



*'Tall Stories sets the benchmark for
children's theatre' Sunday Times*



Trustee Recruitment Pack



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Tall Stories and in the position of Trustee. We are particularly interested in individuals who have experience working as a creative or artistic leader to advise and support Tall Stories' Executive team as we embark on our next chapter.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director and Co-Founder Toby Mitchell and Executive Director Tara Wilkinson, Tall Stories is a leading theatre company touring the UK and the world with our exciting blend of storytelling theatre, catchy music, innovative puppetry and lots of laughs. Throughout our almost 30-year history, we have welcomed (and continue to welcome) audiences in venues of every size and scale, ranging from the West End and Broadway, to the Sydney Opera House to Soweto and at our own base in Islington.

We are currently undergoing a strategic review to ensure the stability and growth of Tall Stories within a complex cultural landscape. The review will inform Tall Stories' 5-year strategy and explores the artistic programme, touring model and partnerships needed to widen our reach and deepen our impact. We are also undergoing recruitment for a new Chair of the Board and have recently appointed a new Treasurer to join our existing group of Trustees.

Our new Trustee will be someone who has experience of working as a creative within the performing arts industry within a freelance capacity and will ideally also bring experience of artistic leadership within an arts organisation. You will understand the performing arts landscape in which Tall Stories is making and presenting work and be excited by the power of making work for family audiences.

About Tall Stories

Tall Stories tours the UK and internationally with shows for family audiences. We bring great stories to life and are internationally recognised for our exciting blend of storytelling theatre, original music, innovative puppetry and lots of laughter.

We create opportunities for everyone to get involved with theatre and offer accessible performances (including but not limited to integrated BSL, audio descriptions and in relaxed environments). We also provide free shows and experiences as part of our commitment to removing barriers that might otherwise prevent children and families from experiencing live theatre.

We are based at the Tall Stories Studio, with a step-free 80 seat space situated in the Central Library in Islington, London. As well as being our administrative home, the space also plays host to preview performances. To increase our impact in the sector, we also run artist development programmes and deliver wider community activities to complement our programme of on-stage work.

Explore more on our website - <https://tallstories.org.uk/>

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 is in technicolour
- We invite people (big and small) to feel and talk
- We encourage play and silliness
- We open up the magic of Tall Stories for all children
- We value and care for one another





Strategic Objectives

2027 marks 30 years of Tall Stories. In readiness for this landmark we are in the process of conducting a full strategic review, led by our current Chair and Board of Trustees. This will inform the future strategy of the organisation in order to ensure our growth and stability for the next decade or more. We are focusing on four key priority areas:

1. **ARTISTIC PROGRAMME:** an exciting artistic programme which builds on the success of the existing programme and supports development of new work
2. **TOURING AND PARTNERSHIPS:** building on our existing touring relationships and creating new national partnerships to deepen our impact with communities in touring locations
3. **AUDIENCES AND ACCESS:** enabling greater access for audiences - widening our reach and deepening our impact
4. **IMPACT:** increasing our impact in the world of family theatre at local, national and policy level

Finances

Tall Stories is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee with a turnover of approximately £2.25m per annum. Income comes primarily from production activity through ticket sales.

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 up to 8 Trustees, led by the Chair. All Trustees (including the Chair) 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 sub-committees made up of members of the wider Board. The Finance Committee is led by the Treasurer and reports to the Board on all finance issues. There is also a recently established Inclusion Committee. The new Trustee will have the opportunity to sit on the Inclusion Committee during their time in post – a further discussion about this can be had once on Board with the Chair to ascertain availability and interest.

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 as both Trustees of the registered charity and as Directors of the Limited Company during their tenure.

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

Current Trustees

Penelope Daly (Chair)
Stacie Bond
Pippa Garland
Will Mauchline
Zaylie-Dawn Wilson

We are currently recruiting for a new Chair who will begin in early 2026. A new Treasurer has been recruited and will be formally appointed to the Board in late September.



