



Where everything
is possible



Chair or Co-Chair of the Board Recruitment Pack

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair or Co-Chair of the Tall Stories Board.

Following a transformational tenure, our current Chair, Penelope Daly, will step down in 2026. We are seeking a dynamic, strategic and imaginative individual to lead our Board of Trustees, either as Chair or Co-Chair alongside an existing board member and work closely with the Executive team as we embark on the next chapter of Tall Stories' development.

The Chair plays a vital role in overseeing the organisation's governance and strategic direction. They will support and challenge the Executive team, helping to realise our vision of creating and sharing stories that broaden horizons, inspire generations and bring joy to children and families.

Led by Artistic Director and Co-Founder Toby Mitchell and Executive Director Tara Wilkinson, Tall Stories is a leading theatre company renowned for its distinctive blend of storytelling, music, puppetry and lots of laughs. For almost 30 years, our productions have delighted audiences across the UK and around the world, from the West End and Broadway to the Sydney Opera House and Soweto.

As we develop our new strategic and business plan for 2027–2030, our priorities include increasing artistic ambition, deepening community engagement and strengthening long-term financial resilience within an increasingly complex cultural landscape. We are looking for a Chair or Co-Chair who can help us navigate these opportunities and challenges, supporting the organisation to fulfil its potential and maximise the impact of our work for audiences locally, nationally and internationally.






About Tall Stories

We are based at the Tall Stories Studio, a step-free 80-seat venue located within Islington Central Library, London. As well as serving as our administrative home, the Studio hosts preview performances, artist development programmes and a range of community activities that complement our on-stage work.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone can engage with theatre. Our programme includes accessible performances with integrated BSL, audio description and relaxed environments, alongside free performances and creative experiences designed to remove barriers to participation and enable more children and families to enjoy live theatre.

Explore more on our [website](#)

Our Brand Promises

- We keep it simple, do try this at home.
 - We put a pause on life to transport you into another world.
 - Everything we do has a touch of magic.
 - We invite children and their grown ups to feel and talk.
 - We encourage play and silliness.
 - We open up the wonder of Tall Stories for all children.
 - We value and care for one another.
- 

Strategic Ambitions

2027 marks 30 years of Tall Stories. In readiness for this landmark, we are conducting a full strategic review, focusing on five key areas:

- 1. ARTISTIC PROGRAMME:** An exciting programme of work that builds on our established successes while actively supporting the creation of new productions.
- 2. TOURING MODEL:** Building on our existing touring expertise and creating new national partnerships.
- 3. AUDIENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Enabling greater access by reaching more people and creating more meaningful connections with audiences.
- 4. INDUSTRY IMPACT (ARTIST DEVELOPMENT):** Increasing our impact and influence in family theatre.
- 5. TEAM CULTURE:** To champion positive working practices and wellbeing across the industry.



Finances

Tall Stories is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee with a turnover of approximately £2.95m in 2024/25.

We invite you to review our most recent annual accounts [here](#).

Governance at Tall Stories

As a registered charity, Tall Stories is governed by a Board of Trustees, led by a current Chair and Co-Chair. All Trustees are appointed for an initial 3-year term and can be reappointed up to a maximum of two terms. Trustees bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to the Board including experience from both within and outside of the cultural sector.

There are two subcommittees made up of members of the wider Board. The Finance Subcommittee led by the Treasurer and reporting to the Board on all finance issues. There is also a recently established Inclusion Subcommittee. The Chair does not sit on these Committees but oversees them as part of normal Board duties.

As well as being a registered charity, Tall Stories is also a Limited Company through which its trading activities are delivered. Members of the Board act both as trustee of the registered charity and as a Directors of the Limited Company during their tenure.

The Board delegate day to day management of the organisation to the Executive Team (Artistic Director and Co-Founder, Toby Mitchell, and Executive Director, Tara Wilkinson).

Current Trustees

- Penelope Daly (Chair)
- Stacie Bond (Co-Chair)
- Kate Alhashimi (Treasurer)
- Owen Calvert-Lyons
- Pippa Garland
- Will Mauchline
- Zaylie-Dawn Wilson

A person wearing a grey sweater is holding a green frog puppet. The puppet has large white eyes and a red mouth. The person's hands are visible, holding the puppet's body. The background is dark.

The Role of the Chair

As Chair or Co-Chair, you will lead the Board of Trustees to ensure exemplary governance of Tall Stories. You will have responsibility, alongside other Trustees, to ensure the company delivers on its charitable objectives, remains solvent, is effectively managed and is compliant with all necessary legislation and governance.

