



APPLY TO BE A TRUSTEE OF FORWARD ARTS FOUNDATION 2021

About Us

For three decades, Forward Arts Foundation has been at the forefront of new poetry and now reaches an estimated 131 million people each year.

Since 1991, Forward Arts Foundation ('Forward') has promoted public knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of poetry. We are a national charity working across the UK and online to widen poetry's audience, honour achievement and support talent. Through our two flagship programmes, Forward Prizes for Poetry and National Poetry Day, we work towards a better society where individuals and communities can develop their innate creativity, their agency and their understanding through the making and sharing of poetry.

Our experience and agility have guided us through the turbulence of 2020 as millions of people turned to poetry to make sense of a rapidly shifting world. We are now propelled into our 30th-anniversary year by the momentum of the biggest National Poetry Day to date and the critically acclaimed poetry of the Forward Prizes that represents the urgency of our times.

Under new leadership, we are looking to the future. Our first step is to increase our capacity to deliver an exceptional 30th-anniversary programme, this year. This includes new digital initiatives, regional Poetry Producers and a new Poems of the Decade anthology, all part of an enriched programme around the Forward Prizes and National Poetry Day.

By 2024, our ambition is for a network of locally driven activity across the UK representing the nation's diversity through poetry. We want our digital channel to be recognised as the leading resource for contemporary poetry, including cross-arts commissions, films, and events, as well as extensive resources for teachers and the general public. And we aim to have instigated a programme of university-based research on the social impact of poetry with a white paper for policy makers, cultural leaders and community influencers.

Leadership and Management

Forward is led by its board of five Trustees, chaired by Martin Thomas. Martin brings extensive experience as a trustee of several charities, including Chair of Women for Women International. Other trustees are Forward's Founder William Sieghart CBE, responsible for the 2013 Sieghart Report on libraries and e-books; Kim Evans, former senior executive at BBC and Arts Council; Jamie Andrews, Head of Culture and Learning at British Library; and Giles Spackman, Group Finance Director of Oxford University Press.

The executive team is led by Mónica Parle, Executive Director. She was appointed in February 2021, following the departure of Susannah Herbert, who ran the organisation for eight transformative years and successfully steered us through the pandemic. Mónica has stepped up from her previous role as National Poetry Day Manager, providing the continuity and organisational knowledge to drive forward the learnings of 2020. She was previously Executive Director at First Story and is a highly commended writer. The team also includes Holly Hopkins, Forward Prizes Manager, and Natalie Charles, Office Manager. We are currently recruiting a National Poetry Day Manager and the new post of Development Manager.

The team is supported by freelance specialists in education, communications, finance, HR and fundraising.

New Trustees

We are looking to appoint up to four new Trustees to the Board. These roles are unpaid. Within the 4 new Trustees, we are looking for two young trustees, in this people under 30.

We believe poetry is for everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, maternity and pregnancy, race, religion, class and sexual orientation. Our approach to recruiting trustees is shaped by a commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion.

Across 2021, we are working to more actively and strategically embed inclusion in every facet of our practice. We particularly welcome applications for vacancies from D/deaf and disabled and black and minority ethnic candidates, as well as candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds, as they are under-represented in the arts, and we commit to review our processes to ensure that our organisation more closely reflects the society it serves.

For the more experienced candidates:

We seek individuals with expertise in any of the below and a belief that your skills will contribute to the strong and effective governance and growth of a small charity:

- Fundraising from all sources, i.e. both restricted and unrestricted.
- Communications that drive action and have achieved financial objectives.
- Policy and advocacy relevant to culture, literature and literacy.
- Ideally, applicants should show interest in and understanding of the literature/arts sector and/or literacy and education.

For the two young trustees:

- A genuine interest in poetry and in supporting our work with poets, schools, libraries, harder-to-reach communities,
- The time and commitment to attend and prepare for quarterly board meetings.
- The will and capacity to engage fully with the board, and members of the Forward team as appropriate, to help grow our work and extend its impact.
- Expertise and experience of the non-profit sector IS NOT NECESSARY.
- You must be at least 18.
- We are recruiting for potential – learning in the role can be expected.
- You are not there to represent young people – you are there to bring us a much-needed diversity of perspective.

General duties as a Trustee

- Ensure that Forward complies with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure Forward Arts Foundation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its stated aims.
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction to the Forward Arts Foundation, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the Forward Arts Foundation.
- Ensure the financial stability of the Forward Arts Foundation.
- Serve as an advocate for the organisation as required, including for specific issues or events.
- We hope that at least one of the new trustees will champion the role of diversity within the Forward Arts Foundation.

Terms and Commitment

Location: All Board Meetings may be attended online. We will try to meet face-to-face when we can. But Trustees are welcome wherever they live.

The Board meets quarterly. Trustees are appointed for a 3-year term, with a maximum of 3 terms possible.

For our young trustees, a 1 or 2 year term may be preferred and is available. In addition, we offer young trustees: training in how to be a trustee, mentoring and buddying and the chance to really learn about what it takes to run an arts organisation.

Salary: Unpaid, travel expenses will be reimbursed if required and where necessary.

Deadline for applications: 3 June 2021

To apply or find out more, contact jobs@forwardartsfoundation.org with TRUSTEE2021 in the subject line.

As part of the application process, we will ask you to tell us what your previous experience is, and what knowledge and skills you have. Also someone we can talk to as a referee. We will accept applications in any medium.

Forward Arts Foundation is an equal opportunities employer and we positively welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their religious beliefs or political opinions, sex, marital or family status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or disability status.

Forward Arts Foundation is a registered charity (charity number: 1037939) and a company limited by guarantee (company no: 02902864), registered in England and Wales.