

**TRUSTEE APPLICATION DETAILS**

# Help make the British Schools Museum ​ “the place where learning comes to​ life”

Would you like to play a part in developing an exciting future for a much-loved museum?

Do you want to make use of your talent and energy, with opportunities for personal growth and fulfilment?

Are you interested in making a difference to museum visitors’ lives?

# About British Schools Museum

As we approach our Silver Jubilee year in 2021, the British Schools Museum is looking for new Trustees who can help lay the foundations and build the strategies that will enable us to emerge from this coronavirus environment, vigorously steering the Museum towards a brighter future.

We tell the story of early primary education and the social history of childhood through our flourishing schools programme, rolling exhibitions and special events, all within the unique setting of Victorian school buildings, including the last remaining Monitorial Schoolroom in the world.

The Museum was founded on the skills, energy and enthusiasm of volunteers who transformed their

vision into reality, and it has served us well over the years. To ensure we adapt for modern audiences in a competitive marketplace, we are now looking for Trustees who embody this pioneering spirit, and who are prepared to work as part of a team and help forge a new and exciting future for the Museum.

The roles are voluntary and are not remunerated.

**Vision**

​To be the best at connecting our Heritage and communities

## Mission

The Museum’s mission is to challenge and inform the way people think about “early years’ education and its social impact locally and nationally.”

* **Ideas**​: we use our collection to engage people with issues that are relevant to them.
* **Identity**​: we reflect and celebrate Hitchin and our local communities; we inspire local pride.
* **Impact**:​ we promote wellbeing for people and the planet.

Preserve our unique buildings and collections for future generations so that our communities continue to discover and enjoy the history of learning.

## Values

* *Relevant*​: we engage people with our collection and how it relates to their lives.
* *Open-minded*​: we challenge ourselves and others.
* *Collaborative*​: we build partnerships; we actively involve people.
* *Sustainable*​: we work towards a sustainable world.
* *Pioneering*​: we want to be recognised nationally as a Museum of Learning

## Role description: Trustee

**What is expected of British Schools Museum Trustees?**

Trustees use their skills, expertise and experience to support the Museum, helping us to achieve our strategic aims. Trustees also often learn new skills during their time on the board. Being a Trustee means making decisions that will impact on people’s lives, the future of the Museum and our local community.

**Key expectations of Trustees are to:**

* contribute – help where possible and offer the benefit of their expertise to support the Museum
* attend meetings and other events – take part in discussions and make decisions, prepare fully for meetings by reading papers, listen to other people, challenge sensitively and respect diversity, be fair and open
* act jointly and accept a majority decision – make decisions collectively with the other Trustees and stand by them and respect confidentiality
* have an up-to-date knowledge of the Museum – understand how the Museum works and the environment within which it operates
* take advice – seek and consider professional advice on anything about which the Trustees do not have expertise themselves

**Trustee responsibilities:**

* Ensure that the Museum’s assets (its property, land, collection, people etc) are used towards meeting the charitable objectives.
* Define the values and standards of the Museum, including the mission statement and policies.
* Contribute to the ongoing strategic development of the British Schools Museum. Once the Board has agreed on strategy and policies, it defers responsibility for execution to the executive and assumes a monitoring role, challenging and supporting the Museum’s management team.
* Be responsible, along with the other Trustees, for the success of the Museum: set the strategic aims, ensure that necessary resources are in place to meet them and monitor performance. Review and approve the business plan, budget and programme.
* Ensure transparency and accountability in the Museum’s activities.
* Regularly review and consider the risks to the Museum’s success and future.

**Person Specification:**

It is essential that Trustees should:

* Have the ability to see the bigger picture and think creatively
* Have a commitment to enabling equality and diversity
* Be willing to learn and open to new ideas
* Be able to listen, talk to and get on with other people

It is desirable that trustees have:

* An interest in museums and heritage.
* A strong personal network
* A specialism in one of the areas we have highlighted as needing support (see the FAQs) **Application process FAQs**

**What is the Board and what is its role?**

The Board of Trustees consists of between 4 and 12 people from varied backgrounds who jointly take responsibility for ensuring that the Museum is well-run and that it delivers its charitable aims. Our charitable objects, as defined in our governing document, are:

* 1. to preserve and use a historically important group of buildings in Hitchin,

Hertfordshire known as British Schools.

* 1. to advance education of the public in the history of schooling by:
     1. preserving and enhancing the collections of artefacts relating to the history of elementary education and social history of children.
     2. presenting these buildings and collections as a museum of elementary education and childhood.
     3. delivering a living experience of historical schooldays to all.

**What is our formal governance structure?**

The Hitchin British Schools Trust is a Limited​ Company with charitable status.​ **Who can be a trustee?**

Membership of the Board of Trustees is open to all adults over 16, unless you:

* Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (e.g. fraud).
* Are bankrupt or have entered into a formal arrangement (e.g. an individual voluntary arrangement) with a creditor.
* Have been removed as a company director or charity trustee because of wrongdoing.

The Museum actively encourages applications from those who are traditionally under-represented in such roles and aims to ensure that our organisation reflects our local community and delivers our inclusion agenda. The most desirable qualities in a Trustee are a commitment to the Museum, and the ability to contribute towards the delivery of its aims.

**How long would I need to serve?**

New Trustees are expected to make a commitment to serve 3 years initially. All new Trustees will have a 6-month probationary period.

**How much time does it take up?**

We estimate a minimum time commitment of 15 days per year. The Board currently meets monthly via Google Hangouts. Once we are able, we will revert to our usual schedule of meeting four times a year for formal meetings. In addition, there are other formal and informal events and our AGM. Trustee attendance is also encouraged at volunteer events. In addition to formal meetings, Trustees are encouraged to take a deeper interest in an aspect of the Museum’s workings.

**Are we looking for anything in particular?**

We welcome applications from people with a wide range of skills and experience, and from diverse backgrounds. We have identified some areas where we would like to have help. However, we welcome applications from anyone who feels they have something to give which is not on this list:

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| --- | --- |
| **Finance** | **To oversee the accounting procedures of the Trust, to ensure transparency and to advise the Board in the formulation and monitoring of a finance strategy** |
| **Marketing/PR** | **To assist and advise in a marketing strategy for the British Schools Museum locally and nationally and to act as PR advisor to the Trust** |
| **Digital** | **To advise and assist the Board and staff in the continued development of a major digital presence and to oversee the improvement of the Museum’s IT infrastructure** |
| **Fundraising** | **To advise and assist the Board in setting a fundraising strategy in order to maximise future revenue streams for the continued growth and future development of the British Schools Museum** |

**Can I talk to someone about the roles before I apply?**

We are holding a socially distanced open day on **Tuesday 25 August 2020** **at 1pm** for prospective trustees. This will include a briefing, a tour of the site and an opportunity to meet with staff and trustees. If you are interested in attending this event please fill in your details here: ​<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YCRYG3Y> by ​**Monday 24 August 2020**​**.**

If you have any questions or would like to talk to one of the existing trustees before you apply, please contact **Linda Brandish**, [linda.brandish@gmail.com](mailto:linda.brandish@gmail.com) **or 07881 954724**

**How to apply**

To make an application please complete the form below:

• The application form:​ <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TXQXJ8R>

The closing date for applications is ​**25 August 2020**​. All applicants will be invited for an informal interview with the trustees on **2 September 2020 and will be notified the week before.**

Appointments will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references.