You will lead the Board in driving strategy and overseeing the delivery of Tall Stories' work, ensuring long-term sustainability. You will support the Executive team to refine and execute our 3-year strategic plan, ensuring we all uphold Tall Stories' vision and brand promises as well as delivering on our ambitions, objectives and results.

The Chair and Co-Chair challenge and support the Executive team to consider our strategic and commercial positioning, facilitating robust and constructive conversations with the Board to push Tall Stories forward.

This is an opportunity for you to lead and champion theatre for all, and to make a significant difference by supporting us to further our impact and reach in the coming years.

Main Duties of the Role

Governance

- Provide leadership to the Board of Trustees, enabling them to deliver their role and work collaboratively.
- Chair Board meetings, ensuring business is conducted efficiently.
- Ensure organisational resilience, monitoring policies, financial position and risk management.
- Ensure the Board consists of an appropriate blend of skills and backgrounds.
- Conduct annual appraisals of each Board member.

Leadership and Strategy

- Play a key role in refining, implementing and evolving Tall Stories' 3-year strategic plan, with focus on long-term sustainability and impact, ensuring the organisation develops in line with its mission and charitable objectives.
- Work closely with the Executive team, providing collaborative and critical support.
- Champion Tall Stories' brand promises.
- Protect and uphold Tall Stories' reputation.
- Conduct annual appraisals of the Executive team.

Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement

- Exemplify the brand promises of the organisation by attending performances and events, representing the organisation with key stakeholders, funders and partners.



Person Specification

We are looking for someone with a dynamic, strategic and commercially driven approach to governance, who would enjoy the opportunity to contribute to the cultural sector by leading Tall Stories into its next phase. You will be empathetic and will be passionate about the role theatre can play in people's lives as well as bringing a commercial acumen to organisational development.

Your experience and knowledge will include an understanding of running or growing businesses in service and/or product driven sectors. You will have experience of leadership or senior management and a particular skill for bringing people together and leading groups to work in a collaborative way. You will understand the nuances of a charity board from experience as a Trustee.

You do not need to work specifically in the arts or cultural sector or have held an equivalent Chair role already. However, a Trustee position or equivalent subcommittee Chair role on a charity board of some kind is important.

Experience and Knowledge

- An understanding of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship, outlined by the Charity Commission.
- A passion and interest for theatre and a commitment to Tall Stories' brand promises.
- A strategic and commercial approach to organisational development.
- Good, independent judgement.
- Financial literacy.
- Leadership and facilitation of constructive discussions.

We are eager to hear from interested individuals with a broad range of backgrounds and expertise. Particular areas of experience that are of interest are:

- Running and scaling businesses from a range of sectors.
- Developing new income streams and business models within any sector.

Terms and Conditions

Time Commitment

Varies, but on average 22.5 days per annum (see breakdown below). Co-Chair commitment would be proportionate.

Location

The Tall Stories team is based day to day in Islington, London but our work tours all over the UK and the world. Board meetings and sub-committee meetings take place both online and in person. Regular engagement with the team at our London offices is expected but it is envisaged that the postholder can be based in other location(s) across the UK.

Remuneration

This is a voluntary position, but expenses will be reimbursed including travel, additional childcare, etc, in consultation with the Executive.

Estimated Time Commitment

Activity	Time Commitment	Detail
Chairing Board Meetings x 4	4 days per year	1 day per Board meeting to include meeting and prep time
Board Away Day	2 days per year	2 days per year to include full day session and prep and follow up time
Board Management including annual Board one to ones	2 days per year	Including meetings, prep time and ad hoc engagement with Board members
Executive Team Check Ins	9 days per year	Assumes an average of 0.75 day per month
Artistic & Executive Director Appraisals	1 day per year	0.5 day per year per Exec team member to include meeting and prep time
Performance and events	1.5 days per year	Includes travel time and attendance
Other advocacy and company management	3 days per year	Includes meetings and prep time

Please note the above is a breakdown of an average year and actual time spent on each activity may vary year by year. We will work with the Chair to ensure activity is scheduled and managed in line with your other commitments as needed.

A woman on the left is wearing a headband with pink bunny ears and a tan vest over a white shirt. She has a surprised expression. A man on the right is wearing a brown flat cap with a large, fluffy fox tail on top, a brown jacket with a white fur collar, and tan trousers. He is also smiling broadly. They are both in a forest-themed set with stylized trees. The man is holding a pink Twister mat. A purple text box is overlaid on the image.

How to apply

If you would like an informal and confidential conversation about this role, please contact Vicki Grace, Director of Recruitment and Organisational Change at Achates, who is supporting this process. You can reach Vicki by email on vicki@achates.org.uk.