

# Hay Festival *Global*

**Candidate Brief:**  
**Trustee**  
*December 2025*



## **Chair's Welcome**

Dear Candidate

I am delighted you are interested in joining the fantastic team at the Hay Festival Foundation. It's a hugely important time for the Foundation.

We currently deliver over 70 days of 'festival' activity every year in multiple locations across the world and the work of the organisation has never felt more critical. We are evolving in Wales, the UK and internationally to champion freedom of expression in an ever-changing world. Core to the organisation's mission is the desire to champion creativity and different perspectives to help equip the audiences who attend our events with the knowledge and insight to forge a better society.

I am a relatively new Chair, appointed in January this year, and I am focused on building a financially sustainable charity for the long term, through focused fundraising, diversifying our income and building on the success of our global events. To help with that important work, we are now looking to appoint new Trustees, who will bring a variety of attributes, skills and experiences to build on our current strategic direction.

I've been impressed by the dynamism and ambition of the current Board and am excited about the opportunity to build up the skill set of that team even further with this latest round of Trustee recruitment. I look forward to discussing the opportunity with you.

With best wishes,

**Jay Hunt**  
**Chair – Hay Festival Foundation**

## Overview

As an independent charity with a global reach, regulated by the Charity Commission, Hay Festival Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board determines policy and, together with the leadership team, sets the strategic direction of the organisation and oversees the management of the activity. The Board collectively develops strategy, approves resource allocations, represents Hay Festival Foundation Ltd externally and monitors the organisation's performance against agreed objectives.

Trustees of HFF have a statutory duty to ensure the charity complies with its governing document, charity law and other legislation, that the organisation pursues its charitable objects by ensuring resources are used to achieve charitable activities, to set the strategic direction and ensure the effective administration of the organisation, safeguarding the good name and value of HFF.

To fulfil these duties, Trustees meet a minimum of five times a year to scrutinise and discuss Board papers, key issues, and provide expert guidance on new initiatives related to the approved strategy and business plan.

The current Board is led by Jay Hunt, the Chair, and at full strength will have up to 15 Trustees. Trustees attend five board meetings a year, including a strategy away-day and are asked to participate in sub-committees (Finance, Resources and Audit; Nominations and Advisory Council and working subgroups on various strategic threads). The term of office is three years and Trustees can be appointed for up to three consecutive terms.

Trustees receive a full induction into the organisation, mentor support and ongoing training and development opportunities in respect of governance.

### **Who are we looking for:**

We are looking for trustees with an interest in and passion for creativity and arts; and wider subject matter that could incorporate science, politics, environmental sustainability, nature and history. In addition, expert knowledge is sought, to support the strategic direction of this organisation and the next exciting phase of development in Wales, UK and globally. HFF strives for diversity in its audiences, staff and volunteers and would like to reflect this diversity on the Board also.

You are joining HFF at an interesting time in its journey, as we seek to make a positive impact on culture and the arts, education, and the spread of ideas for the widest possible audiences, in the UK and globally. We want to nurture creativity and widen access through recruiting trustees with a mix of skills, networks, experiences and voices.

We are looking for people with enthusiasm and relevant knowledge who are open to innovative and entrepreneurial ideas and able to think through policies, strategy and governance, fairly and innovatively. HFF is a UK-based charity; international festivals are operated in conjunction with foreign entities.

We are particularly keen to hear from you if you have an interest in this role and can bring strategic experience in any of the following areas:

- International experience within cultural or creative sectors
- Digital production and media expertise
- Fund development and high-net-worth access
- Capital project and infrastructure development

We are especially interested to engage candidates who have a strong connection to the core purpose of Hay Festival, and who are willing to open their networks to HFF. First time trustees with the relevant skills and commitment will be welcomed and supported to develop in this non-executive role.

HFF is committed to representing the experiences and identities of staff, volunteers and the diverse communities they serve across the organisation and especially at Board level and welcomes applications of interest from people representative of all communities and experiences.

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## The role

Following a review of the Charity's short- and long-term needs, the Board will, from time to time, look to recruit specific skills to supplement the Board and aid with succession planning, and to suit specific areas of strategy.

The Board have recognised a need to recruit new Trustees to fulfil current and upcoming skill vacancies and to support its current strategic needs.

