

Hay Festival *Global*

Candidate Brief:
Chair of Board
May 2024



Hay Festival Global

Introduction

Hay Festival Foundation Limited is a UK registered charity that brings together writers, artists, thinkers and performers from around the world, to share their ideas and creativity, across festivals, forums and digital platforms. Based in Hay-on-Wye, and first known for Hay Festival Hay-on-Wye, the charity now runs events and projects across four continents, including impactful work in communities and schools.

Hay Festival Global (the working name for Hay Festival Foundation Limited) has been running for 38 years and is regarded as one of the most powerful cultural organisations in the world. Much more than a book festival, today it is the most important cultural event of its kind, with an ability to connect communities through culture. At the core of Hay Festival Global is the transformative power of words and the belief that those words and ideas can change the world and that everybody should have access to inspiration and creativity.

“Hay Festival democratises inspiration” – Katrin Bennhold, New York Times.

Hay Festival Global operates on a mixed funding model with important commercial income streams, including ticketing, retail and membership. It has a turnover of £5m.

At the heart of all our activity is Hay Festival, Hay-on-Wye, which takes place for 11 days at the end of May and early June, bringing together thousands of people from a variety of backgrounds for a programme of 600+ individually ticketed events. Each year, around 150,000 people come to Hay-on-Wye for the Festival. Past guests have included and writers Martin Amis, Hilary Mantel, Doris Lessing, Zadie Smith, Sally Rooney, Salman Rushdie, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie; thought-leaders Malala Yousafzai, Gloria Steinem, David Attenborough and Naomi Klein; world-class performers Paul McCartney, Helena Bonham Carter, Dua Lipa and Stormzy; artists Ai Weiwei, Grayson Perry and Tracey Emin; scientists Stephen Hawking, Daniel Kahneman and Didier Queloz; economists Mariana Mazzucato, David Spiegelhalter, Esther Duflo, Joseph Stiglitz, and Paul Krugman; and world leaders Hillary Rodham Clinton, Desmond Tutu, Christiana Figueres, Jimmy Carter, Ehud Barak, His Majesty King Charles III, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and former President Bill Clinton, who described it as the “Woodstock of the mind.” The events held at Hay-on-Wye are the core of our work and continue to inspire future generations of audiences, our artists and creative industry partners, and our Global events.

Hay Festival Global is growing internationally with events this year in Kenya, Colombia, Peru, Mexico, USA, Spain, and Ukraine. It is the intention of Hay Festival Global to continue to expand nationally and internationally.

The charity continues to evolve and adapt. In recent years, it has moved from a founder-led organisation to a more commercial, agile, accessible, global, sustainable and creative force in keeping with contemporary society. As government funding decreases, cultural organisations are having to stand alone. Hay Festival Global aims to be the best in the sector and strives to expand its educational remit and to continue to build its global presence, whilst ensuring that it is commercially sustainable.

Hay Festival Foundation Limited raises £2m from sales, £1m from other commercial activities, £2m from fundraising (including trusts, public donations and high-net-worth donations). In terms of headcount, Hay Festival Foundation Limited employs 15 full-time employees and four part-time. There are 12 Trustees in total, seven of the Trustees are new to the Board, and three are first-time Trustees. Actor and writer Stephen Fry is the President.



The role

Caroline Michel, the current Chair of Hay Festival Foundation Limited will be stepping down at the end of this year and the Board is looking to appoint a new Chair. The new Chair will join in December 2024 and take over fully in January 2025. The new Chair will be ratified by the Board in the autumn of 2024 and they will serve a minimum of three years, with a possible second term.

Caroline has been Chair since 2015. She describes her job as “the most exciting cultural job in Europe” and has been instrumental in transforming the organisation into the global charity it is today.

Recently, Caroline also led the recruitment of the new Chief Executive Officer, Julie Finch, and the appointment of seven new members to the charity’s Board of Trustees. The new Trustees bring extensive expertise and experience at a crucial moment in time for Hay Festival Global.

