



Recruitment Pack
Chair of the Board

November 2021



Dick Whittington at Hackney Empire, December 2019
Photography by Robert Workman

Welcome from Karin Gartzke

Chair of the Nominations Committee

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chair of the Hackney Empire Board of Trustees.

Hackney Empire is a recognised landmark venue both for our audiences and also within the theatre and broader arts and culture sector. We are looking forward to a period of growth, development and consolidation, forging new creative, community and business partnerships.

During the Covid crisis we delivered a full learning and participation programme, and, by necessity, increased our frontline service to assist and support communities from across East and North London. We receive financial support from the London Borough of Hackney, and we are one of Arts Council England's National Portfolio clients. Having benefitted from Emergency Funding and Cultural Recovery Funding, Hackney Empire is in a financially stable position and has a robust business plan for 2022-23 and beyond. Hackney Empire is a registered charity.

We are committed to the principles of ambition, quality, relevance, dynamism, environmental responsibility, and inclusivity as expressed in the Arts Council's transformative [Let's Create](#) strategy.

Our current Chair, Delphine Brand, is due to step down having been a trustee for over 10 years. We are now looking for a successor to build on her achievements and take us forward.

The current board is well-skilled in areas such as finance, strategic/business planning, entrepreneurialism, building management, fundraising, arts management and industry, law, government policy and communications/marketing. In the course of the next year, we are going to be looking for Trustees with experience of arts practice and education policy. We also intend to diversify membership of the Board.

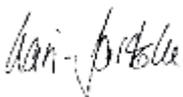
We are looking for someone with trustee experience in the arts or an associated area, someone who is a strong advocate and strategic thinker, and capable of leading a strong and diverse board. If you are as comfortable rising to a challenge as you are celebrating success, and enjoy working with an Executive Team, we'd love to hear from you.

This pack includes information about our history, future, organisation, board, senior staff, links to more information, details of the Chair role and person specification, and selection procedure.

Please let us know if you have any access requirements or would like the information in another format by emailing recruitment@hackneyempire.co.uk

If you would like a confidential and informal discussion about the position before expressing interest, please contact Jodi Myers, who is acting as Hackney Empire's recruitment consultant. She is contactable on projects@jodimyrs.co.uk and she will be pleased to set up a time to talk with you.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Karin Gartzke, Trustee and Chair of the Nominations Committee



Photography by Fabrice Bourgelle

Our History & Future

“The Hackney, as the people of the area affectionately called the Hackney Empire, was a variety theatre – a Music Hall. However, the Hackney Empire was not just any old Music Hall – certainly not! The Hackney was a gem, a joy and a pleasure to see and to go to... found in the heart of the East End of London not too far from where I was born and used to live.”

Charles S P Jenkins, eastend-memories.org/empire

Hackney Empire is a world renowned, Grade II* listed, Edwardian music hall, and now a modern variety theatre presenting and championing the best in local, national, and international Arts & Culture in all its forms. Designed by Frank Matcham and built in 1901, the theatre was fully restored in 2003. The glorious and ornate auditorium can accommodate upwards of 1,200 audience members, making it one of the capital’s largest venues outside of the West End. Hackney Empire is often referred to as one of the most beautiful theatres in the country.

Our Memorandum and Articles state that our objectives are:

To advance public education and appreciation of the arts and to provide the theatre facility for recreation and leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the objective of improving the conditions of life, particularly of the inhabitants of the London Borough of Hackney

Hackney Empire has a legacy as a cultural beacon and safe space which annually welcomes over 200,000 audience members - an audience that fully reflects the incredible diversity and vibrancy of London's communities. For decades Hackney Empire has been regarded as a vital and exceptional platform for Black creatives, artists and audiences, and has a proud legacy of supporting marginalised and isolated voices. This legacy continues to this day as a central element of the organisation's manifesto. As well as entertaining, educating, and inspiring hundreds of thousands of people each year through its artistic programme, Hackney Empire is a dedicated developmental space for thousands of young people, a safe and welcoming nexus for a modern society.

Hackney Empire's artistic programme champions representation and accessibility, to offer the best of Arts & Culture in all its forms, presenting the full variety of genre, media and narrative on our stage. Over two thirds of the programme is created by and with Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse artists, creatives and practitioners. Every year our annual pantomime has clear and strong representation in leading roles and backstage crew. One of our two associate companies is disabled-led and the other LGBTQIA+.

