

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR THE ROLE OF TRUSTEE OF FABRICA: SOME BASIC INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY

“Fabrica is like a Tate Turbine Hall for Brighton.”

Thank you for thinking about applying to become a Trustee of Fabrica. The following pages provide some background information about us, about what we are looking for in new Trustees, and how to apply to become one.

We hope you will take a good look at our website www.fabrica.org.uk and visit the gallery if you are not already familiar with it. Opening times during exhibitions are 12pm – 5pm on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 12pm – 7pm on Thursday and 2pm – 5pm on Sunday.

Fabrica is a charitable company, governed by a Board of Trustees. We currently have six Trustees - and are looking to grow to eight or nine.

Fabrica’s aims are to:

- provide opportunities for artists to create new work and develop their artistic practice.
- develop new audiences for contemporary visual art.
- establish and maintain relationships that enable us to do what we do better and to increase our value to the artists, the audiences, communities and partners with whom we work.

The Board

- ensures that Fabrica operates, at all times, within the laws and regulations that apply to charitable companies.
- employs the team of professional staff, who run the organisation on a day to day basis.
- guides and supports the salaried Co-Directors in their leadership of the organisation.
- works together as a creative, resourceful body of volunteers to support the staff in achieving Fabrica’s aims.

Our building

Fabrica’s home is a Grade 2-listed, 18th-century church at the junction of Ship Street and Duke Street, in the centre of Brighton. Brighton & Hove City Council leases the building from Chichester Diocese and we have a management contract to operate it as a gallery, where we show artists’ work and run related, participatory activities.

The gallery is a single, high-ceilinged space with two entrances from the street. The Artist Resource (with its library and on-line access) is in one corner. A balcony (used for storage) runs around three sides of the interior.

Every artist uses the gallery differently. In the past year it has featured a suite of rooms, a shallow pool of water running the length of the nave and for our current show, a temporary wall on to which we are projecting two films by Melanie Manchot.

The Fabrica office occupies the former vestry and the room above it. There is a small kitchen and two toilets, one with a baby-changing facility. The gallery, the ground floor office and toilets are wheelchair accessible but, regrettably, the first floor office is accessible only by stairs.

Our finances

If we shortlist your application to become a Trustee, we will send you a copy of our plan for 2011-15. This formed part of our successful bid to Arts Council England to become part of its National Portfolio from April 2012 - 2015.

Our annual expenditure is in the region of £400k. As a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) we know how much financial support we will receive from the Arts Council for the next three years. Our other main sources of funding are Brighton & Hove City Council, the European Union and earned income.

The Council supports us for our work with our local community (individual residents, schools and community groups and other Brighton-based organisations) and for our contribution to the city's reputation as a vibrant centre for the arts. Support from EU funding programmes which promote collaboration between people and places in European member states has enabled us to become a truly international organisation.

Increasing our earned income is one of our highest priorities as we enter 2012 and we are particularly keen to hear from potential Trustees who can help us to find ways to earn income from our premises, knowledge, reputation and networks. There are no entrance charges to Fabrica and we have no café, bookshop or on-line sales. We earn income, between exhibitions, from hiring out the gallery for parties, meetings and events and we are currently testing items for sale, such as sketchbooks.

We have rigorous systems of budgeting and financial control and maintain a reserves policy, with a view to ensuring that we have sufficient funds to meet our obligations.

The Board is responsible for the sound financial management of the organisation and for ensuring that it is trading solvently. It is also responsible for ensuring that

the organisation complies with its legal responsibilities as employers and as the operators of public premises. Trustees are expected to act at all times in the best interests of the company, declaring any conflicts of interest and performing their duties with care, diligence and skill. A full briefing on legal liabilities will be provided but, in most circumstances, an individual Trustee's financial liability will be limited to £1. We provide Trustees' liability insurance.

Our artists and our audience

At least one exhibition per year is a commission and other artists regularly adapt existing work to our space. We have shown world famous artists such as Martin Parr, Alfredo Jaar, Bill Viola, Anish Kapoor and Janet Cardiff and artists at an earlier stage of their careers, such as Frederic Guerts, Melanie Manchot and John Grade. No two exhibitions at Fabrica are the same. As one visitor said, recently: "Fabrica is like a Tate Turbine Hall for Brighton".