An advocate of the organisation since its earliest days, Caroline has led the Festival in bringing authors, politicians, scientists, historians and musicians together in making the pilgrimage to Wales, along with over 150,000 people (10,000-12,000 of whom are school children). She describes the audiences at Hay Festival events as “tough and engaged” and she says that the joy people get from attending is “immense.”

Lord Burns (Advisor and former Trustee) describes the Hay Festival Foundation Limited Board as “an enjoyable Board, where difficult conversations happen.”

The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Board, ensuring that the Board members work constructively together as a team so that all the Trustees are encouraged to play their part. The Chair’s role is non-executive and part-time, but it is vital that the Chair is able to develop a good relationship with the Chief Executive Officer, acting as a sounding board, offering them support, wise counsel and challenge. It is important that the new Chair has the requisite time to ‘give’ to the organisation and that it will become part of their DNA.

The new Chair will be an individual of considerable experience, presence and authority. Hay Festival Foundation Limited has recently appointed several new Trustees and employees to aid continued transformation, in alignment with its charitable objectives. The new Chair will need to support the Chief Executive Officer and build confidence and trust with the new Board of Trustees and executive, helping to develop their thinking around the mission and future growth opportunities for Hay Festival. This individual will be someone who has demonstrated a successful executive career and has now made the transition into a plural career as an established Chair or non-executive director with a passion for literature and the arts. The successful candidate will demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence, as well as intellect. They will be charismatic, collaborative, trustworthy, collegiate, resilient, have a low ego and will lead Hay Festival through the next stage of its strategy.

This is an exciting and important moment to join Hay Festival Global, as it focuses on its mission to inspire and educate audiences around the world.

The Chair will be active in the following areas:

- Providing overall leadership and governance to the Board of Trustees;
- With the Chief Executive Officer, formulating the work plan for the Board against agreed objectives, playing an active role in setting the agenda for Board meetings and acting as a sounding board for the Chief Executive Officer;
- Acting as the link between the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer;
- Ensuring that complete, timely, relevant, accurate, honest and accessible information is placed before the Board to enable Trustees to reach an informed decision;
- Monitoring Board operations and ensuring that individual directors play a full and constructive role in support of Hay Festival Foundation Limited;
- Creating collaborative relationships between the Executive Team and the Board;
- Ensuring that decisions taken by the Board are executed;
- Ensuring that Hay Festival Foundation Limited has appropriate succession processes in place at both Board and executive level.

This will require:

- Rapidly gaining an understanding of the current culture and dynamics of Hay Festival Global, its history, strategy and the context in which it operates, and assume a critical role as an advocate for the charity's interests, strategy and ambitions;
- Being passionate about the future development of Hay Festival Global in the UK and internationally.

Background

Hay Festival Global is seeking a candidate with a successful and accomplished track record as an executive and non-executive, who understands the job of Chair. The new Chair will demonstrate that they value the product - literature - and having a background or involvement in the cultural world would be essential. This could include involvement in literature, science, journalism, history, politics, theatre, art or music.

Importantly, Hay Festival Global needs someone who can open doors - politically, in business and across the arts - to cultivate donors and supporters.

They could be a proven Chair, or if not yet a Chair, a seasoned Senior Independent Director or Non-Executive Director. The new Chair will be able to bring leadership to the Board and encourage the Chief Executive Officer and the executive to achieve further success.

The important qualities for which the Board is looking to include:

- Independence of mind and a modern thinker, combined with sound business judgement;
- Good interpersonal skills to help the Board run effectively and to create an environment that is enjoyable to work in;
- Self-assurance and confidence with strong communication skills;
- Financial numeracy and strong commercial acumen;

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- A good track record of business achievement and experience with a willingness to roll their sleeves up;
- An influential and imaginative individual who has reached a significant level of success within their own field. Likely to be a well-respected and widely known figure and an excellent communicator with experience of Chairing groups of talented people or with a strong non-executive portfolio of Board roles;
- A passion for literature and the arts, and ensuring that they reach a global audience;
- Ability to support the executives in their leadership of the organisation and to build their trust;
- Ability to listen sensitively to the views of others inside and outside the Board. They should be able to quickly gain the trust and respect of other Board members;
- Ability to constructively challenge and help develop proposals on strategy;
- Willingness to continually seek to develop and refresh their knowledge and skills to ensure that their contribution to the Board remains informed and relevant;
- Professional capability, calibre and track record to quickly gain the respect and trust of the literary and arts environment that we work in;
- A wide circle of contacts who are high-net-worth individuals, established philanthropists with connections with the ability to make significant contributions to Hay Festival.

