

HASTINGS CONTEMPORARY



Trustee recruitment pack

February 2022

Introduction

Hastings Contemporary is a national beacon for modern and contemporary art in the south east of England. We explore and celebrate the creative and social power of visual arts, with a particular focus on the immediate community we serve in Hastings. Our high-quality engagement work is informed by the artistic excellence of our exhibitions programme; we have a reputation for hosting world-class exhibitions and for showcasing emerging and overlooked artistic talent from the UK and around the world.

We aim to have a distinctive voice and work closely with artists, endeavour to respond to a global art conversation and enable our audiences to engage in all aspects of cultural life. We are proud to work with and exhibit international, national and locally-based artists.

Hastings Contemporary is an independent charity and, as well as our exhibitions programme, we nurture creative relationships with artists and our community in Hastings. We offer a welcoming space for families to explore our exhibitions and quiet spaces for creativity for those who have a range of access needs including neurodivergence. We facilitate workshops and courses to energise people to get creative and to gain skills and knowledge to pursue careers in the arts. A holistic approach to the experience of art is something we strive to deliver through our work within the community outside our gallery walls, in hospices, dementia groups and neurodivergent communities, as well as with carers and families.

As well as the exhibitions and events hosted in our beautiful building on the seafront, our off-site work seeks to engage with the local communities of Hastings, and we place education at the heart of our activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Through a variety of talks, tours, workshops and seminars, our public programme aspires to build a meaningful relationship with Hastings' local communities that enables visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on modern and contemporary art.

Our activity not only reflects the historical circumstances of Hastings and the south coast, but also it constitutes a distinct point of view on modern painting. Nestled amongst net huts by Europe's largest beach-launched fishing fleet, the gallery acts as a cultural leader within the town, contributing strongly to the tourist offer, providing creative inspiration and skills development for its population.

In our 10th anniversary year in 2022, we are cultivating new income generation schemes to create even deeper engagements with the Hastings community. Our immediate income priorities for the coming year include engaging with the Government's Levelling Up agenda – the funding available to communities such as Hastings to spread opportunity more equally – and working with the staff team to develop our business plan to continue our status as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, fulfilling the Arts Council's Let's Create strategy as a representative of the UK creative sector.

To help us achieve these strategic priorities, we are seeking to develop and grow our Board of Trustees across a range of skills and backgrounds from senior leadership across business and culture to community representation.

Trustees and senior leadership

Our current trustees bring a wide range of expertise to Hastings Contemporary, united by their connection to the local area and their belief in our vision and mission. Individual trustees have backgrounds in business and financial leadership and enterprise, wealth management, participatory arts, the commercial modern art world and broadcast journalism.

Recent trustee appointments have enabled the creation of a board that is more representative of today's society and the local Hastings community across ethnicity, disability, socio-economic background and local community representation, and our board is now majority female. Aside from the call from many of our funders to increase this representation, we believe that having voices on our board that combine key skills with diverse backgrounds will enable us to better serve all our audiences.

Our aim in recruiting a further two to three trustees is to further complement these skills, ensuring we have a plurality of voices across key areas of expertise and background.

Hastings Contemporary Trustees meet formally for board meetings every three months. In addition, trustees attend occasional meetings with senior staff members, and attend events. The position is not remunerated but reasonable travel and access expenses will be reimbursed.

Candidate specification

We would be interested in hearing from candidates who bring insight across one or more of the following areas:

- Leadership experience, both in the business or financial world, or from a major cultural institution, including an awareness of the fiduciary and financial responsibilities of charity trustees.
- Entrepreneurial skills across business and culture, particularly individuals who could help us develop creative and innovative new earned income streams.
- Experience of creating and developing new models of support and philanthropic networks in the arts or not-for-profit sectors.
- Curatorial expertise and networks in the visual art world, in either commercial or not-for-profit sectors.
- Knowledge of current cultural policy at a national level, particularly as regards funding.
- A working understanding of the context in which Hastings Contemporary operates locally, and the needs and priorities of local communities, particularly around socio-economic issues, young people and recent migrant and refugee populations.
- Candidates who combine one of the above areas with human resources experience, if possible combined with legal expertise.



Equal opportunities

Hastings Contemporary is committed to equality of opportunity in all its activities and employment practices. We actively encourage people from a variety of backgrounds with different experiences, skills, and stories to join us and influence and develop our working practice.

We would be particularly interested in hearing from candidates who reflect the wider community of Hastings, particularly those who have lived or professional experience of the socio-economic issues that affect our community. We will take positive action around this by guaranteeing an interview to any applicant currently resident or in employment in Hastings who has this experience combined with demonstrable knowledge of one of the areas outlined in the candidate specification above.

How to apply

To apply for a role as a Trustee of Hastings Contemporary please submit a short cover letter (no more than two-sides of A4) and CV outlining why you would like to be a trustee and what experience you bring to Matthew Swann at matthew@achates.org.uk by **Wednesday 16 March 2022 at 12 noon**.

As an alternative to a cover letter and CV, candidates are welcome to submit a short (less than five minutes) phone/tablet film or audio recording outlining the above. Your CV can include your education and qualification details, but not the name of institutions (schools, colleges, higher education, training providers) where these have been achieved. Please note, candidates will be asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.

If you would value an informal conversation about being a trustee at Hastings Contemporary, or if you require any of this information in an alternative format (e.g. Microsoft Word), please contact Matthew.