The Role of the Trustee

As a member of the Board of Trustees, you will ensure Tall Stories delivers on its charitable objectives, remains solvent, is effectively managed and is compliant with all necessary legislation and governance.

Your particular experience as a creative and artistic leader will also enable you to provide specific support and guidance to the Executive team on this element of Tall Stories' programme from a governance perspective.

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



Main duties of the role

Governance

- Contribute actively as a member of the Board of Trustees, attending meetings and contributing to conversations about the strategic direction and running of the organisation
- Work collaboratively with other members of the Board
- Provide expert advice to and collaborate with the Executive team to support strategic artistic decisions which includes the annual programme, artistic development work, community projects and the company's position within the industry
- Ensure organisational resilience through regular monitoring of policies, financial position and risk management

Leadership and Strategy

- Play a key role in refining, implementing and evolving Tall Stories' strategic 5-year plan, ensuring sound management with a focus on long-term sustainability and impact and ensuring the organisation develops in line with its mission and charitable objectives
- Proactively champion Tall Stories and our brand promises
- Safeguard the reputation of Tall Stories

Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement

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

Person Specification

We are looking for someone with a creative and strategic approach to governance who would enjoy the opportunity to contribute to the cultural sector by helping to lead Tall Stories into its next phase. You will be empathetic and will be passionate about the role theatre can play in people's lives and will have an understanding of the landscape within which Tall Stories is making and programming artistic work including its opportunities and challenges.

Your experience and knowledge will include an understanding of making productions for live performance. You will have experience of making work of your own as an artist and of contributing to the artistic leadership (perhaps as an Associate or Artistic Director or an equivalent senior role) of an organisation in the performing arts sector.





Experience and Knowledge

- A genuine passion for and interest in theatre (either family theatre or in general) and a commitment to Tall Stories' brand promises
- Experience of making work for live performance as an artist or creative
- An understanding of the working of a performing arts organisation from a creative or artistic leadership perspective
- Good, independent judgement
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities

Terms and Conditions

Time Commitment

Varies but on average the expected commitment equates to around 9 days per annum (see estimated breakdown below)

Location

The Tall Stories team are 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 locations across the UK.

Remuneration

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

Estimated Time Commitment

Activity	Time Commitment	Detail
Attending Board Meetings x 4	2 days per year	0.5 day per Board meeting to include meeting and prep time
Board Away Day	1 day per year	1 day per year to include full day session and prep and follow up time
Executive Team Ad Hoc Support	2 days per year	Assumes 0.5 day every quarter for ad hoc meetings, check in calls on particular artistic questions or topics
Performance and events	2 days per year	Includes travel time and attendance
Other advocacy and company management	2 days per year	Includes meetings and prep time

Please note the above time commitment does not include membership of the Inclusion Subcommittee. If the new Trustee decides to join that committee an additional 2 days per year would be added to cover 4 meetings per year plus preparation time bringing the total commitment to 11 days per annum.

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



How to apply

To apply for the position of Trustee of Tall Stories, please submit a CV (of no more than 2 pages) along with a Cover Letter (of no more than 2 pages) telling us about yourself, your interest in Tall Stories, why you want to help lead the organisation at this time and how you meet the person specification.

Please email your documents to recruits@achates.org.uk ahead of the deadline on Monday 20 October at 9am.

Tall Stories is committed to being as welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible, ensuring we include everyone and excite everyone's imaginations. This applies not only to our performances but to the way we work and who we work with. As such we are keen to ensure our Board represents a broad range of voices and lived experience. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds.

If you have any requirements at this stage of the process, please do let us know by contacting Vicki at Achates on vicki@achates.org.uk who will support you.

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 with this process. You can reach Vicki by email on vicki@achates.org.uk.

Closing date for applications: Monday 20 October at 9am.

Round 1 Interview - w/c 3 November

Round 2 Interviews - w/c 10 or w/c 14 November