



CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RECRUITMENT PACK

EAST ST ARTS



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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of East Street Arts.

This is an exciting opportunity to lead the Board of one of the UK's longest-established artist-led organisations as we enter a significant new phase of our development.

For over thirty years East Street Arts has championed artists by providing affordable workspaces, professional development, public programmes and creative opportunities that strengthen artists' careers and create positive change in communities.

We are seeking a Chair who shares our ambition, values collaborative leadership and can help guide the organisation through continued growth, including the development of an exciting new capital project in Keighley alongside our established programmes across Leeds and our Meanwhile Spaces programme. As Chair you will work closely with an experienced Board and Executive Team to ensure excellent governance, provide strategic leadership and act as an ambassador for East Street Arts nationally.

We welcome applications from people with a broad range of experiences and backgrounds who are passionate about supporting artists and strengthening the cultural sector.





Introduction to East Street Arts

East Street Arts is a visual arts organisation and registered charity based in Leeds, working nationally to support artists to develop resilient and sustainable practices.

Founded in 1993 by artists Karen Watson and Jon Wakeman, East Street Arts has become one of the UK's leading artist-led organisations, providing affordable workspaces, artist development, research, public programmes and creative partnerships that create positive social and cultural impact.

Today we operate across:

- Patrick Studios
- Convention House
- New Capital Project in Keighley
- Meanwhile Spaces across England and Wales

Working with artists at every stage of their careers, we believe artists play a vital role in shaping healthier, more creative and more connected communities.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision (Our vision for the world)

"Artists will create positive change."

Mission (The work we do to achieve our vision)

"We support artists to create resilient and sustainable practices that will affect positive change in the places we live and work, whilst also disrupting social and sector inequalities."

Values (The values we hold and present in our daily behaviours, when conducting our work)

Agile

We are open and responsive to new ways of working and ideas. We adapt our approach wherever possible to provide bespoke support.

Courageous

We are challenging and proactive in our response to social, sector and wider inequalities.

Transparent

We communicate effectively, internally and externally, to ensure we are open about who we are, what we do and why we do it.

Inclusive

We reflect the diverse society we live in. We create a safe and caring environment for everyone.

Original

We are unique in our approach. We ask questions, research new ways of working and innovate.

Nurturing

We support anybody who wants, or needs, to develop an artistic practice. The support we offer is expansive and encouraging.



Why We Are Recruiting a Chair

East Street Arts is entering an exciting period of organisational growth.

Alongside delivering an ambitious artistic programme, we continue to strengthen our artist support offer, expand our portfolio of creative spaces and develop new partnerships across the UK. We are also progressing an important capital development in Keighley which will further increase our impact and long-term sustainability.

As our organisation grows, so too does the importance of strong, collaborative governance. We are looking for an experienced Chair who can provide strategic leadership to the Board, support the Executive Team, champion our values and help ensure East Street Arts continues to thrive.

The Chair plays a vital role in ensuring East Street Arts remains well governed, financially resilient and strategically ambitious.

Working closely with the Executive Director, Artistic Director and Board of Trustees, the Chair provides strategic leadership to the Board and fosters an inclusive, effective Board culture, while supporting and constructively challenging the Executive Team. The role carries responsibility for good governance and legal compliance, and for championing equality, diversity and inclusion. The Chair also supports fundraising and partnership development, represents East Street Arts with funders, partners and stakeholders, and helps guide the organisation through its next phase of growth.

This is an opportunity to make a lasting contribution to artists, communities and the wider cultural sector.





Role Description

Purpose

The Chair provides leadership to the Board of Trustees, enabling it to fulfil its governance responsibilities and ensuring East Street Arts delivers its charitable objectives.

The Chair supports the Executive Director and Artistic Director while maintaining appropriate governance oversight, ensuring the organisation remains financially sustainable, legally compliant and strategically focused.

Key Responsibilities

The Chair leads an effective, inclusive and high-performing Board, chairing Board meetings and the annual strategy day and agreeing agendas with the Executive Director. They ensure Board decisions are implemented and monitored, promote excellent governance and compliance, support the recruitment, induction and development of Trustees, and lead succession planning for the Board.

The Chair builds a constructive relationship with the Executive Director and Artistic Director, supporting organisational resilience and long-term sustainability, and leads the annual appraisal of the Executive Director.

As an ambassador for East Street Arts, the Chair develops relationships with funders, partners and stakeholders, supports fundraising and advocacy, and chairs appointment panels where appropriate. Throughout, the Chair encourages constructive debate and effective decision-making across the Board.

Responsibilities as a Trustee

Alongside Chair responsibilities, Trustees collectively safeguard the charity's assets, ensure legal and regulatory compliance and oversee financial sustainability. They approve organisational strategy, monitor organisational performance and manage risk, ensuring charitable resources are used effectively and promoting East Street Arts' mission and values.

Person Specification

Essential Experience

We are looking for someone with previous Board or senior governance experience, including experience chairing Boards, committees or equivalent senior groups. Candidates should bring strategic leadership experience and a track record of supporting and constructively challenging senior executives, along with financial oversight and organisational sustainability experience. Experience of leading organisational change, developing partnerships and engaging stakeholders is essential, as is experience acting as an ambassador for an organisation.

Desirable Experience

Experience of charity leadership, capital or property projects, or publicly funded arts or cultural organisations would be an advantage, as would fundraising experience, local government or public sector partnerships, and a background in the creative industries.

Essential Knowledge

Candidates should have a sound understanding of charity governance, company law and Trustee responsibilities, strategic planning and risk management. Financial oversight, equality, diversity and inclusion, and organisational development are also important areas of knowledge.

Essential Skills

We are looking for excellent communication and strategic thinking, alongside collaborative leadership and strong judgement. The Chair should be able to build consensus while challenging constructively, build relationships with a wide range of people, and bring political awareness and ambassadorial skills to the role.

Personal Qualities

We are looking for someone who is collaborative, inclusive, curious and thoughtful, confident and supportive, values-led and committed to artists and creativity.

Commitment Expectations

The Board meets four times a year, alongside an annual strategy day. Beyond these fixed dates, the Chair is expected to commit approximately 10–12 days a year to actively supporting East Street Arts, which may include:

- Regular meetings with the Executive Director and Artistic Director
- Committee meetings where appropriate
- Attendance at key East Street Arts events
- Occasional meetings with funders and partners

This is a voluntary position. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

East Street Arts is committed to building a diverse Board that reflects the communities we serve.

We particularly welcome applications from people currently underrepresented within arts leadership and charity governance, including people from Global Majority backgrounds, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ communities, younger people, and people with lived experience relevant to our work.

We are committed to making our recruitment process accessible and will provide reasonable adjustments throughout.

How to apply

Submitting your application

To apply, please provide a copy of your CV and a cover letter (max 2 A4 pages) or voice recording/video (max 5 min) in an easily downloadable format.

In your cover letter, please provide your name, contact details and confirmation that you have the capacity to commit to becoming a Trustee, and outline:

- Why you want to become an East Street Arts Trustee
- What experience you would bring to the Board of Trustees

To apply, send your application by email to recruitment@esamail.org.uk

Alternatively, if you require an adjustment to the above forms of application for any reason, please contact us by emailing recruitment@esamail.org.uk or calling 0113 248 0040. We look forward to hearing from you.



EAST ST ARTS

making space for artists

registered charity 1077401
eaststreetarts.org.uk
@eaststreetarts



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ENGLAND**