

THEATRE PECKHAM

CHARITY
GOVERNANCE
AWARDS
SHORTLIST
10TH YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
★ ★ ★
2025

CHAIR APPLICATION PACK
2026

THE START OF OUR NEXT 40 YEARS

Theatre Peckham celebrated our 40th anniversary on 2nd May 2026.

We are seeking an ambitious, thoughtful and collaborative Chair to help shape Theatre Peckham's next chapter.

Working closely with our CEO and Artistic Director, Dr Suzann McLean MBE, fellow trustees and our wider community of stakeholders, our new Chair will help us turn a bold long-term vision into a resilient and sustainable strategy.

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1986 we are a multi-award-winning cultural venue for artistic excellence and social change. We are rooted in south-east London and shaped by the voices, stories and creativity of the community we serve.

We are both a cultural venue and a learning theatre. Through our Academy training, bold productions, workshops and festival programming, we enable children, young people and early career artists to develop skills, tell their stories and build pathways into the creative industries and beyond.

We deliver more than 24,000 contact hours to more than 300 children and young people who take part in our programmes each year, developing confidence, self-expression and pride in their community.

Our work is hyperlocal, centred on Peckham, neighbouring Camberwell and the surrounding Southwark neighbourhoods. Its impact travels much further: the artists and young people we nurture and grow go on to influence theatre and the wider creative industries across London and beyond. We have:

- A state-of-the-art 200-seat theatre and studios in Peckham.
- A five-year management contract for Canada Water Theatre, awarded from April 2026.
- Award-winning work recognised for widening access, artistic excellence and musical theatre education

For 40 years, we have opened doors, championed underrepresented voices and shown that creativity belongs to everyone.

Distinguished patrons including John Boyega, Roy Williams OBE FRSL, Jenny Agutter OBE, Dr Paulette Randall MBE, Editor of The Stage Matt Hemley, and Miatta Fahnbulleh MP.



WHERE TALENT MEETS OPPORTUNITY

Young people take their first creative steps with us. Early-career artists develop new work and grow their practice. Audiences experience stories that reflect the communities around them.

Together, these activities create a pathway from first engagement with theatre to professional opportunity. We are where talent meets opportunity.

Through performances, training and artist development, we provide a platform for young people and early-career artists from underrepresented backgrounds to develop their skills, realise their potential and thrive in creative careers and beyond.

What this means in practice

- A creative home for young people.
- A welcoming space to explore creativity, build confidence and find a voice.
- A platform for new voices and stories.
- Rooted in our local community.
- Reflecting the diversity and creativity of Peckham, Camberwell and the wider Southwark neighbourhoods.
- Championing representation in the arts.
- Reshaping who makes theatre and whose stories are told.
- Opening pathways into the creative industries.
- Supporting talent from first creative experiences through to professional careers.
- Developing and presenting work that reflects contemporary life and amplifies underrepresented perspectives.
- Building confidence and wellbeing through creativity.
- Enabling young people to develop resilience, ambition and self-belief on and off the stage.
- Helping shape the future of theatre.
- Contributing to a more representative, inclusive and dynamic creative industry.



Dr. Suzann McLean MBE
CEO and Artistic Director



"Theatre Peckham is a community-driven organisation providing life-changing experiences. We are deeply committed to nurturing the talents of young creatives and empowering them to be the storytellers of now and the future. Our board of trustees are a collective of visionaries, advocates, and change-makers. Together, we aim to create a vibrant and inclusive environment."

OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

We are a learning theatre that champions artistic excellence and social change for young people and our hyperlocal community in Peckham, Camberwell and the surrounding Southwark neighbourhoods.

Vision

We are building a genuinely representative and inclusive society where everyone can participate, lead, work and enjoy creativity and culture.

Mission

We are a learning theatre that champions artistic excellence and social change for young people and our hyperlocal community in Peckham, Camberwell and the surrounding Southwark neighbourhoods.

Values

We strive for these values to be reflected in all we do:



REPRESENTATION

We are committed to showcasing diverse voices and ensuring all individuals feel seen and valued in our work and community.



COLLABORATION

We believe in the power of working together creatively and sharing success through strong partnerships and teamwork.



INNOVATION

We embrace new ideas, pushing boundaries to create fresh and exciting theatre experiences.



AMBITION

We strive for excellence, aiming to continuously grow and offer meaningful opportunities for our community and artists.