Our programme, which runs from April – December, has consistently attracted 45,000 – 50,000 people per year. In 2011 we are on target to exceed this, thanks to an exceptional turnout (38,500) for Janet Cardiff's *Forty Party Motet* in the spring. Our audiences are local, national and from overseas and of all ages and backgrounds. With the Arts Council's support over the past two years, we have been working to build an older audience for the contemporary visual arts and our research in this field and an experimental programme of activities are beginning to pay off.

Our staff and volunteers

Fabrica has two Co-Directors, who share the role of Chief Executive. Liz Whitehead is Director of Artistic & Audience Development and Lisa Finch is Director of Operations, Finance & Funded Programmes. Lisa moved into this role following the sudden death, in June this year, of our Co-Director Matthew Miller, and we are in the process of establishing a new staff structure.

At full strength, a dozen paid staff fill the equivalent of seven full-time posts. Part-time working has always been a feature of Fabrica. It enables us to employ staff who are practising artists and who have other roles, responsibilities and interests in life, alongside their work for us.

We have a pool of tried and tested freelancers who work with us on a project by project basis, for example, delivering education projects, updating our website or undertaking research.

We depend on the energy and enthusiasm of volunteers in all areas of our work. We currently have more than 40, who give us at least three hours per week and in many cases more. They work in the gallery, with the public, with artists and in the office. Many of our younger volunteers go on to find paid work in the cultural sector.

Our Trustees and what we are looking for

We are looking for two Trustees to join us in December this year. Two of our current Trustees will be standing down in December 2012, so this is the first stage in a continuing process of recruitment. Our current Trustees are:

Phyllida Shaw (Chair), researcher, facilitator and adviser to grant-making trusts

Shirley Chubb (Vice Chair), artist and academic

Krystyna Matyjaskiewicz (Vice Chair), curator and local authority officer

Mary Agnes Covey-Krell, artist and academic, with expertise in new media

Helen Walker, consultant and former civil servant, with expertise in regeneration

David Waters, company director

We are especially interested in hearing from people with expertise in commercial business development, marketing, public and media relations and financial management. Experience of donor development would be a bonus.

You do not need previous experience of serving on a Board or of working for an arts organisation, but an interest in and enjoyment of the contemporary visual arts and a commitment to expanding audiences for the visual arts are essential.

The commitment

We are looking for Trustees who can commit to serving a minimum of two years. Historically we have had no maximum term, but we are likely to introduce this in the coming year.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, we expect Trustees to attend a minimum of three out of four Board meetings in any twelve-month period. Dates are agreed months in advance. The Board meetings take place in Brighton, on a weekday, starting at 4pm or 6pm and last two hours. We aim to have at least two Trustees at the opening night of every exhibition (usually 6pm – 9pm on a Friday). Small, time-limited working groups of Trustees and staff are formed to undertake specific tasks (e.g. to recruit staff, to review an area of our work, or to manage a project).

Excluding the time needed to read papers in advance of Board meetings and travel to meetings, we estimate that Trustees can expect to spend a minimum of seven days on Fabrica business during the course of a year.

Our Trustees are volunteers, but we can reimburse the cost of travel to Board meetings, awaydays and any meetings we ask you to attend on Fabrica's behalf, as well as the cost of B&B accommodation, if you are unable to return home after an evening meeting.

We hope this description answers most of your initial questions. Our website, <http://fabrica.org.uk/> contains a lot of information about the programme and culture of the organisation so please take a good look at it.

Being a Trustee with Fabrica is enjoyable and rewarding and we very much hope you will consider putting in an application.

HOW TO APPLY

In order to assess the applications we receive, we are asking everyone to use the same format. Please write us a letter (there is no lower or upper word limit) with the following information, in the following order:

1. My name and contact details and the best time of day to contact me
2. Why the opportunity to be a Trustee of Fabrica appeals to me
3. My opinion of the strengths and weaknesses of Fabrica's exhibition space
4. Some initial thoughts on how Fabrica might increase its earned income
5. The knowledge, experience and skills I could bring to the Board
6. The name and contact details of two referees

Please email your application to Phyllida Shaw, Chair of Fabrica phyllida.shaw@me.com with a copy to Liz.Whitehead@fabrica.org.uk

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN FABRICA.
WE REALLY APPRECIATE IT.**