



# TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT



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## OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

If there is anything we can do to make the recruitment process more accessible and inclusive for you, if you would like support in communicating your skills, experience, or attitude, or if you would like to find out more about the role and us, please contact John Ryan for an informal chat on [john.ryan@oxfordhouse.org.uk](mailto:john.ryan@oxfordhouse.org.uk) or 0207 749 1102.

**“I think Oxford  
House do very well  
at truly *inclusive*  
programming.”**

*Local resident*



# WELCOME

***“It isn't easy to describe Oxford House. Obviously, it is a building. More to the point, it is the people who use it.”***

Director, Oxford House, 1970's



Thank you for your interest in joining the board of Oxford House in Bethnal Green (OH).

We want to hear from you whether this is your first board role, or if you already have experience.

Oxford House is a community arts centre based in the heart of Bethnal Green. We offer a diverse programme of creative opportunities with participation central to our work. Each week we welcome circa 1,200 people for a range of live events, creative classes, exhibitions, and special projects. Our users are from diverse backgrounds, abilities, and ages, mostly from Tower Hamlets and surrounding East London boroughs.

Our vision is to build a harmonious and creative community in Bethnal Green, including tackling the persistent challenges and inequalities that still exist in East London and prevent our community reaching its full potential. The way we achieve this is by providing a community-led, inspiring, and sustainable arts space focusing on participatory arts and community collaboration.

It is, therefore, important for us to have a diverse board that reflects the communities we work with and can challenge us and add a variety of knowledge, skills, experience, and background. We are keen to strengthen the voices of Asian, Black and Global Majority people, those who are disabled, and those from the LGBTQ+ community and / or from lower socio-economic backgrounds, on our Board. If you identify this way, you can tell us this in your own words in the covering letter and monitoring form.

We would love to hear from you!

**Jane Earl (Chair) & John Ryan (CEO)**

# WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR



We are looking for people who are supportive of our mission (*what we do and how we do it!*) and who have a real connection with Bethnal Green.

You will believe in the power of creativity and participation to build creative communities. Rooted in Bethnal Green since 1884 we were the first 'settlement house' to open. Students from Oxford lived as volunteers and created programmes that reduced the impact of poverty, including youth work, free legal advice, cultural clubs, and adult education classes.

We have evolved as Bethnal Green has evolved and we remain completely passionate about place, participation, and communities. You will, too.

Experience of working with a charity or community and cultural organisation before joining the board is not essential as training will be provided.

You will have a local connection to Bethnal Green and Tower Hamlets, OR with experience in one of the following:

- Digital (incl marketing and communications).
- Property/operations expertise (esp. historic buildings).
- Finance.

The general attributes we are looking for include:

- A willingness to speak your mind and be enquiring.
- An ability to think creatively and strategically.
- An ability to collaborate and be part of a team.
- Effective interpersonal skills, and motivation to act as an ambassador for OH.
- An active commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties and responsibilities of being a trustee.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort required.



**'The café is a success; it brings the space alive and opens it up. It is the 'heart of the building; it's Bethnal Green's living room.'**

Café customer

# ABOUT US



Located in a Grade II listed building, Oxford House is at the heart of the community in Bethnal Green and is a thriving independent arts, community, and heritage centre. Our vision is to build harmonious and creative communities in Bethnal Green.

We do this by using Oxford House, as

- a community space with a café, affordable workspace, and spaces to hire.
- a creative place with classes and activities delivered with community partners.
- a place to volunteer and develop skills.

## Our Values

- *Collaborative*, in our approach with partners, resident companies, and communities
- *Respectful* of people and organisations, we work with, always valuing the importance of difference.
- *Engaging*, with audiences, visitors, and partners to ensure we get better at what we do.
- *Anti-racist*, in how we work internally and with communities.
- *Trusted*, to be a safe space to work or visit.
- *Energising*, and participatory in how we work with people and communities.

Established in 1884, OH is a registered charity in England. Our financial model combines a mixture of unrestricted and restricted funding. By careful stewardship of our income (a mix of office rental, venue hire, café, and grant) we have developed an enterprising business and social model.


## FIND OUT MORE ABOUT US!

Click on the links below: 

[Instagram](#)

 [Facebook](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 <https://www.oxfordhouse.org.uk/>



# WHAT DOES BEING A BOARD MEMBER INVOLVE?



***“I just love Oxford House’s history and what it stands for. Every neighbourhood in the country should have an OH. I feel honoured to have been given a chance to serve its cause.”***

– Ery Nzaramba, Board member

## **MORE INFORMATION**

You can find out more about the role and responsibility of a charity trustee by reading these:

[The Essential trustee – what you need to know, what you need to do](#)

[Becoming a Trustee](#)

A copy of our Annual accounts is available on the [charity commission website](#).

A board of trustees is a group of people with overall responsibility for the management of an organisation. Board members do not deliver the work of an organisation. They set the overall direction, approve budgets, and support staff by talking through latest ideas, and progress existing plans. The board has ultimate responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of the organisation to achieve its charitable objectives.

