

A meeting place
for music



Board Recruitment & Membership Policy



www.thecumnocktryst.com

Board of Trustees Recruitment and Membership Policy

I. Introduction

The Cumnock Tryst's inspiring vision is to be a world-class music festival with exemplary year-round community engagement and concert programmes, making Cumnock a renowned cultural destination. We are committed to building the most relevant, place-based contemporary classical music organisation in the UK, connecting our community to international musicians, and providing uplifting experiences for audiences, participants, composers and performers, while contributing to local regeneration and the economy.

The Board of Trustees plays a crucial role in guiding the festival's strategic direction, ensuring its financial sustainability, and upholding its commitment to artistic excellence. This policy outlines the process for recruiting and appointing new Trustees, emphasising the importance of a diverse and skilled board that reflects the community it serves. A strong and engaged board is essential for The Cumnock Tryst to thrive and achieve its artistic, educational and community objectives.

II. Board of Trustees Responsibilities & Commitment

Board Structure

The Board of Trustees consists of a Chair, in addition to other Trustees.

Responsibility

Trustees are responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of The Cumnock Tryst. Key responsibilities include:

- **Strategic Planning & Oversight:** Working closely with the executive team and contributing to the development and implementation of the festival's business plan, monitoring performance, and ensuring long-term sustainability.
- **Financial Management & Fundraising:** Overseeing the festival's finances, approving budgets, monitoring financial performance, and actively participating in fundraising efforts.
- **Governance & Compliance:** Ensuring adherence to all legal and regulatory requirements, including charity law, company law, and best practices in governance. This includes reviewing and updating policies, managing risk, and ensuring accountability.
- **Community Engagement & Advocacy:** Acting as ambassadors for the festival, building relationships with stakeholders, and advocating for the arts within the community.
- **Artistic Vision:** Supporting the Artistic Director and Cumnock Tryst executive team in developing and delivering a compelling artistic programme, while respecting artistic freedom and ensuring alignment with the festival's mission.
- **Human Resources:** Overseeing HR policies and procedures, including the appointment and performance management of key staff.

Time Commitment

Trustees are expected to attend approximately 4 board meetings per year and participate in strategic planning and fundraising activities. Trustees should also be willing to serve on sub-committees and/or short-term working groups as needed, potentially contributing their professional expertise and experience to any specific matters that might arise. Meetings are normally held online via video call, with the expectation that at least one meeting per year will be held in person. Trustees are encouraged to attend festival events to develop a deeper understanding of The Cumnock Tryst's ongoing work.

Term of Office

Trustees will be appointed to the Board for a term of a maximum of four years, with the potential to be re-appointed for a further term of four years, by a resolution passed by a majority at a Board meeting. No Trustee shall serve more than two consecutive terms (eight years total) without a break of at least one year from the Board.

Appropriate succession planning will be implemented to ensure that new Trustees and any future Chairs are appointed at regular intervals, preventing significant simultaneous turnover. This staggered appointment process is intended to ensure a smooth leadership transition and maintain continuity on the Board.

Financial responsibilities

Trustees are expected to pay for tickets to concerts and events promoted by The Cumnock Tryst. While this demonstrates commitment to the festival, the Cumnock Tryst recognises that this expectation may present a barrier to participation for some individuals. To ensure inclusivity and broaden access to Board membership, The Cumnock Tryst is committed to exploring options for financial assistance to support Trustees in meeting this expectation.

Expenses are generally not claimable for Board business. However, expenses may be reimbursed when a Trustee is specifically requested to undertake Tryst business that incurs personal costs. Such reimbursement must be pre-approved by the Chair, or by the Board in the case of the Chair's expenses.

III. Candidate Profile

The Cumnock Tryst seeks individuals with a passion for the arts and a commitment to the festival's mission to be members of the Board of Trustees. The Board will maintain a skills matrix to identify any gaps in collective expertise and will prioritise recruitment accordingly. Ideal candidates will possess a combination of the following skills, experience, and qualities:

Essential

- Commitment to The Cumnock Tryst's mission and values.
- Strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively and contribute effectively to a team.
- Understanding of good governance principles.

Desirable

- Experience in one or more of the following areas: arts management, finance, law, marketing, fundraising, human resources, or community engagement.
- Knowledge of the local community and the Scottish cultural landscape.
- Experience serving on a board or in a leadership role.

IV. Recruitment Process

The Cumnock Tryst's Board recruitment process aims to be as transparent and equitable as possible, ensuring that we attract applications from the widest possible range of qualified individuals.

- 1. Call for Nominations/Applications:** The Cumnock Tryst will publicly advertise all vacancies for Board Trustee positions, including Chair, on our website, social media platforms, in local press outlets, and through direct outreach to relevant professional networks. Each advertisement will clearly outline the responsibilities of the role, the expected time commitment, the application process, and any specific requirements for the position. The advertisement will also specify the term of office and any current vacancies.
- 2. Application Materials:** Applicants will be required to submit a CV, a cover letter outlining their interest in the position and highlighting their relevant skills and experience, and a statement addressing their understanding of The Cumnock Tryst's mission and their vision for its future.
- 3. Selection Committee:** The Selection Committee will comprise the Chair of the Board and two current members of the Board of Trustees. The Selection Committee will be responsible for reviewing all applications, shortlisting candidates, conducting interviews, and making recommendations to the Board regarding the appointment of new Trustees.
- 4. Shortlisting:** The Selection Committee will use pre-defined criteria, based on the Candidate Profile, to shortlist candidates for interviews.
- 5. Interviews:** Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview with the Selection Committee. The interview will explore the candidate's skills, experience, and suitability for the role. Questions will be designed to assess their understanding of the festival, their commitment to its mission, and their ability to contribute to the Board. Interviews may be carried out online or in person, as appropriate. The Cumnock Tryst will always endeavour to make accessibility arrangements in order to accommodate any candidates with specific requirements.
- 6. Conflicts of Interest:** All candidates and Trustees must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest before their appointment, or as they arise thereafter. The Board maintains a register of interests, which is updated annually. Trustees must recuse themselves from any discussions or decisions where a conflict may exist.
- 7. Reference Checks:** References will be checked for shortlisted candidates before a final decision is made.
- 8. Selection & Appointment:** The Selection Committee will recommend the preferred candidate(s) to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Board will make the final appointment. All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application.
- 9. Onboarding:** New Trustees will participate in an onboarding process, including an induction session with the Chair and other Board members, an introduction to the festival's staff and key stakeholders, and access to relevant documents, such as The Cumnock Tryst's strategic plan, financial statements, and governance policies.

VI. Equal Opportunities & Diversity Statement

The Cumnock Tryst is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all aspects of its operations, particularly at board level. We actively encourage applications from all qualified individuals, regardless of their background.

We will continue to actively encourage applications from prospective board members from all backgrounds — including but not limited to — race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic status. We strive to create an inclusive environment where all voices are heard and valued.

VII. Removal of Trustees

Trustees may be removed from office if they miss more than three consecutive meetings without reasonable excuse, as outlined in The Cumnock Tryst's constitution. They may also be removed if they are deemed to act in a manner detrimental to The Cumnock Tryst's interests, or become disqualified from being a trustee for any of the reasons outlined in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

VIII. Contact Information

For any questions regarding The Cumnock Tryst's Board selection process, please contact Paul Wood, chair@thecumnocktryst.com.

This policy has been drafted in accordance with The Cumnock Tryst's Constitution, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, guidance from the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), and the Scottish Governance Code for the Third Sector.