Developing creative strategic partnerships enables us to broaden our reach and widen our opportunities to present and amplify excellent, challenging and often ignored narratives. For example, in 2019, Hackney Empire partnered with Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Northern Stage to present the adaptation of the critically acclaimed and number one best seller *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, by Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini.

Comedy and music will play an instrumental role in re-engaging our audiences. We are exploring new opportunities to play a greater part in the presentation of commercial and classical music as a core part of our programme.

More information about Hackney Empire can be found at www.hackneyempire.co.uk

Our Vision, Mission & Values

Transformative – Representative – Accessible – Radical – Inspiring

Vision

We believe that everybody should have the opportunity to experience the singularly transformative power of great Arts & Culture, and we will do everything we can to create vital access for all.

Mission

Hackney Empire presents a programme that is extraordinary, challenging, and profound, celebrating the richness of local, national and international Arts & Culture. We will nurture and platform the unheard and the unknown, to encourage and share excellence in all its forms.

Values

- Extraordinary Arts & Culture can be created by **all people, anywhere**.
- The **transformative** impact of **Arts & Culture**, in all its forms, **should be accessible** by all. We have the opportunity to affect how we view others, our environment, our society and ourselves.
- We want ignored and overlooked voices to be heard, isolated communities to be engaged and **ideas to be recognised and responded to**.
- **Young people** from all backgrounds **will always have a home** at Hackney Empire and our **community** will always be at the heart of how we think and how we work.
- **We want to entertain and provoke**. We want to face difficult truths, confront prejudice, embrace new ideas, and share stories.
- **We want to work with others** to create high-quality, innovative, and powerful programme.

Key Objectives: 2022 – 2023

We aim to set achievable targets and measure progress against Arts Council England *Let's Create* Investment Principles:

Objective 1: Inclusivity & Relevance

To offer a safe place for artistic development to diverse and un(ders)represented artists (via, amongst other initiatives, Hackney Empire's newly launched Emerging Creative & Project Support Scheme) and to review our brand, and audience engagement strategies with a view to develop audience attendance and participation

Objective 2: Dynamism

To support and develop the team; integrating new staff as part of our strategic rebuilding and to engage proactively with our teams, community and industry specialists and partners to incorporate a broad range of views as we develop our business plan for the future

Objective 3: Ambition & Quality

To invest in our artistic programme through strategic partnerships and risk-sharing, backed by increasing financial reserves, and to re-establish comedy and music programme post COVID, seeking out creative partnerships to develop and co-produce/commission new work

Objective 4: Environmental Responsibility

To embed our environmental strategy within the team and strive to be at the forefront of industry developments in this area.

"Hackney Empire is a legendary venue which plays a key role in the cultural, civic and economic life of its community. With an enviable track record in engaging young people from traditionally the most isolated and at risk communities, Hackney Empire has expertise that we anticipate will be much needed in the days to come. We are all going to need Arts & Culture to inspire and reconnect us on the other side of this, and we're especially going to need places like Hackney Empire – which are embedded in their communities and able to bring people together."

Mayor Philip Glanville, London Borough of Hackney

Hackney Empire Board

There are currently nine members of the Board – these are the Directors of the company, who also act as Trustees of the charity. The Board of Trustees meet five times a year, with a Finance Committee, Development Committee and, currently, a Chair Nominations Committee, working alongside the Board. We hold an annual awayday on a theme relevant to the time.

Please see below information on our current Trustees and Executive Team.

Trustees

David Adams has over 40 years' experience in consumer facing business. A qualified accountant, he served as Finance Director for a number of major UK retailers. He chairs Hackney Empire's Finance Committee.

Delphine Brand (Chair) is a Partner of EPIC Investment Partners and has spent her career in private equity and investment banking. She was previously Chair of Hackney Empire's Finance Committee.

Richard Etienne is a senior communications specialist with extensive experience in local and international campaigning to a target audience, including the execution of multi-channel marketing campaigns.

Karin Gartzke is an experienced arts management consultant with a comprehensive understanding of the performing arts industry, both subsidised and commercial.