Style

Cultural fit, both in terms of the organisation and the executive team and members of the Board is important. The successful candidate should have an open and collaborative style, strong interpersonal and communication skills and the ability to challenge effectively. Other essential qualities/traits are low ego, high intellect, robust, calm, diplomatic and a willingness to engage and learn. They must be brave, visionary, and demonstrate a high level of personal and professional integrity and ethical standards.

Time commitment

The Board meets four times per year in London or Wales, and there is one away-day in Hay-on-Wye. The new Chair would be expected to attend part of Hay Festival Wales and any new festivals, but they would not be expected to attend every festival. Ideally the new Chair will be based in the UK and willing to travel to Wales and internationally to spend time with the team, not just at key events. In addition, the role will involve time with the CEO, which will vary on requirement at any given time. We would suggest this could involve up to 20% of the Chair's time during the first 12 months, particularly during our strategic implementation. An ability to be responsive and flexible with their availability is essential.

Remuneration

This role is pro bono, although with expenses reimbursed for international travel to the festivals.

Diversity and inclusion

Hay Festival Global is fully committed to equality of opportunity and will consider candidates regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic background, religion and/or beliefs.

Candidate profile

Experience

- Proven record of success at a senior executive and non-executive level, Chair and/or NED experience;
- Demonstrable leadership capability and track record of achievement;
- Demonstrable love of the arts; in particular the written word;
- International outlook;
- Knowledge and understanding of Wales's political and funding landscape, and Hay-on-Wye's place within it;
- Ideally, the candidate will have previously attended Hay Festival, Hay-on-Wye and/or Hay Global event/s.

Understanding of the position of the UK Globally; politically and culturally. Personal characteristics

- Excellent mentoring skills to help develop non-executive directors and Trustees;
- Able to encourage and support the executive team advocating for positive change and development;
- A collaborative style with evident engagement with colleagues and stakeholders;
- Adept at supporting but also challenging colleagues to ensure that, at all times, the best interests of the business, its employees, the artists, and its audience are represented in a balanced manner;
- To have an excellent network and confident about their ability to open doors for fundraising;
- Respects and supports equalities, diversity and inclusion;
- Adaptable, flexible, and responsive;
- Diplomatic, able to negotiate and navigate a varied range of engagements;
- Supportive, dependable and calm, particularly through periods of crisis and external challenges.

Appendix 1 – the current Trustees, CEO and Advisors

Caroline Michel, Chair (outgoing)

Caroline has been the Chair of Hay Festival since 2015. She has been Chief Executive at Peter Fraser & Dunlop since 2007. She has over 25 years' worth of experience in the industry and ran both Vintage at Random House and Harper Press at HarperCollins. She is Chair of the BFI Trust and was previously a Trustee of Somerset House.

Corisande Albert, (new) Trustee

Corisande is a farmer, ceramicist and award-winning film producer. Trained as a barrister, she is Managing Director of Transatlantic Films and has an organic regenerative agriculture farm near Hay-on-Wye, Wales. She also runs a ceramics studio with her work exhibited nationally.

Nick Butler, (new) Trustee

Nick is an economist, specialising in the transition to a lower carbon society and the relationship between energy and security. He is an experienced Non-Executive Director and Chair of commercial and not-for-profit entities.

Suhair Khan, (new) Trustee

Suhair is a technology entrepreneur and creative leader. She has led initiatives at Google and Google Arts and Culture merging cutting-edge technologies with art, design and culture, education and sustainability. She is also involved as a Board member/Advisory capacity with the Design Museum, British Library, Sadler's Wells, London Design Biennale and the UK's Museum of the Year Prize and is currently a visiting lecturer at Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design.

