



RECRUITMENT OF **CHAIR** OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

wacarts.co.uk/vacancies
recruitment@wacarts.co.uk



Thank you for your interest in applying for the position of Chair of the Board of Trustees at Wac Arts.

For almost five decades, Wac Arts has championed creativity, opportunity and inclusion, empowering young people and communities in and around Camden through participation in the arts. We now seek an exceptional Chair to help guide the next chapter of our development, both in our arts programme and as custodians of the Old Town Hall in Hampstead.

In 2026, we:

- Engaged more than 1,700 children and young people aged 4 – 30, at our Camden HQ, Hampstead's Old Town Hall, as well in school and community settings across London.
- Offered 42 bursaries to unique participants across the arts programme.
- Invited 1,217 audience members across its own shows (e.g. *Weekend & Evening sharing*, *Actors Company productions*, *Schools Festival & Community performances*), professional performances (e.g. *Baby Broadway*, *Aka Dance*, *Akademi*) and festivals (*Camden Fringe*).

2028 will be Wac Arts' 50th year anniversary, and the 150th year of its home, The Old Town Hall (a Grade II listed building). To mark the occasion, the charity has set an ambitious goal for itself that includes:

- Expanding its affordable arts programme for children and young people from its current 1700+ participants to 2000+
- Establishing an early-years programme of activity that sees Wac Arts recognised as a hub for early years arts development
- Growing its unique school offerings, including projects like *Listen Up!* and our annual School Festival
- Expanding its intergenerational community projects
- Cultivating an audience development strategy that includes an ongoing programme of shows at the town hall catered to young families
- Undertaking essential capital improvements to the building to modernise the capability of its spaces and diversifying its events and hires division to create more commercial opportunities

As members of the selection committee and trustees of Wac Arts, we are thus looking for a leader who shares our belief in the transformational power of the arts in young people and understands the vital role that cultural organisations play in enriching lives, strengthening communities and creating opportunities for young people to thrive. We are particularly interested in hearing from individuals who bring a strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and possess the ability to build meaningful relationships with artists, partners, funders, communities and stakeholders. Above all, we seek a Chair who will be a trusted partner to our Chief Executive Officer and an inspiring advocate for Wac Arts' mission and values. We look forward to meeting candidates who share this vision.

Yours sincerely,

Swagata Ganguly, Nicola Clements, Megan Taylor & Miriam Feldman
(The Chair Selection Committee)



ABOUT WAC ARTS

Wac Arts is one of the few multi-arts centres for children and young people in London, driven by their needs.

Our core Arts Programme provides accessible creative, performing and digital arts opportunities in the heart of our community, removing barriers by offering on-site activities (e.g. *Weekend & Evening sessions, Actors Companies, Wac Nites*), or free of charge through schools and communities partnerships (e.g. *School Festival, Listen Up!, Intergenerational Projects*).

Recognising and tackling increasing inequalities in access to the arts (typically over 2 in 5 of our on-site participants come from 30% of the most disadvantaged communities in England) and the life-long benefits they bring, we help young people in an area of stark inequality to develop skills, build confidence and wellbeing, connect with others and forge healthy relationships, and make positive decisions.

More information on our arts programme and its various offerings can be found [here](#).

OUR COMMUNITY SAYS

"It was a pleasure to be involved in this year's WAC Arts Festival. Our students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and were incredibly proud to see their work displayed as part of the exhibition. The opportunity to engage with other schools' artwork was both inspiring and rewarding for them." -

Participating Teacher School Festival

"Wac Arts means an expanded life. A better life. A chance to open up with likeminded people and grow as a person. That's what I felt in the eleven years I've been here" -

John Gaine, Senior Wac Arts student and Wac Arts Ambassador

"My daughter was a little reserved at the beginning, but I've slowly seen her grow in confidence thanks to her Drama, dance & singing teachers. Her drama teacher has been very encouraging" - **Parent/Carer**

"Thank you very much for offering us a bursary for the upcoming academic year. My daughter has gained so much attending classes at Wac Arts and we are grateful that she will be able to continue." -

Parent/Carer



ABOUT WAC ARTS

OUR HOME

We are the custodians of local landmark Hampstead Old Town Hall (A Grade II listed historic building), hosting diverse social and charitable organisations such as London University of the Third Age (U3A) and Akademi (South Asian dance company), as well as providing valuable rehearsal and performing space for hire at affordable and charity rates. This year we hosted West End and National tour rehearsals for productions including Oliver, Beetlejuice, Billy Elliot and The Oresteia, as well as community festivals, such as the Durga Puja, and performances from MPAA. These relationships are vital in ensuring we can continue to offer our subsidised Programme.

OUR CAPITAL PLAN

As 2028 approaches, the charity has highlighted key areas of focus for the Old Town Hall. Beyond the agreed works that focusses on essential needs of the building, two key areas of focus recently have been a much-needed upgrade to the audio/visual and technical capability of the 3 halls in the Victorian section (main hall, small hall and council chamber) and associated diversified hire strategy. A clear development plan is currently in place to help fund the upgrades, with the ambition to do so in Summer 2027.