Sean Gascoigne has been a talent and literary agent for over 25 years, nurturing and discovering some of Britain's most recognisable actors, writers and directors.

Mark Harwood is a partner at RSM, the global accounting firm, where he specialises in advising large and mid-market businesses which operate internationally. He has held senior finance roles in industry and strategic advisory roles in government.

Matthew Roeser has over 30 years of C-suite, investment banking, fund management, start-up, and board experience.

Jay Sheth is Head of Policy and Economics at the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Previously Head of Policy and Regulatory Affairs at Virgin Money where he led work on the introduction of the Women in Finance Charter in conjunction with HM Treasury.

Roger Woolfe was a solicitor in a private practice with a central London firm for over 50 years, with 13 years as a senior partner, and still practises as a part time consultant.

Executive Team

The board delegates the day-to-day running of the Hackney Empire to Joint Chief Executives.

Jo Hemmant, Executive Director; joined Hackney Empire in 2012, becoming Executive Director in 2017. She has worked in theatre and the arts for more than 30 years as an actress, producer, and arts manager.

Yamin Choudury, Artistic Director; became Artistic Director in 2018. With a particular focus on creating platforms and pathways for diverse, representative and emerging ideas, artists, audiences and participants. His lived experience and unconventional journey into the arts has made access the cornerstone of his creative practice.

Structure and Operation of the Board

The Trustees oversee the business of Hackney Empire Limited (HEL), the company that operates the theatre; and Hackney Empire Trading Limited, the company that is responsible for the production of the pantomime and other shows. HEL has a 25-year full repairing and insuring lease of the theatre at a peppercorn rent, and negotiations are in hand for a renewal of this lease for a further 25 years at a peppercorn rent. Several years ago, after the future of the theatre had been threatened, the theatre's freehold was transferred to a charitable trust, Hackney Empire Preservation Trust. The current chair of HEL is also a trustee of the charitable trust as are Jo Hemmant and Yamin Choudury, the Executive Team.

A Finance Committee is in place to ensure a close overview of the financial position of the organisation. The committee meets separately, and reports into, the Board of Trustees. Key contact points are with management and the Board, with the outsourced finance function, and with the external auditors. During the pandemic, particular focus has been paid to the cash flow of the organisation, with both a short term (13 week) and longer term (18 months) cash flow forecast frequently updated and reviewed.

For the latest set of financial accounts please [click here](#), accounts for 2021/22 are due to be produced by November 2021 and will be made available to shortlisted candidates.

Organisational Structure

The Executive Director and Artistic Director are Joint Chief Executives of Hackney Empire. The Programming, Participation & Learning and Technical departments report to the Artistic Director; the Customer Experience, Marketing, Finance and Operations departments report to the Executive Director, and oversight of the Development department is shared by the Chief Executive team. There are currently approximately 25 full time or equivalent staff, plus a valued team of casual and freelance personnel. This number will increase as the organisation rebuilds post pandemic.

The Board

Roles & Responsibilities

- Ensure that Hackney Empire complies with its legal obligations
- Ensure Hackney Empire delivers against its stated mission, vision and values
- Provide leadership and set the strategic direction of Hackney Empire alongside the Executive Team
- Monitor and evaluate progress of the key priorities of the strategy
- Take overall financial responsibility, monitor the budget and financial performance, and ensure compliance with the conditions of Hackney Empire's public and private funding
- Monitor the internal and external risks facing Hackney Empire and put in place actions to mitigate risk wherever possible
- Ensure appropriate policies, including those relating to employment, diversity and inclusion, health and safety and safeguarding, are in place and kept under review
- Employ and manage the Executive Team, and ensure clear delegated authority to staff
- Ensure effective management of staff and internal processes
- Ensure that Hackney Empire's assets are well maintained
- Champion best practice throughout Hackney Empire
- Act with integrity and in the best interests of Hackney Empire, safeguarding its reputation and values
- Act as ambassador for Hackney Empire