### Purpose of the Role

We are seeking trustee/s with skills in the following areas:

- International experience within cultural or creative sectors
- Digital production and media expertise
- Fund development and high-net-worth access
- Capital project and infrastructure development

### Key Skills and Experience

The ideal Trustee will bring a combination of expertise and a commitment to the values and vision of HFF. Key skills and experience required include:

#### Interpersonal and Leadership Skills:

- Ability and capacity to work collaboratively with Trustees, staff, and external advisors to ensure clear oversight and shared accountability.
- Confidence in challenging proposals constructively while fostering a positive and cooperative team environment.
- Additional Attributes:
- A demonstrable commitment to the Charity's mission to inspire and educate through cultural programming.
- Acting as an ambassador for HFF, championing its objectives and maintaining the highest ethical standards.
- A person of influence in their region, with access to HNWI and a willingness to introduce HFF to decision makers and potential donors.

**Commitment:**

Trustees are expected to attend all Board meetings. The Board of Trustees normally meets five times per annum, ideally in person in either Hay-on-Wye or London, including one away-day a year.

Trustees may also choose or be asked to join certain sub-committees, to which they will be expected to contribute. Trustees will be invited to attend and participate in planning and development events and a range of Trustee development activities. Trustees will be expected to devote appropriate preparation time ahead of each meeting.

Acting as an ambassador for HFF, championing its objectives and maintaining the highest ethical standards.

Willingness to travel to Hay Festival offices to meet the relevant Executive team members as and when required.

**Duties of a Trustee**

The Board of Trustees takes on the ultimate legal and fiscal responsibility for all the activities of the Charity. The Trustees maintain an overview of policy and strategic direction rather than being involved in day-to-day operations. The duties of Trustees are summarised below.

The duties of a Trustee are to:

- Ensure that the Charity pursues its stated objects (purposes) for the public benefit, as defined in its governing document.
- Ensure that the Charity complies with its governing document (i.e., its memorandum and articles of association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that the Charity makes efficient and responsible use of resources, that all monies are applied to its objects, agreed plans and budgets.
- Ensure that risks to the Charity, staff, volunteers and visitors to the events are at an acceptable level and are efficiently managed.
- Provide strategic direction, determine overall policy, set targets and evaluate performance.
- Safeguard the good name and values of the Charity.
- Act exclusively in the best interests of the Charity and not in their own personal interests.
- Ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- Protect and manage the property of the Charity and ensure the proper investment of the Charity's funds.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions. Trustees will be expected to keep themselves informed of the activities of the Charity and the wider issues that affect its work.

## **Ways of Working**

A commitment to Nolan's Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort as a volunteer.

It is desirable that you are familiar with the work of Hay Festival and have attended a festival. Trustees are not paid for performing their duties. They may claim expenses, within specified limits, for travelling and subsistence associated with attendance at meetings, training events and conferences.

Further details regarding the role of Trustee are set out in the Charity Commission document, The Essential Trustee:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/866947/CC3\\_feb20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866947/CC3_feb20.pdf)

## **The Application Process**

Application deadline 31st January 2026

Please send us a copy of your CV with a covering letter outlining:

- Why you are interested in joining the HFF Board.
- Any relevant skills, interests or experience (professional and/or personal).
- Details of two referees.

## **Interview and Selection Process**

Initial shortlisting and interviews during February 2026

This is a relaxed interview, and a fantastic opportunity to gain experience more about the role from the Chair, Trustees and CEO. We will be interested to hear about:

- Why you applied for the role and how you meet the skills required.
- What skills, interests or experiences (professional and/or personal) you could bring to the Board.
- Level of charity trustee experience or a statement on why this role is of interest in gaining skills as a Trustee.
- The topics that are important to you and issues you would like to give voice to on the Board and how they can build impact for the Charity.
- How you will contribute to our mission, vision, values and strategic development.

Please inform us of any access needs you may have when attending interviews.

## **Appointment**

27th April 2026 – at the HFF Board Meeting

Preferred candidates will be recommended to the Board for appointment at the next appropriate Board meeting.

Application enquiries and submission to: [sian@hayfestival.org](mailto:sian@hayfestival.org) (Corporate Administrator Hay Festival).

