, understanding and agreeing strategic matters. The Board is responsible for ensuring they remain skilled, relevant and knowledgeable as a team about the Trust's work, charity law requirements and that they are clear about the role they play on the Board.

Trustees:

All Trustees are advocates for the organisation and promote its purpose, attend arts and cultural activity and appropriate stakeholder events, meetings and networks. Trustees shall also use their expertise, knowledge, networks and contacts to promote the work of the Trust in a consistent and promotional way as agreed by the Board and Chief Executive.

Governance:

Trustees ensure that the organisation functions within the legal, charitable and financial requirements of a charitable company limited by guarantee with a trading company. Trustees strive to;

- Achieve best practice and are accountable for ensuring the financial stability of the organisation
- Ensure the proper investment of funds in protecting the future of the Trust and that reserves meet obligations.
- Demonstrate that due diligence is applied to all Board decisions in relation to investments and long-term financial planning and risk management.
- Ensure policy compliance.
- Work towards ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion.

Board Sub-Committees:

The Trust has two sub-committees (Finance and Human Resources & Policies) and a nominations committee that oversees Board recruitment. These groups have delegated responsibilities and report to quarterly trustee meetings. Membership requires relevant skills and experience from Trustees who can co-opt other specialisms as and when required. It is expected that all Trustees contribute to at least one sub-committee.

The Person Specification

We have a diverse board with wide-ranging skills, abilities and representation. We have vacancies on the board to broaden our skills and we seek to better represent and mirror the community and users we serve. As such, this person specification outlines the essential and desirable skills and experience we seek and our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Skills & Experience: We seek Trustees with the following skills and experience:

Essential:

- Enthusiasm for art, heritage and/or culture
- A passion of the Trust's work, priorities, cultural offer and values
- Strong communication skills including ability to contribute effectively at meetings
- Experience in understanding and resolving complex management information
- Qualities that inspire confidence in staff, trustees, customers and stakeholders
- Ability to share and embrace knowledge and specialisms in order to work as a team
- Skills to support the CEO and leadership team in delivering the Trusts objectives
- Good understanding of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- A commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion; ensuring that it is considered in all aspects of decision-making and remains a high priority.
- Willingness and availability to prepare for and attend meetings, events and training.
- Experience of living or working in Luton and a passion for the Town.

Desirable:

- Ability to understand and influence local, regional and national cultural agendas
- Specialist in Accounting, Finance, Legal, Commercial.

Diversity:

We aim for our Board to reflect the diversity of our customers, audience and geography. We particularly welcome applications from Young People; Women; Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, LGBTQ+ and people with disabilities who are underrepresented on the board and in comparison to the community and users we serve.

Equity Diversity and Inclusion statement

We believe that everyone stands to benefit when we embrace and value the diversity of thoughts, ideas and ways of working that people from different backgrounds, lived experiences and identities bring. It improves decision-making, boosts engagement and innovation, and enables us to better meet the needs of the diverse community we serve, our business goals and objectives. The Culture Trust is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to fair and open competition. Applications from under-represented groups are particularly encouraged and welcome. Under the Equality Act (2010), we are legally required to consider making reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged in the recruitment and selection process. We are therefore committed to meeting, wherever possible, any needs you specify in your application.

Terms of appointment

Time Commitment:

Trustees are required to commit time to attend the following:

- Quarterly Board meetings (normally Thursdays 4pm-7pm) and annual AGM
- Annual Away-day
- One specialist role on a project or sub-committee (minimum 4 x 2 hour meetings per year)
- One staff meeting/social/networks per annum
- Key events and activities (2 per annum minimum)

Remuneration:

The voluntary position is unpaid but all appropriate travel, hospitality and administrative expenditure is reimbursed.

Benefits:

We value the input of Trustees and encourage enjoyable engagement, so we provide free tickets to events. We also provide training and development, look and see visits and visiting speakers to expand Trustees knowledge and update on context. There's no doubt that being a trustee is one of the most rewarding and powerful ways in which you can contribute and support your local community and a cause you care about. It is a way to gain, sharpen and develop skills, strategic experience and team working and increase your professional networks. It puts you at the very heart of the organisation and its work. It can also be seen as an altruistic act of giving which is known to be good for well-being.

Accountabilities:

The Charity Commission publication 'The Essential Trustee – What You Need to Know' provides further information regarding the responsibilities of charity trustees.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-knowcc3>

Duration:

The appointment is for three years and can be renewed for a second term of three years.

How to Apply

To apply please provide the following:

- A comprehensive CV and biography outlining your roles, responsibilities and achievements. Please include details of any service as a Board Trustee or any other voluntary/community work.
- A supporting statement addressing your motivations for applying & outlining how you meet the person specification (section 3).

Please e-mail your application to: marie.kirbyshaw@culturetrust.com.

If you would like an informal conversation about the role prior to submitting an application please contact Marie Kirbyshaw. We look forward to receiving your application.