

MAGIC ME

JOB PACK



Chair of the Board of Trustees

If you require an alternative job pack or application format or support to apply (e.g., due to disability, limited internet access), please contact recruits@achates.org.uk (Achates are our recruitment partner for this process) to discuss how we can assist you.

You can find our recruitment and selection policy with details of how we ensure a fair and equitable recruitment process [here](#).

WHO WE'RE LOOKING FOR

"I will never look at a teenager the same again"
-Older participant, post-event feedback

"I will see the older generation with a new perspective"
-Student, audience feedback

Magic Me helps people recognise and address the limiting beliefs they hold about themselves and others based on their age. To do this we connect people of all ages through meaningful creative experiences which dismantle ageism, increase confidence and reduce loneliness. In 2025/2026, 92% of participants reported that a Magic Me project increased their confidence to take on new activities and 93% feel a stronger sense of connection to the community.

As Magic Me embarks on its next chapter, we are seeking a new Chair to lead our Board of Trustees and steward the organisation into the future. As Chair you will lead the Board to govern Magic Me as it seeks to deepen and widen our impact. You will support us to take our work to the next level, connecting us with exciting cultural organisations to give more participants creative opportunities and develop further audiences for our age-positive, intergenerational work.

This is the perfect time for an inspiring cultural leader to become our next Chair (or join as part of a Co-Chair model - see below for further information). Our new 2027-2032 strategy will bring a slight step change. We are currently preparing to launch our ambitious new 2027-2032 strategy, which will focus on cultivating exciting cultural and arts partnerships to develop an audience for our work and help people to understand the ageist limitations they place upon themselves and others.

We'll be looking to create London's first Intergenerational Borough in our home in Tower Hamlets and to underpin our legacy and cement our role as leaders in the arts and ageing space, we'll create a physical and digital archive of our 40 year history.

Throughout this strategy, the chair will lead our Board governance, support our Co-CEOs to execute the plan, connect Magic Me with potential new partners and steward our vision for ending ageism through intergenerational arts locally and nationally.

We are looking for an individual with experience of leading an organisation, major programme or project in the arts and cultural sector and you'll be excited by the potential for participatory arts practice to connect people of all ages to themselves and others to challenge preconceptions and reduce loneliness. Ideally, you bring prior experience as a Chair or Trustee in the charity sector, paired with the warmth, strategic thinking, and clarity needed to support our Co-CEOs and lead an active, engaged trustee board.

At Magic Me, we believe in the power of diverse talent to deliver meaningful projects, drive innovation and create an inclusive organisational culture. We are committed to building a Board that reflects the communities we serve. We particularly encourage applications from candidates from racially minoritised backgrounds, including the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets and disabled candidates. Connections to activity within Tower Hamlets are welcome, though not critical.

Alternative models:

One of our core values is collaboration and we recently centred this within our organisational structure, introducing a co-leadership model which has been driving an increase in opportunities across the charity.

To that end we are very open to exploring a Co-Chair structure or establishing a Vice-Chair role for someone already on the board to complement the successful candidate's skills and capacity.

We welcome open discussions on how this model could work for you however, we can see some of the following scenarios working well:

- Arts or cultural leader without Board experience paired with a non-arts leader that has served as a Trustee.
- A well networked artist with significant community arts experience paired with a non-arts senior leader with Chair experience.
- A senior arts leader from a large cultural organisation and a senior leader from a small community arts organisation neither having board experience.
- Arts or cultural leader without Board experience and a Vice-chair selected from existing board members (or other Trustees within our adjacent recruitment process).

If you would like to apply for the role within an alternative model then details of how to include that in your application can be found below.



ABOUT MAGIC ME

Magic Me is the UK's leading positive ageing participatory arts charity. We are dedicated to connecting people of all ages through extraordinary creative projects.

Founded in 1989, we have spent over three decades pioneering intergenerational arts practices in Tower Hamlets and leading creative care home initiatives across London and Essex. In October 2025, following the departure of our Founder after 36 years, we transitioned to a successful Co-CEO structure led by our Executive Director and Creative Director. Financially, the charity is in excellent health with strong reserves, supported by an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) grant and an invested Board with active subcommittees.



OUR VALUES

At Magic Me, our values aren't just words on a wall in the office; they're the guiding principles for everything we do. We work...

Collaboratively

We value what every individual brings, from diverse ages and backgrounds, and deliberately plan activities that bring different people together in new ways. Our arts practice fosters fresh approaches, valuing and exchanging expertise from multiple perspectives across many sectors and professions.

Inclusively

We recognise that every individual is unique, responding to their strengths and situations to ensure everyone can thrive and be themselves. We offer a warm welcome, paying careful attention to how we invite and support people to connect and participate.