RELATIONSHIPS

We value and build lifelong connections with participants, audiences and partners, grounded in trust, mutual respect and a shared commitment to the arts.



A CHAIR TO GUIDE OUR NEXT CHAPTER

As we celebrate our 40th anniversary, we are looking ahead with ambition and purpose.

We are seeking a new Chair to help shape Theatre Peckham's next chapter. This is a pivotal leadership role with the opportunity to guide our strategic direction and build on four decades of impact.

The Chair will lead an inclusive, high-performing Board, encourage open discussion, drawing out different perspectives to support effective decision-making, and sustain a relationship of trust and accountability to help drive Theatre Peckham's vision forward.

Ambition matched by care

We are [financially secure and well positioned](#), however like all publicly funded arts organisations, we operate in an increasingly challenging environment.

Our next Chair will bring ambition, sound judgement and strategic insight, helping us seize new opportunities while safeguarding our resources, reputation and long term sustainability.

Strategy

Our new Chair will help us to:

- Shape a compelling vision for Theatre Peckham's next 40 years and translate it into a practical, measurable strategy.
- Keep children, young people, early career artists and our hyperlocal community at the heart of Board thinking.
- Build on the opportunity presented by our Peckham home and our five-year management contract for Canada Water Theatre.
- Strengthen income, partnerships, profile and influence while maintaining rigorous oversight of risk and sustainability.
- Ensure our leadership and governance increasingly reflect the community we serve.

Who we are looking for

We are looking for a strategic leader who combines imagination and sound judgement with warmth, curiosity and a genuinely collaborative approach.

We do not expect one person to bring every possible skill. We are interested in the whole contribution you could make: your values, judgement, lived experience, networks and ability to help a diverse Board do its best work.



ROLE PROFILE

The Chair will lead the Board in ensuring that we deliver our mission, remain financially sustainable and realise our strategic ambition.

In this role, you will:

- Lead the Board. Provide inclusive and effective leadership, set high standards of governance and ensure trustees make a strong collective contribution.
- Shape our future. Guide the development of an ambitious long-term vision and strategy, grounded in our mission, values and 40-year legacy.
- Partner with our CEO and Artistic Director. Build a close, trusting and appropriately challenging relationship with Dr Suzann McLean MBE, supporting performance, accountability and wellbeing.
- Steward our sustainability. Ensure strategic ambition is matched by careful financial oversight, proportionate risk management and a clear plan for resilience.
- Build a collaborative culture. Enable open, respectful and collegiate discussion across the Board and strengthen engagement with staff and stakeholders.
- Champion representation and inclusivity. Help ensure that our Board and leadership reflect the voices, backgrounds and experiences of the community we serve.
- Grow our reach and influence. Represent us externally, deepen relationships with funders and partners, and support fundraising and partnership development.
- Assure compliance. Ensure our decisions and activities remain aligned with our charitable purpose and all regulatory and funder requirements.
- Work with the whole Board with a particularly important relationship with the CEO and Artistic Director. The relationship should be mutually supportive, candid and focused on the best interests of Theatre Peckham and the communities we serve.
- The Chair will also act as a connector – bringing trustees, staff, partners, funders and community perspectives together around shared goals.

This is an unpaid role.

We reimburse reasonable expenses in line with our expenses policy. All trustees are supported to understand the role and participate fully.

Charity Commission guidance on
Trusteeship can be found [here](#)

ABOUT TRUSTEESHIP

Trustees hold ultimate responsibility for directing our affairs and ensuring that we deliver our charitable outcomes.

Trustees work with our CEO and Artistic Director to set our strategic direction through business planning and clear long-term objectives. They must act only in Theatre Peckham's best interests, use their skills and experience with care, and participate fully in collective decisions.

CORE DUTIES

Duty of Care

Keep informed about our work and use personal knowledge and experience to help ensure that we are well run, effective and accountable.

Duty of Prudence

Ensure that we remain financially sound; use charitable funds and assets wisely and only to further our purposes; and avoid exposing our property, funds, assets or reputation to undue risk.

Safeguarding

Understand and fulfil safeguarding responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Trustees complete a DBS (Disclosure Baring Service) check.

Compliance

Ensure that we comply with charity law, Charity Commission requirements and other relevant legal and regulatory obligations.