David Olusoga, (new) Trustee

David is a historian, author, presenter and BAFTA-winning film-maker. He is Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester and the author of several books. His book *Black and British* was awarded both the Longman-History Today Trustees Award and the PEN Hessel-Tiltman Prize, while the children's edition won best Children's Non-Fiction at the British Book Awards. David is a recipient of the BAFTA Special Award, the British Academy's President's Medal and the Norton Medlicott Medal for Services to History.

Ed Shedd, (new) Trustee

Ed is a long-standing Partner at Deloitte where he leads the European TMT and Climate & Sustainability practices. Experienced in supporting CEO-led growth and digital transformation, he is passionate about driving change to help deliver society's transition to a net-positive, circular economy. He is also Chair of Create Central, an industry body helping to turbocharge the West Midlands creative content sector.

Shakia Stewart, (new) Trustee

Shakia is Global Head of Digital Content at the British Council. A champion of inclusive design and the power of storytelling, she is an advocate for equality and diversity in the workplace and beyond. With an MA in Latin American History, she has a special interest in the Black diaspora and is a widely travelled content specialist and consultant, working with change groups including the Black Swimming Association and the London, Sugar and Slavery gallery at the Museum of London, Docklands.

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Victoria Bejarano, (established) Trustee

Victoria is Chair and previous CEO for Zurich Colombia Seuros SA. She has broad experience of the insurance industry in Latin America, Spain and the USA. Her Early career included the role of CEO for Mapfre Seguros, Colombia.

Baroness Rosie Boycott, (established) Trustee

A cross bench peer in the House of Lords, she was appointed to work on food policy and is a well-known food activist with an interest in food poverty, health and environment and agricultural sustainability. She was the founder of the feminist magazine *Spare Rib* and editor-in-chief of three national newspapers: *The Independent on Sunday*, *The Independent* and *The Daily Express*.

Geraint Davies, (established) Trustee

Geraint has been a Trustee and Director of the Hay Festival Charity and its predecessor bodies for 8 years. After 25 years as a Partner with Grant Thornton finishing as Senior Partner Wales and the West, Geraint retired in June 2013. His numerous Non-Executive roles include Vice Chair of GCRE Ltd appointed by Welsh Government in 2020, WRU and WNO, Chair of one Church in Wales committee. Geraint is the pro bono lead adviser to the Aberfan charities, a role he has held for some 45 years. He has for the last few years also advised the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission and DLUHC on the longer-term strategies needed arising from the disaster.

Philippe Sands KC, (established) Trustee

Philippe Sands QC is Professor of Law at University College London and a practising barrister at Matrix Chambers, the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. He is the author of several academic books on international law, and contributes to the *New York Review of Books*, *Vanity Fair*, *the Financial Times* and *The Guardian*. He won the 2016 Baillie Gifford Prize for *East West Street: on the origins of genocide and crimes against humanity* (Spanish translation was published by Anagrama, October 2017).

CEO and Advisors

Lord Burns GCB (outgoing Trustee)

Lord Burns (known as Terry) will continue as an advisor on the Finance and Audit Committee and will be part of the panel for the Chair search. Lord Burns is a British economist, made a life peer in 1998 for his services as former Chief Economic Advisor and Permanent Secretary to HM Treasury. Previous appointments include Chair of Santander UK, Channel 4, Marks and Spencer Group plc, Ofcom and The Royal Academy of Music

Julie Finch, Chief Executive Officer

Julie joined Hay Festival Global in 2022 and has been instrumental in moving it from a founder model to a more sustainable model, together with a drive to professionalise operations whilst remaining a creative force. Previously, she led national and international cultural projects and as a CEO undertook complex change management across two previous roles.

Jonathan Godfrey, Nik Gowing and Dylan Jones are recently retired Trustees and will transition over to the Hay Festival Global Advisory Council.

