



Travelling Light Theatre Company

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Thank you for your interest in becoming Chair of Trustees for Travelling Light Theatre Company.

This pack contains a variety of information about the role including background information about the company, role description and person specification. The expression of interest form and equal opportunities monitoring form can be downloaded separately.

Should you wish to have an informal conversation about the role in the first instance please contact the current Chair of Trustees, John Middleton Chair@travellinglighttheatre.org.uk.

Expressions of interest should be submitted to admin@travellinglighttheatre.org.uk by Friday 8th October 2021.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Regards

Dienka Hines

Executive Director



About Travelling Light Theatre Company

Travelling Light is a theatre company and children's charity based in Barton Hill in Bristol. We create outstanding theatre for and with young people that inspires their thinking, engages their emotions and fires their imaginations. Over the last 37 years we have sparked the creative journey of over one million children and young people in our locality of Barton Hill, throughout Bristol and beyond.

Travelling Light creates award winning professional touring theatre to allow children, young people and their families equal access to artistic excellence. Our productions tour to theatres, arts centres, festivals, community venues and schools and for many of our audiences seeing one of our shows is their first experience of theatre and can inspire a lifetime's enjoyment. Our work is nationally and internationally facing, while remaining embedded within our community of Barton Hill in Bristol.

Our participation programme offers creative experiences to children and young people in Barton Hill and across Bristol. We believe in every child's entitlement to creativity and imagination and proactively engage with children and young people who would otherwise have little or no access to arts and cultural activities. Our work includes youth theatre, creative learning projects and family and community engagement.

A photo from our production of *Three Kings*, 2018



About the role of Chair of the Board

Do you share our belief that every child has the right to create, imagine and experience great stories? Do you have experience of governance from being on a management committee or from a management/leadership role? And would you like to bring your experience to make a real difference to a Bristol-based charity and the young people we work with?

We are looking for a Chair who can lead the Travelling Light Board and support the company through the crucial next phase on our journey as we emerge from the Coronavirus pandemic and develop the company's next four-year business plan. Our current Chair is stepping down after completing a full term of service on the board, and the new Chair will join the board this autumn and begin the role in January 2022.

We are looking for someone who can facilitate effective meetings, enabling a wide range of voices to be heard and informed decisions to be made. The Chair will encourage an inclusive and welcoming board culture, developing positive relationships with the board, staff and other stakeholders. We are looking for a Chair who values the company's diverse leadership as an organisational strength and recognises that leadership takes many forms. Travelling Light works with a very wide range of children and young people from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, who are both disabled and non-disabled, and with a range of lived experiences. We are seeking to develop a trustee board that is more representative of the communities that we serve.

The Chair will advocate for the organisation with authenticity through sharing the story of the company's work and impact. You do not have to have a background in the arts or come with an existing arts network but should demonstrate a commitment to Travelling Light's work creating and sharing inspirational stories through theatre and providing creative opportunities for children and young people.

A photo from a *Louder Than Words* session, March 2020



The current board

Travelling Light's board consists of 7 committed trustees with backgrounds in areas such as higher education, theatre, business, and local community members. There are fixed terms of service on the board and our Chair and some other long-standing trustees are coming to their end of term, which is why we are now seeking a new Chair and new trustees to bring new skills and perspectives to the board.

The board meets 4 times a year as well as Away Days and our annual AGM and finance and artistic subcommittees feed into the main board. The board has met via Zoom during the coronavirus pandemic with a plan to return to face-face meetings in the autumn. Having worked together remotely over a period of time, spending time together as a board and staff team through events such as away days will be a priority over the coming months.

There are opportunities for trustees to get involved in the work of the company by volunteering at events, meeting the young people we work with, attending youth theatre showcases and professional performances, supporting fundraising campaigns and advocating for the organisation by sharing stories about the company's work.



Audience members at a performance of *Igloo*, January 2020.

Leadership and staff

Travelling Light is led by two joint CEOs, an Executive Director (Dienka Hines) who leads on the business/management side of the company and an Artistic Director (Heidi Vaughan) who leads on the artistic vision and programme. The staff team also consist of General Manager (Ali Sully), Marketing Manager (Jamie Harber), Creative Learning Officer (Lizzy Stephens), Youth and Community Officer (Louise Betts) and Production Manager (Becky Vowles). We are a small and agile team who work flexibly.