Trustees are expected to:

- Attend at least four Board meetings a year with an annual Away Day and AGM
- Attend performances, Academy showcases and other events
- Contribute skills through subcommittees such as finance, nominations, programming and/or fundraising.
- Take an active role in fundraising, advocacy and network-building.



BOARD STRUCTURE

We have a total of 13 serving Board members.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Treasurer
- Trustees



Each Board member brings their own specialisms to their Trusteeship. Expertise on our Board includes, but is not limited to:

EXPERTISE

- Legal
- HR
- Producing
- Artistic
- Finance
- Marketing & Comms
- Press
- Education

SUBCOMMITTEES

Subcommittees are smaller groups of leadership and expertise that are responsible for overseeing specific tasks. Trustees are not expected to serve on every subcommittee, but there is an expectation that they will contribute to at least one, sharing their professional expertise and supporting the Board in providing effective oversight of key areas of the organisation's work.

- Finance
- HR
- Nominations
- Marketing & Communications
- Programming
- Fundraising
- Patrons
- TP4o Action Group
- Sustainability

The representation within our current board is:

**23%
Neurodiverse**

**69% Global
Majority**

54% Women

**7% are 25 or
under**

OUR COMMITMENT TO REPRESENTATION

We want our leadership to reflect the community we serve – in its lived experience, perspectives and connections.

We are committed to developing and maintaining a fully representative Board of Trustees. This commitment earned us a finalist place in the Board Equity, Diversity and Inclusion category at the Charity Governance Awards 2025, from more than 100 entries.

We welcome applications regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality and/or socio-economic background.

We assess candidates on the mix of professional and personal experience, judgement, values and potential needed to provide strategic leadership for Theatre Peckham.

Representation matters on stage, behind the scenes and in leadership. We are therefore especially interested in candidates who can help us remain accountable and connected to our richly diverse communities in Peckham, Camberwell and across the London Borough of Southwark.

Inclusive Recruitment

We want every candidate to be able to take part fully and with dignity. Please tell us what would make the process accessible for you.

During the application process we can:

- ★ Pay reasonable care and childcare costs associated with interviews.
- ★ Pay reasonable travel costs to and from an in-person interview.
- ★ Make reasonable adjustments, including arranging a sign-language interpreter in advance.
- ★ Provide this pack in an editable format.
- ★ Offer a guaranteed first-stage interview to disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.

If there is any other support needed, please let us know.



BECOME OUR CHAIR

You may be a strong fit if you:

- Have a strong connection to our purpose, values and community-rooted ethos.
- Can lead the development of an ambitious vision and strategy, turning ideas into clear priorities and accountable delivery.
- Understand the balance between entrepreneurial ambition and the financial care required to protect a publicly funded arts organisation.
- Build trusting, candid and constructive relationships with a CEO, trustees and a wide range of stakeholders.
- Chair inclusive conversations, draw out different perspectives and help a group reach sound collective decisions.
- Can represent and advocate for Theatre Peckham with credibility across culture, public life, philanthropy, business and community networks.
- Understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Can commit the time and energy required to be visible, engaged and well informed.

HOW TO APPLY

Submit a cover letter* of no more than one A4 page explaining why you are interested in becoming our Chair. Tell us how your experience, perspective and leadership could help us shape Theatre Peckham's next 40 years.

You may find these prompts helpful:

Tell us about you and your background

Tell us what experience, knowledge, skills or perspective you think you could bring to the role

Tell us what excites you about this opportunity and our next chapter

Send your application to: tash@theatrepeckham.co.uk
Please also complete our Equal Opportunities form [here](#)

*You are welcome to apply in another format, such as an audio recording or a film made on your phone. Please keep alternative-format applications to no more than three minutes and email us in advance if you plan to use one.

Key Dates:

- ★ Monday 14th September, 10am: Deadline for applications.
- ★ Monday 12th October - Successful applicants will be interviewed by our Nominations Committee.
- ★ Tuesday 3rd November - A second interview which will include a tour of our building and an informal conversation with the current Chair, will follow.
- ★ If you are shortlisted to the final stage, you will be invited to attend our next Board meeting as an observer on Tuesday 20th October, 5:30PM-7PM

THEATRE PECKHAM

We look forward to hearing from you.



Find out more about the [Theatre Peckham Team](#)

Link to [Charity Overview](#)

Read our latest [Impact Report](#)