

Charles Dickens Museum

VACANCIES ON THE BOARD – APPLICATIONS INVITED

www.dickensmuseum.com

The Charles Dickens Museum (CDM) is **seeking three people to join its non-executive Board** in spring 2021. CDM is a fully accredited independent museum (charity no 212172) dedicated to promoting the life and work of Charles Dickens, writer, journalist and social reformer.

The Museum holds **the world's most comprehensive collection** of material relating to Dickens's life and work, including the house in which he lived when he established himself as a writer in the 1830s and rose to international fame. CDM is a place of pilgrimage for people from across the country and around the world, and it is a place of learning for thousands of children and young people.

At this time, we are looking for **skills and experience** in museum management and accreditation, as well as people with legal and finance expertise. We would also welcome applications from people who live or work in the neighbourhood of the Museum (Bloomsbury, Holborn, King's Cross / St Pancras).

The Charles Dickens Museum recognises the value of diversity and is keen to more closely reflect the wide range of people who visit the Museum. We celebrate the role it plays in the creation of an inclusive workplace culture and thrive on the range of experience and insight diversity brings to our Museum. We want to **broaden the diversity of our Board** and welcome candidates who can contribute **greater diversity of representation and thinking**, including Black, Asian, and minority ethnic people, LGBT+ people, people with disabilities and those with experience of socio-economic disadvantage.

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The **object of the charity** is to promote, encourage, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the life and works of Charles Dickens and to establish and maintain the property at 48 Doughty Street in the London Borough of Camden as a Museum to house and preserve all articles having connection with Charles Dickens.

The Charles Dickens Museum is **the leading centre for the study, appreciation and enjoyment of Charles Dickens's life and work**. With over 100,000 items comprising furniture, personal effects, paintings, prints, photographs, letters, manuscripts, and rare editions, the collection is significant for its breadth and depth. A temporary exhibition programme enhances and complements the Museum's permanent displays, and we offer a range of learning and engagement opportunities.

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Becoming a Board Member

The Charles Dickens Museum is a charity governed by a sole trustee company, which is limited by guarantee. Board members are directors of the sole trustee company and responsible for ensuring that this company carries out its duties as the trustee of the charity.

The Museum is managed by a Director, who leads a small team of staff. The Board is responsible for setting and monitoring the Museum's strategic objectives and finances, and for ensuring that the organisation delivers its charitable purpose in compliance with charity law. Board members support the Museum's management team and oversee its performance.

Being a Board member of the Charles Dickens Museum is a voluntary, unremunerated role, although expenses (such as travel for attending required meetings) may be claimed. Board members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, bringing with them their experience, skills and expertise to support and enrich the running of the Museum. At the same time, members gain a great deal from their work on the Board in terms of new experiences and knowledge.

There are currently 12 Board members who meet five times a year. Board Members are appointed for a period of three years and are eligible to be reappointed for a further term of three years.

In addition, members contribute to the Board's committees and project groups. Currently there is a committee dealing with the Museum's finances, staffing and governance matters, and an advisory group overseeing the Museum collections. Additionally, ad hoc project groups are convened as needed to deal with particular areas of work, such as education policy and provision. Board members join committees and project groups depending on their skills, interests and available time.

Duties and Responsibilities of a Board Member

The main duties of Board members are to work cooperatively with colleagues to:

- Set the strategic direction of the charity in line with Articles of Association, leaving the operational direction to the Director and team;
- Ensure that the Museum complies with its governing document and any relevant legislation or regulations;
- Safeguard the Museum's finances by approving the budget and monitoring the accounts to ensure the achievement of financial objectives;
- Appoint the Director and oversee performance;
- Regularly review the policies for the operation of the Museum as a charity and an accredited museum;
- Manage strategic risks to the organisation, including any conflicts of interest;
- Protect the property and reputation of the Museum.

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Attributes required by Board Members

- Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of the governance framework within which the Museum operates;
- A clear interest in and commitment to the Museum's central purpose to promote the work of Charles Dickens;
- Proven strategic vision;
- Sound, independent judgment and ability to question constructively;
- Integrity;
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team and a willingness to state personal convictions and, equally, to accept a majority decision and be tolerant of the views of other people;
- The time to commit to meetings and Museum activities:
 - preparation for and attendance at four Board meetings a year, normally held in the afternoon or early evening;
 - preparation for and attendance at an annual Away Day;
 - attendance at various events held at the Museum.

In contributing to the work of the Board, effective Board members must use reasonable care, avoid any conflict of interests, make use of their skills and experience in the interests of the Museum and its staff, and be ready to take appropriate advice as necessary.

Further information about the role is contained in the Charity Commission Guide—*The Essential Trustee—What you need to Know*:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

Support for new Board Members

New Board members will be given an induction pack containing useful information about the governance of the Charles Dickens Museum and its current strategic plan and finances. An induction briefing will be arranged with Board colleagues and the Director, and there will be ongoing opportunities to engage with the Museum's day-to-day work.

To apply:

Please send a **CV and up to two sides of A4** explaining how you meet our requirements and why you are interested in joining the Charles Dickens Museum Board, **by Friday 14th May at 12 noon BST**, to:

Dr Cindy Sughrue
Director
Charles Dickens Museum
48-49 Doughty Street
London, WC1N 2LX

Or by email to: cindy.sughrue@dickensmuseum.com

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Cindy Sughrue by email, as above, or telephone 020 7405 2127.