

Could you make a difference to this vital, dynamic charity?

Accessible Arts & Media (AAM) wants to expand its Board of Trustees, to bring in different people with skills and experience to complement our present team. The Trustees provide oversight, scrutiny, support & challenge to help the staff team at AAM ensure its continued success. Trustees help ensure that AAM operates within its budgets and project plans and that it is run in a transparent and fair manner. We're particularly seeking a Treasurer to replace a retiring Trustee, but we'd also welcome a range of other people.

What is Accessible Arts & Media?

We're a small charity, based in Chapelfields, York. We've been delivering inclusive creative learning and wellbeing projects in and around York since 1982. AAM is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Our work's built around the belief that everyone can learn, everyone can be creative, and everyone can play a part in their local community. They just need the right support, and that's where we come in. We've got a vision for a more inclusive society, where everyone gets the chance to shine, and we're helping to make that happen in York.

Our projects include specialist creative sensory activities for people with complex disabilities, dementia and mental ill health; training programmes where learning-disabled adults and young people learn how to be workshop leaders; singing and signing choirs; accessible music-making groups; and creative media programmes that help people tell their stories.

The people who take part in our sessions often face difficulty with everyday activities and can end up feeling isolated and cut off. Taking part in our projects helps them:

- explore and connect with the world around them, in a safe, supportive, fun environment;
- learn new skills that they can transfer to other parts of their lives, including education, training and employment;
- connect with other people, making new friends along the way;
- grow the confidence to have more of a say in the things that matter to them;
- build emotional resilience;



Members of our Hands & Voices Choir

- contribute to their local community through workshops, performances and film commissions;
- feel happy, connected, confident and valued, all of which can have a profound impact on wellbeing.

We're not a campaigning organisation but we've brought inclusion and diversity to the forefront in York for more than 40 years. We're experts in creating a caring environment where everyone's supported to take part in the way that suits them best. It's a space where you can be yourself. And it's a space where people develop the confidence to realise that they have a voice.

One of our volunteers had this to say: *I have volunteered with Accessible Arts and Media for over 3 years now and the people I have met through the charity have really made an impact on my life for the better. They are such positive workers and very understanding of people's needs and each other's. I have gained lifelong skills in communication, and it's given me a lot of reward from being part of the team. I recommend them to anyone wanting to gain skills and be part of great ongoing projects in York.*



Young people in our IMPs (Inclusive Music Projects) group

As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, our projects and activities are more essential than ever.

We know, from talking to the people who take part in our projects, that the past two years have had a big impact on them. We've got an important role to play in supporting their wellbeing as they rebuild their confidence and re-connect with their community.

For further information about our projects and AAM, please explore our website:
www.aamedia.org.uk

Who runs Accessible Arts & Media?

The senior officer is the Creative Director, Rose Kent, and she reports to the Board of Trustees, who are Directors of the limited company. In common with all charities, our Trustees are non-executive volunteers who receive no payment, though travel expenses can be reimbursed subject to prior agreement.

There are profiles of the current Trustees on [Meet the team - Accessible Arts and Media \(aamedia.org.uk\)](http://www.aamedia.org.uk)

What do Trustees do?

Trustees are there to make sure AAM runs smoothly and achieves its goals. Being a Trustee is a legal responsibility. It's also a way to support charities.

There's lots of information about being a Trustee of a Charity in general, including main duties and legal obligations: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do>

Charity Trustees must, legally:

- Act in the charity's best interest,
- Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit,
- Ensure the charity complies with its governing document and the law,
- Manage the charity's resources responsibly,
- Act with reasonable care and skill,
- Ensure that the charity is accountable.

AAM's Trustees bring their own external perspective, drawing on their experience in other fields. They contribute their expertise, knowledge and skills and support the staff team, providing advice and guidance in different ways at different times.

AAM's Trustees' responsibilities include:

- Regular attendance at Board meetings. We usually have five each year & almost always on zoom. Meetings last up to 2 hours and are usually held early evening (e.g. 6pm) but we do try to adjust times to suit Trustees' other commitments.
- Reading all relevant papers and making personal preparation before meetings.
- Ensuring that AAM has balanced budgets in place before each financial year and has sensible financial management & reporting.
- Ensuring that all AAM's activities are consistent with its charitable aims.
- Supporting the Creative Director in major, strategic decision-making.
- Getting to know and supporting, where appropriate, AAM's staff and volunteers, providing advice and guidance when appropriate.
- Attending AAM events from time to time.
- Participating in training related to governance and board development.
- Advocating on behalf of AAM and making connections wherever possible.

At present, three of our Trustees serve on the HR sub-group and three on the Finance Sub-Group. These sub-groups usually meet four times a year, timed to fit in before Board meetings, but both meet more often if needed. These meetings are almost always on zoom. Other sub-groups or working parties are set up from time to time, for specific purposes.

The Trustees elect a Chair and there are also chairs of each sub-group.

We currently have no defined terms for Trustees but are planning to amend our Articles of Association to introduce them. It's likely to be a maximum of two four-year terms, with the option of a third for the chair.

More Information about AAM

- There's lots of information on our website www.aamedia.org.uk
- You can find the Charity Overview of AAM including our annual report and accounts on the [Charity Commission website](#). (search using registered charity number 1072902)

Who are we looking for?

It doesn't matter if you've not been a charity trustee before. What's more important is the skills and experience Trustees bring to the Board. We don't expect you to be knowledgeable about the arts or media – an understanding of issues around disability, mental health or dementia is more important, though not necessarily at a professional level.

It's not essential that our Trustees live in, or particularly near, York. The majority of our meetings now take place on zoom so distance is no object. However, it is important that trustees see some of our work, from time to time, and are able to attend in person occasionally.

We've recently done an audit of the skills and experience which we think are important and where we think we have gaps (either now or we may do in future). We're particularly keen to hear from people who have one or more of the following:

- Lived experience (either personal or through a friend or family member) of learning disability, physical disability, or mental ill-health, or people living with dementia and memory loss,
- Experience of managing budgets of c£250k,
- Understanding of current issues in care & disability including funding,
- Understanding of current issues in health & well-being including funding,
- Digital (its use both internally and for delivery of our work)
- HR / people management.

We are also looking for a Trustee to take on the role of Treasurer. For that role, experience of charity or not-for-profit accounting would be particularly useful. For more information, please see Additional Information Treasurer Role. Because of the

involvement in AAM's finances, the Treasurer would have to have, or be able to obtain, DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance.

Because AAM is a small charity, the Trustees and staff get to know each other and meet up when, for example, Trustees come to concerts and other events. It's a warm and friendly environment, with everyone sharing a commitment to the value of work AAM does. We all learn from each other at different times and in different ways.

We value both work and lived experiences within our Trustee Board and you don't have to be on a Board before. We're committed to developing more diverse representation on our Board and for our Trustees to reflect the community we engage with through our work. We're keen to hear from disabled people, people under 40, men and majority ethnic people who are underrepresented on our Board.

Please note Trustees must be over 18 and must not:

- have been disqualified by law from acting as a trustee,
- have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud),
- be bankrupt, or entering into a formal arrangement (eg an individual voluntary arrangement) with a creditor,
- have been removed, as a company director or charity trustee, because of wrongdoing.

Application Process

If you would like to find out more before applying, please email recruitment@aam.org.uk and one of the Trustees will get in touch.

If you'd like to be considered, please email **recruitment@aam.org.uk by 12th September 2022**. You can tell us about what you could bring to the role of Trustee in your email and you're welcome to add a CV if that helps.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet some of the Trustees (either in person at the AAM Office or on zoom) at a mutually agreed date/time, in late September / early October.