As a board member you would:

- Make sure we deliver our charitable purpose for public benefit by developing our long- term strategy to achieve our vision.
- Ensure the effective and efficient governance of OH by making sure we comply with our governing document, charity law and any other relevant legislation or regulations, including the right policies/procedures.
- Monitor our delivery against key funder requirements from funders such as National Lottery Heritage Fund and Garfield Weston.
- Manage the charity’s resources responsibly, ensuring its effective and efficient administration as well as its financial stability.
- Safeguard our reputation and values.

***“There is a real opportunity for community anchors to be part of - and lead - the recovery of East London. I'd like Oxford House to be a place where the community feels like it is taking more ownership of that future recovery.’***

– Respondent to NLHF Evaluation Report

# WHAT YOU GET FROM THE ROLE & YOUR COMMITMENT



## WHAT YOU GET FROM THE ROLE

- Induction and training programme
- Opportunity to help shape the direction of a valued community space, and be part of an active, loyal, and engaged group of trustees.
- Work with an enthusiastic, friendly, and dedicated staff team.
- Networking opportunities
- A chance to make a difference.
- Expand your skill set (governance/ marketing/ finance/ project & people management).
- Annual 1-2-1 with the Chair

All meetings are conducted in an inclusive way, with options for online captioning and regular rest breaks. Specific adjustments for communication, such as interpretation or support to understand written documents, can be provided.

**‘Thank you all for making our team event a very enjoyable and memorable day – everyone really enjoyed themselves and we will definitely add you to our volunteering list for next year!’**

– Standard Charter corporate volunteering feedback

## YOUR COMMITMENT

- To serve an initial term of 3 years, with the possibility of re-appointment until 6 consecutive years’ service has been reached.
- To attend 6 (1 ½ hour) board Meetings and AGM (up to 1 hour) a year in person
- Attend the annual Away Day in person, focusing on longer term planning.
- To sit on one of the Board’s sub committees
- Read and respond to board papers.
- Attend OH events where possible.
- Be a board champion for a specific area of the operation.
- To advocate and champion OH’s work, values, ambition, and strategic direction.
- To provide specialist advice and expertise as required and appropriate

In total, Trustees usually commit the equivalent of 4–7 days per annum to their role. Board meetings are generally hybrid, taking place at OH’s office in Bethnal Green and online.

The role is a voluntary one and is unpaid although reasonable travel expenses can be paid. The role is that of a charity trustee which carries legal obligations and fiduciary duties and requires compliance with charity law as well as fulfilling the statutory duties of being a non-executive director.

# HOW TO APPLY



Please apply by **22 JUNE 2026** with the following:

- 1 A brief covering letter (max one side of A4) OR a short film/video (via a URL link of yourself (max 5 minutes), answering the following questions in your own words:
  - a) why are you interested in becoming a board member for OH
  - b) what you would bring to the role
- 2 Your CV or list of previous experience in an employed or voluntary capacity
- 3 Completed Diversity Monitoring Form.

## SEND TO

You must be over 18 to apply. Applications should be sent by email to our Chief Executive, John Ryan.

[john.ryan@oxfordhouse.org.uk](mailto:john.ryan@oxfordhouse.org.uk)

## NOTE ON VIDEO APPLICATIONS

Please send videos or audio files as an unlisted YouTube video or from your chosen platform. Quality of filming has no impact on the application, please just use your smartphone camera or webcam.

## SELECTION PROCESS

Candidates will be scored by a panel on the:

- strength of responses to the questions above
- listed specific skills experience OR geographic location (east London)
- If you are from a background that is currently underrepresented in the cultural sector (for example, if you are from a group that experiences racism, if you did not go to university or received free school meals as a child, or if you have a disability), **please state this in your application and you will be guaranteed an interview.**
- Closing date for applications **22 June**
- Interviews - week beginning **29/30 June**
- Successful candidates invited to attend Board for info and then formal approval at end of the meeting
- Board approval **20 July**

We will notify you either way whether you have been selected for interview or not.

# CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



## JANE EARL

*Chair of Board of Trustees*

Jane became our new Chair in Nov. 2025. She is a very experienced Chair/senior leader with a background in housing, arts, and local government. Jane is a local resident



## LINDA KAUR

*Vice Chair*

Linda is a local resident and businesswoman and Director/Owner of local business, Khalsa School Wear.



## ERY NZARAMBA

Ery is a freelance Writer and Actor who lives locally. He joined the board in 2023.



## IBRAR ALYAS

*Treasurer*

Ibby is a Director at Credit Suisse and joined us in 2019.



## RUTH SPRINGER

Ruth is on the Senior Team of a secondary school in Bethnal Green and has lived and worked in East London for 16 years.



## JEZ LEE

Jez is a BAFTA, RTS, Grierson and Emmy nominated Executive Producer and joined the board in 2025.



## SARAH CASTLE

Sarah is Head of Learning and Engagement at a national museum with a particular interest in inclusion. Sarah joined the board in 2023.



## CAROLINE SIMONSEN

Caroline is a Producer working across multiple art forms, she is currently Program Manager for London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE, Bloomberg.