Creatively

Our high-quality arts activities and projects are led by professional artists, ensuring everyone has the right to extraordinary arts experiences. We bring our creative skills to problem-solving, partnership building, and strategic planning, always seeking innovative solutions.

Thoughtfully

We are curious and take time to find out what individuals and partners truly need and want, actively welcoming feedback for continuous improvement. We think long-term, valuing how today's small actions can influence and build significant change tomorrow.

WHY NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO JOIN

Our outgoing Chair, who has served since 2018, has successfully steered Magic Me through major transformative milestones including navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, securing ACE NPO status in 2023, and guiding our transition from Founder-led to our current Co-CEO model in 2025.

You will step into a role designed for maximum impact and strategic influence. Joining Magic Me now offers an exciting opportunity to shape an organisation at a pivotal point in our history:

- You will take post in April 2027 marking the start of our new 2027-2032 Strategy. You will lead the Board in stewarding and launching a 5 year vision co-created with over 60 community stakeholders.
- You will guide the Board through defining milestones that will elevate Magic Me's national standing. This includes our 40th anniversary archive project in 2029, securing and launching high-profile cultural venue partnerships to challenge ageism, and creating London's first intergenerational borough in Tower Hamlets.
- Following our 2025 transition from a founder led model to a Co-CEO structure, you will step into a stable, collaborative executive partnership. You will have the opportunity to mentor, support, and act as a strategic sounding board to two dynamic Co-CEOs.
- You will be taking the reins of an organisation in excellent financial health, backed by an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) grant, strong reserves, and an active, engaged Trustee Board.

If you want to see the immediate impact of our work, our '[It's on the Cards](#)' project is currently live at the Wellcome Collection's 'The Coming of Age' exhibition – a perfect example of the high-profile, cross-sector spaces where your strategic expertise could amplify our reach.

You'll be supporting the team with a diverse and impactful programme, ranging from engaging intergenerational projects with local communities and schools such as [Creative Mix](#), to pioneering initiatives like the award-winning [Spark](#) which trains care home staff in leading sensory-based arts activities to support residents' creative expression.



ROLE DETAILS

We have an active, highly engaged Board of Trustees with a broad mix of expertise. Governance is structured around four sub-committees—Creative Strategy, People, Fundraising & Marketing, and Finance, Audit & Risk—each operating with delegated decision-making powers. While Trustees can join any committee, the Chair maintains an overarching strategic view and does not serve as a standing member on sub-committees. To complement our new Chair, we are also recruiting new Trustees to fill specific skill gaps identified in a recent Board audit.

Financially, Magic Me is in a strong position, holding £150,000 in unrestricted reserves - currently 50% above our reserves policy of 3 months operating costs. Our funding base is anchored by our Arts Council England NPO status (providing 30–35% of annual income) alongside a strong track record with Trusts and Foundations (45–55%). To ensure long-term resilience, we are currently delivering an income diversification plan—preparing to launch new major giving initiatives alongside our upcoming 2027–2032 strategic plan.

- **Role Title:** Chair of the Board of Trustees (open to Co-Chair arrangement)
- **Reporting to:** The Board of Trustees (and accountable to the Charity Commission)
- **Compensation:** This is a voluntary role. Reasonable travel, childcare, and accessibility expenses reimbursed
- **Location:** Bethnal Green, E2, East London for in-person meetings. Virtual arrangements for most other meetings.
- **Time commitment:** Approximately 14 days per year (1-2 days per month on average).

Your time commitment:

The average time commitment for the Chair has been calculated as follows (please note 1 day is assumed to equate to approximately 7 hours of work):

Item	Time
Quarterly board meetings	4 days (up to 1 day per meeting to include preparing for the meeting, reading papers, attending meetings in person and follow up)
Board management & ad hoc subcommittee attendance	1.5 days (this varies but assumes approximately 1-2 hours per month)
Monthly Co-CEO check in (frequency can be discussed)	2.5 days (1 hour meeting per month plus 30 mins agenda setting/prep/follow up)
Annual performance planning and review for Co-CEOs	1 day (assumes up to 2x 1 hours per CEO once per year plus prep)
Ad hoc support for Co-CEOs and issues arising	1.5 days (this varies but assumes approximately 1-2 hours per month)
Annual away day	1.5 days (including 1 day for the session plus prep and follow up time)
Networking and advocacy	2 days +

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELIVERABLES

Board Leadership and Governance

- Provide strategic leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring Magic Me fulfills its programme commitments, charitable objects, legal obligations, and financial compliance.
- Facilitate inclusive, efficient, and forward-looking Board meetings that encourage constructive challenge and active participation from all trustees.
- Ensure subcommittees (Finance, Audit & Risk; Fundraising; People; Creative Strategy) operate effectively and report clearly to the main Board (note, the Chair role is not a member of any of the subcommittees).
- Directly support Board recruitment and succession planning, maintaining a diverse Board reflective of Tower Hamlets and our communities.
- Maintain strong rapport with Board colleagues providing feedback as and when appropriate.