OUR BOARD

More details on our trustees can be found [here](#).

OUR FUNDING

Wac Arts has a diversified income portfolio, with the charity generating 50% of its income from its studio hire and tenants. 12% of its income is generated through fundraising with the remaining coming from its arts program and as the Short Breaks services provider for Camden council. Our trustee report/end of year account can be found [here](#).



ABOUT THE CHAIR

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Leadership & Governance

- Provide inclusive and effective leadership to the Board of Trustees.
- Ensure the Board fulfils its legal, charitable, and fiduciary duties.
- Set the agenda for board meetings in collaboration with the CEO and Company Secretary.
- Foster a culture of constructive challenge, accountability and collaboration.

Strategic Direction

- Support the development and delivery of Wac Arts' strategic vision, its ambitions for 2028 and beyond.
- Ensure creative ambition is balanced with financial and operational sustainability.
- Champion long-term planning and resilience, including organisational growth.

Support to the Executive

- Act as a critical friend to the CEO, providing guidance, encouragement and challenge.
- Support the CEO in navigating complex stakeholder, funding and operational environments.
- Lead the CEO appraisal and succession planning.

Community & Advocacy

- Act as an ambassador for Wac Arts, strengthening relationships with partners, funders, artists, and local communities.
- Ensure community voices and lived experience inform strategic decision-making.
- Advocate for equity, diversity, inclusion and access across all areas of the organisation.
- Introduce Wac Arts to their own network that furthers the interests of Wac Arts.

Capital & Assets (Desirable)

- Provide strategic oversight and appropriate challenge on capital developments, building projects, or major infrastructure initiatives (as relevant).
- Support governance arrangements around risk, compliance and delivery of capital projects.



ABOUT THE ROLE

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Candidates must have a clear understanding of and commitment to the aims of the Charity. Candidates will ideally possess and be able to demonstrate all or most of the following:

ESSENTIAL

- A strong creative or cultural background and a genuine passion for youth arts.
- Experience of chairing boards, committees or executive groups, or demonstrable leadership transferable to the role.
- Strong track record of advocacy, influence and relationship-building at senior levels across the arts ecosystem.
- Demonstrable commitment to diversity, community engagement and widening access.
- Understanding of governance, charity responsibilities and organisational oversight (e.g. financial, risk management and compliance).
- Understanding of arts funding landscapes (e.g. statutory, trusts and foundations) and income generation in a charity setting.

DESIRABLE

- Experience of capital projects, property development, refurbishment, or major building works.
- Experience navigating organisational growth or change within a not-for-profit setting.

TIME COMMITMENT

- Approximately 1 day per month – with no set format (includes check-in with CEO)
- 4 Board meetings per year & 1 AGM for the Hamden Trust Board
- Sub-committee meetings (generally twice a year, except Finance which is 4 times) and 1 Board Away Day
- Attendance at performances and events, usually once a quarter

This is a voluntary, unpaid role. Reasonable expenses are covered.

Our current Chair would be happy to discuss the role further, if helpful.

Our hope is that our new Chair will be in post by the end of 2026. However our timetable is flexible and we can ensure a comfortable handover period to suit the right candidate.

Term

- Initial term of 3 years
- Usually renewable for a further 1 term



HOW TO APPLY

For a confidential discussion or to find out more about the role, please contact: Mary Caws (Recruitment Consultant) Email: cawsmmary@gmail.com

To begin a conversation, we are asking you to send us your CV with an expression of interest. This can be a letter of no more than two pages: or a video (MP4 file) or audio (MP3 file) of no more than 5 minutes if you would prefer.

Please make sure you tell us:

- Why you would like to be the next Chair at Wac Arts
- What you think you would bring to the organisation and how your skills could support the board and team in achieving its ambitions
- How your experience makes you a good fit for the role of Chair

You need to send your expression of interest to Maria Vasiliou at maria.vasiliou@wacarts.co.uk by Monday 9 November at 12noon, along with a completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

Please mark your email as confidential and include CHAIR EOI in the subject line.

We are planning to meet candidates on 25 November 2026; when you contact us, please let us know if you are not free on that day.

For shortlisted candidates, we will make sure that there are opportunities to meet our Chief Executive informally, as well as taking part in a more formal interview process.

It is our responsibility to make the application process accessible, and to give you the information you need to decide whether you might be suitable.

If you require the pack or any further information in a different format, or have questions shared with you before you apply, please get in touch with recruitment@wacarts.co.uk with the subject line CHAIR EOI.

As an equal opportunities employer, Wac Arts is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, marriage or civil partnership.

We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join Wac Arts. We are looking for interest from people who reflect the diversity of London and the communities we serve.

At Wac Arts we strive to be a leader in diversity and inclusion. Reducing inequality is the cornerstone of our mission. It is vital that we understand the diversity of our own organisation accurately and at all levels.

As such, we would like to ask you to complete the optional form [here](#).





NA 25 YEARS
AT THE OLD TOWN HALL

Thank you for taking the time to apply for the Chair of the Board of Trustees position, we look forward to reading your application.