Chair of the Board

Responsibilities & Duties

- Chairing and leading the Board of Directors (known as Trustees) in setting, reviewing, and developing the strategic direction for Hackney Empire
- Working collaboratively with the Board, supporting, and challenging the Executive Team in delivering the vision, mission and key objectives
- Ensuring a cohesive Board encouraging all Trustees to make the most of their contribution and championing representation
- Ensuring that the Board reviews and endorses all policies and processes required for Hackney Empire to satisfy its obligations and preserve its values
- Working with the Finance Committee, the Executive team and outsourced finance suppliers to ensure sound financial management and to set and approve budgets
- Actively supporting fundraising, and assisting on opportunities with the Development Board
- Ensuring that Hackney Empire operates within its legal responsibilities

- Supervision of the Executive Team (annual appraisal, regular support sessions, ad hoc mentoring/support, recruitment)
- Approving the agenda, chairing trustee meetings, and ensuring that they are properly run and minuted
- Providing a safe forum for all Trustees to express their opinion and be heard, at formal meetings and ad hoc, acting as the last arbiter for unresolved complaints or disputes
- Raising and maintaining the profile of the theatre within the theatre industry community and beyond
- Taking positive action to promote representation and Inclusion in all aspects of the life and work of Hackney Empire

Skills & Experience

- Leadership, with an ability to drive forward change
- A track record that demonstrates vision and ambition as well as a record of successful achievement which will command the respect of fellow Board members, the staff, customers, funding bodies and the performing arts profession
- A commitment to the values and aspirations of Hackney Empire and its place within the community and the national arts and culture scene
- A demonstrable commitment to good corporate governance, and knowledge of charitable principles and requirements
- A strategic understanding of financial planning and deployment and the legal context within which Hackney Empire operates
- As for all the Trustees, a willingness to actively support management, contributing to the delivery of agreed objectives
- The ability to network and make the case for culture, supporting the Executive team in fundraising, lobbying, championing the Hackney Empire, liaising with key funders
- A passion for theatre, and an understanding of the theatre industry and funding bodies
- A deep understanding of the principles of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and how to achieve good practice
- Awareness of best practice in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Knowledge of and love of Hackney, its culture and its history

The above list is indicative only and not exhaustive. The Chair will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role, including attending events and performances out of office hours, and email correspondence and phone calls between meetings with the Board and Executive. It is estimated that on average this is likely to equate to the equivalent of two days a month.

The term of office is for an initial period of four years.

This is a voluntary position but travel and out-of-pocket expenses can be reimbursed where required.

WE ARE ARTS & CULTURE



Photography by David Monteith-Hodge

Diversity

Hackney Empire has a powerful history as a cultural beacon and safe space, which annually welcomes over 200,000 audience members - an audience that fully reflects the incredible diversity and depth of London's communities. For decades Hackney Empire has been regarded as a vital and exceptional platform for Black, Asian and ethnically diverse creatives, artists, audiences and participants; and has a proud legacy of supporting marginalised and isolated voices. This legacy continues to this day as a core principle within the organisation's mission.

Hackney Empire is committed to promoting equality, inclusion and representation in all areas of our work, we are opposed to all forms of discrimination, direct or indirect.

Hackney Empire's aim is to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all of our employees, participants, audiences, artists, patrons, clients and all other people with whom we engage to produce and present our programme; deliver our services; and to ensure legal diligence and internal best practice.

How to apply

You are encouraged to contact Jodi Myers who is acting as Hackney Empire's recruitment consultant, for an informal and confidential conversation before expressing interest in the role of Chair. She can be contacted via projects@jodimyrs.co.uk

In order to make an expression of interest please provide:

- A letter, of no more than two pages, setting out your interest in the role with examples of how you meet the requirements of the specification. You should demonstrate how your experience relates to the various skills and personal qualities that you believe make you suitable for the role. This may include work you have done in a voluntary capacity and experience you have gained in other fields that you feel are appropriate.
- A CV
- A completed Equal Opportunities Form

The Equal Opportunities Form will be separated from expressions of interest before being considered by the Nominations Committee.

Expressions of interest should be addressed to *Karin Gartzke, Chair of the Nominations Committee* and sent to projects@jodimyrs.co.uk at 10am on 17th January 2022 with "Hackney Empire" in the subject line.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to meet with the Chair Nominations Committee which consists of three trustees and, separately, the Executive Team. Dates to be confirmed – but likely to be in the week of 31st January 2022.

The preferred candidate will subsequently be invited to meet other Trustees.

The successful candidate will be expected to complete an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service before appointment can be confirmed.