Co-CEO Support and Facilitation

- Meet with the Co-CEOs monthly and serve as a trusted sounding board, mentor, and critical friend.
- Provide line management for the Co-CEOs on behalf of the board, conducting 1:1 annual performance planning and reviews.
- Maintain a clear, healthy boundary between strategic Board oversight and executive management.

Strategic Development

- Lead the Board in stewarding the 2027–2032 Strategy and monitoring progress against key objectives.
- Support the Co-CEOs to develop appropriate strategic plans to deliver the Strategy.

Promotion of the Organisation

- Act as an ambassador and advocate for Magic Me across the arts, cultural, non-profit, and public sectors.
- Network with potential funders, strategic partners, and community leaders to raise Magic Me's public profile. Help us open doors that we can't currently open.
- Champion Magic Me's values, anti-ageist vision, and commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

- **Arts leadership:** Significant leadership experience within the arts, cultural, or creative sectors.
- **Advocating for Magic Me:** An experienced networker, able to connect the organisation with potential cultural partners to expose our work to a wider audience.
- **Participatory arts awareness:** Clear understanding or appreciation of participatory, community, or socially engaged arts practices.
- **Strategic vision:** Ability to think strategically, analyse complex information, and guide an organisation through changes.
- **Commitment to inclusion:** Strong personal commitment to anti-racist, anti-ageist, and inclusive practices.
- **Governance competency:** Sound understanding of charity governance principles and the legal duties of a trustee. Confidence to work within our organisational structure and Co-Leadership model.
- **Facilitation & communication:** Collaborative style with excellent skills in facilitating discussion and building consensus.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- **Board leadership:** Previous experience serving as a Chair, Vice-Chair, or Subcommittee Chair for a charity or public body. (Please note, candidates without this experience may be asked to collaborate with a Vice- or Co-Chair with this experience as we have two first-time CEOs in our executive co-leadership model).
- **Tower Hamlets connection:** Lived experience, working knowledge, or networks within Tower Hamlets and East London.

We strongly encourage applications from diverse backgrounds and particularly those with connections to or lived experience in Bangladeshi, LGBTQ+, or disabled communities.



APPLICATION PROCESS

To support our commitment to equity, diversity, and building a fairer charity sector, Magic Me is using CharityJob's anonymised recruitment tool for this selection process. This recruitment method helps eliminate unconscious bias by removing identifying details – such as names, ages, genders, and education history – from your initial application, ensuring every candidate is assessed purely on their skills and experience.

You can apply directly on the CharityJob website and will be asked to submit a CV and respond to the questions on their platform.

If you are interested in applying for a role as a Co-Chair or would like to propose an alternative model there is an option to express this on the platform but we would ask that you first have a conversation with Vicki at Achates (vicki@achates.org.uk) to express your interest. If you are applying with another candidate, please do not share their details in the application question responses or on your CV as these go to the Magic Me team. Please email Vicki at Achates and notify her as to who you are applying with and she can ensure the applications are matched.

Selection timeline & interviews

- 11.59PM Sunday 1st November - applications close
- 2nd-9th November - shortlisting: Candidates shortlisted and invited to interview by Monday 9th of November.
- 16th & 17th November - first stage interviews (virtual): Conducted online with the outgoing Chair, Co-CEOs, and the Chair of the People Committee.
- 30th November - second stage interviews (in-person): Held at our Bethnal Green offices with the outgoing Chair and Co-CEOs.
- Appointment and confirmation by 3rd December

Post-interview & handover schedule

To ensure a smooth transition ahead of the official April 2027 start, the successful candidate will participate in a managed handover period:

- Wednesday 20th January 2027 (9:30am to 4:00pm): Attend the Board and Staff Away Day.
- January – March 2027: Attend key meetings (including monthly Co-CEO catch-ups) alongside the incumbent Chair.
- Wednesday 10th February 2027 (6:00pm – 8:00pm): Shadow the incumbent Chair at the quarterly Board meeting.
- April 2027: Formal assumption of the Chairship.

Appointment is subject to standard eligibility checks, including references and an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

We are working with Achates as our recruitment partner on this appointment. For a confidential, informal conversation about the role, please contact Vicki Grace, Director of Recruitment and Organisational Change on vicki@achates.org.uk. These conversations will not influence our selection process and details will not be shared with the Magic Me team.

We look forward to reading your application!



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