A photo from *Inside Story*, a week of free creative activities for children in Barton Hill, summer 2019.

Our current working context

Travelling Light has continued operating throughout the coronavirus pandemic, providing creativity and stories for those children and young people most affected by lockdowns. This included story based activity packs and a specially created storybook based on one of our plays, which was distributed for free to over 2,000 children in our locality of Barton Hill and across Bristol. Alongside this, we also ran weekly online workshops for our youth theatre and our ActionSpeak and Louder Than Words groups for young disabled people. Our Artistic Director worked with a team of experienced artists to produce *I7 and the Squeak Gobbler*, a free digital story and resources for local schools, which has reached over 28,000 school children nationally. As we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic, we have returned to face-to-face activity for our youth theatre groups and are in rehearsal for a new production, *Vixen*, which will tour to schools in autumn 2021.

Travelling light is a National Portfolio Organisation funded by Arts Council England and from this autumn will be working on our next application for 2023-2027. A main focus of the board will be in supporting the CEOs with forward planning for the next 4-year business plan, as well as our ongoing resilience and adaptability as we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic. We are committed to learning from the current crisis to continue to develop and adapt our programme, deepen community engagement, and innovate artistically.

A photo from *I7 & the Squeak Gobbler*, our digital story for schools, 2021



Chair of Trustees Role Description

In addition to the general responsibilities of a trustee (see accompanying trustee role description), the Chair is responsible for:

- Facilitating inclusive and effective board discussions.
- Ensuring that the Board of Trustees fulfils its governance responsibilities.
- Leading the board to support the Executive Director and Artistic Director in business planning for the future of the company. Ensuring the charity stays true to its mission and values.
- Supporting and appraising the Executive Director and Artistic Director.
- Building an effective relationship between the Board of Trustees and the senior management, staff team and other stakeholders.
- Being prepared to share the story of the company's work and advocate for its impact.
- Maintaining an overview of the company's work (including finances). Using this knowledge to facilitate effective discussions and decisions.

In addition to the duties of a trustee, the Chair performs the following duties:

- Working with the Executive Director to plan the annual cycle of board meetings. This includes identifying discussion areas for the board, setting agendas, checking minutes, and monitoring agreed actions.
- Chairing board meetings and ensuring effective discussions and decision making.
- Ensuring trustee decisions are acted upon, and progress is monitored and evaluated.
- Leading on the appointment, and appraisal of Executive Director and Artistic Director. Acting as a critical friend and sounding board for CEOs and supporting their professional development.
- Chairing formal HR processes (e.g. disciplinary & grievance) where appropriate, in line with the charity's policies.
- Ensuring effective communication with trustees and addressing any conflicts within the board.
- With the Executive Director, supporting board development and self-appraisal. Planning for the induction, training, recruitment and succession of trustees. Ensuring the skills of trustees are used to the charity's benefit.
- Representing the charity at events, meetings or functions as required.
- Attending other committees or working groups when appropriate.
- Occasional attendance at staff meetings and training days, as appropriate

Inside Story, children enjoying free creative activities, summer 2019



Person specification for the Chair of Trustees

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You share Travelling Light's commitment to creating and sharing inspirational stories through theatre and providing creative opportunities for children and young people. You have experience of governance/being on a management committee or an understanding of governance from a management/leadership role. You are an effective facilitator who can ensure voices and opinions of trustees are heard and meetings are productive. You are a good listener and an honest and open communicator who can constructively challenge. You enjoy working with others and value different perspectives and opinions. You are committed to Diversity & Inclusion and Equity and want to support the company to embed social justice across our work. You are able to devote the time and commitment needed to carry out the role. You are able to advocate for the company, attending events and supporting campaigns. You are committed to supporting Travelling Light's development as a fundraising organisation. You understand and accept the legal responsibilities and duties of trusteeship. 	<p>Knowledge or experience in one or more the following areas would be desirable, but not essential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Safeguarding Fundraising and philanthropy Financial management <p>Other desirable qualities could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of charity or arts leadership Involvement in networks which can support advocacy and business development opportunities. Experience of strategy development and/or business planning.

Please complete the Trustee Expression of Interest Form, stating any relevant skills and experience in relation to the person specification.

Deadline for expressions of interest **8th October 2021**. Please send expressions of interest to admin@travellinglighttheatre.org.uk

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Photos by Camilla Adams



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