



Manchester
Literature
Festival

TRUSTEE: RECRUITMENT PACK

Manchester Literature Festival (MLF) is seeking new Trustees to join the Board of Directors and to help lead one of the North's most innovative literary festivals in its exciting next phase of development.

ABOUT MLF

MLF began trading in 2006 and was built on the legacy of its successful predecessor, Manchester Poetry Festival. Providing unique and imaginative opportunities for audiences to experience high quality live literature, the Festival takes place annually in October, and also presents a Spring programme and signature/special events outside the Festival period, as well as an ongoing education programme.

A firm believer in the transformative power of words and stories, MLF showcases and commissions some of the most interesting voices in fiction, poetry, literature in translation, song-writing, activism and culture. Featuring both established and emerging writers, the Festival provides a platform for women writers, LGBTQ+ writers, working class writers and writers of colour to reflect the rich diversity of Manchester.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are producing a digital iteration of the Festival in October 2020. #MLF20 comprises 17 events featuring high profile authors, poets, artists and activists from across the globe, including conversations with Tori Amos, Angela Davis, Nick Hornby, Maaza Mengiste and Kae Tempest.



Previous MLF guests have included Booker-prize winning novelists Margaret Atwood, Roddy Doyle, Anne Enright, Howard Jacobson, Marlon James, Ben Okri and Arundhati Roy; Poet Laureates Simon Armitage, Carol Ann Duffy, Seamus Heaney, Jackie Kay and Tracy K Smith; Children's Laureates Malorie Blackman, Lauren Child, Michael Morpurgo and Michael Rosen; musicians Brett Anderson, Guy Garvey, Johnny Marr, Neil Tennant and Tracey Thorn; comedians Jo Brand, Susan Calman and Sarah Millican; and other cultural figures including Alan Johnson, Mona Eltahawy, Graham Norton and Vivienne Westwood.



MLF events take place in venues across Manchester including Central Library, Royal Northern College of Music, Martin Harris Centre for Music & Drama, International Anthony Burgess Foundation and Elizabeth Gaskell's House.

The Festival is also committed to developing and delivering work that offers children and young people access to the very best in contemporary writing from across the world. This is done through the delivery of projects and events as part of the annual Festival, and a year-round programme of opportunities in schools and libraries across Greater Manchester supporting children and young people to be creative.

Led by the MLF Chair, the Festival was central to the designation of Manchester as a UNESCO City of literature in 2017, working in partnership with Manchester City Council, The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and partners across the city's cultural sector.



Festival Patrons are Rachel Cooke (author and Observer critic), Carol Ann Duffy (former UK Poet Laureate), Jackie Kay (Scottish Makar and Chancellor of Salford University), Dame Jenni Murray (broadcaster and former anchor of BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour), Miranda Sawyer (broadcaster and journalist), Michael Schmidt (poet, founder and editorial director of Carcanet Press & PN Review), Kamila Shamsie (author and lecturer at the University of Manchester's Centre for New Writing) and Erica Wagner (author, editor and broadcaster).

MLF employs two Co-Directors, a Children and Young People's Programme Producer and a team drawn from a network of freelancers covering PR, marketing, social media, fundraising, volunteering, event and project management, and outreach delivery.

MLF is a Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Festival holds National Portfolio Organisation status with Arts Council England and is also supported by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Culture Fund and Manchester City Council, with The University of Manchester as its Higher Education Partner. Other funds and support are secured from a range of partner organisations, businesses and trusts and foundations.



In 2019, MLF recruited a new Chair, Peter Mearns, and Trustees and Staff also participated in an Away Day and Skills Audit. The new Chair is tasked with leading on the development of a new strategic plan for MLF, working with Trustees, the Co-Directors - Cathy Bolton and Sarah-Jane Roberts - and the Staff Team. To support this and the organisation's ongoing development, MLF seeks new Trustees to join the organisation as it moves forward.

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FESTIVAL TRUSTEES

Trustees are expected to:

- Provide leadership and strategic direction for Manchester Literature Festival
- Ensure that financial and other resources are well-managed and used effectively
- Act as responsible employers to the Festival staff and support their ongoing training and development needs
- Ensure that the Festival meets all its legal obligations and maintains appropriate policies and procedures
- Use their skills, knowledge, experience and contacts to help support the development of the organisation and raise the profile of the Festival's work
- Participate in relevant working groups/sub-committees such as the Fundraising or Finance Sub-committees
- Act as an ambassador and a 'public face' for the Festival, and advocate for its work
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to the arts, to equal opportunities and to championing the vision and ambition of MLF
- Commit appropriate time to the role, attending Board meetings, contributing to the work of the Board's sub-committees and representing MLF at events and meetings with key stakeholders
- Foster and promote a positive working environment
- Support the work of the organisation by attending MLF's events

Current Board Members have a wide range of experience including in the arts and literature, publishing, education, finance, law, business and management. We have identified a number of areas that MLF wishes to strengthen, including **accountancy, fundraising, marketing, IT/digital capacity building** and **commercial business experience**, and we particularly welcome applications from people with skills and expertise in these areas.

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held every two months, typically starting at 5.30pm in central Manchester (though currently held digitally due to social distancing restrictions). We expect Trustees to be fully prepared for meetings which will entail reading written reports in advance.

Expenses

Trustees are volunteers and are not financially remunerated, though reasonable expenses to enable attendance at meetings may be claimed back from MLF. These include travel, accommodation, postage, phone calls, childcare or care of other dependents while attending meetings.

Length of Service

Trustees will serve a three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.

Equal Opportunities

MLF is committed to promoting equal opportunities and inclusivity, and to ensuring the Board is representative of the people of Manchester. The Festival encourages applications regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation and from communities or groups that are under-represented in the governance of cultural organisations.

If the role holder is disabled, every effort will be made to supply all necessary equipment or support to allow them to carry out the duties of the role.

Eligibility

Candidates must be at least 16 years of age and be legally eligible to become a Board Member/Chair or Trustee of a charity. You must not:

- Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud)
- Be declared bankrupt or be subject to bankruptcy restrictions
- Have an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA) with a creditor
- Been removed or disqualified as a company director or charity trustee because of wrongdoing
- Be disqualified or barred from acting as a trustee under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Please see further information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved#before-you-start--make-sure-you-are-eligible>

Applicants may be required to undergo a DBS check.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply to be a MLF Trustee, please send:

- A letter setting out your relevant experience and interest in the role of an MLF Trustee
- A CV
- Completed Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form

Please make sure your letter and CV together are no more than 4 pages in length.

Applications should be addressed to: Cathy Bolton, and emailed to director@manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk by 5pm on **Friday 27 November 2020**.

If you would like an informal conversation before applying, please contact the Festival's Chair, Peter Mearns, to arrange a short discussion: peter.mearns@live.co.uk

Once applications have been assessed, we will invite suitable candidates to an interview and arrange an informal opportunity for them to meet other Board Members and core staff.



Further Reading

- The role of Board Members and Trustees - The Charity Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/running-charity/trustee-role-board>
- The Essential Trustee - The Charity Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

Thank you for your interest in Manchester Literature Festival.

Manchester Literature Festival

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