



The Life Class at the Royal Female School of Art, 1868

## Candidate Information Pack Trustees

# Letter from the Chair

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Dear Candidate

The Royal Female School of Art Foundation (RFSF) has been assisting students in the arts since 1842. We are a growing charity that annually disburses grants to educational institutions in the Greater London area in order to advance the education of students.

Our mission is to widen access to the arts, design and associated professions by supporting those who might otherwise be unable to start or stay in further and higher education, in Greater London. They may be suffering disadvantage because of financial hardship, cultural barriers, physical or mental disability, or caring responsibilities.

Our Trustees play a pivotal role in setting the strategic direction of our organisation, as well as ensuring we are delivering our best to widen access to arts education in Greater London. We are particularly interested in hearing from those with a Further Education background or Digital Communications. Of course, a passion for art and education is essential!

At the RFSF we recognise the value of diversity in all its forms at all levels of the organisation, including at Board level. We wish to attract people from a broad range of backgrounds, demographics and cultures to steer and inform our work. We are aiming for inclusivity, richness of experience and diversity to ensure a Board of Trustees that reflects the diversity of our society. A strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of our values and we celebrate its role in the creation of an inclusive workplace culture. We actively encourage applications from underrepresented groups from the BAME, LGBT+ or disabled communities who meet the essential job criteria, as part of our commitment to improve the diversity of our team. We value the interview process of all candidates as a way to provide applicants with the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities beyond the initial application stage. All appointments will be made on merit of skill and experience relative to the role.

I do hope you will consider applying for the role and our Foundation Secretary is more than happy to have a conversation before you do so – details of how to reach her can be found at the end of this information pack.

Yours sincerely

Lora De Felice

Chair

# About the Royal Female School of Art Foundation

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## History

For over 175 years RFSa has been supporting artists. It is as relevant now as it was when it was founded in 1842 to teach art to young women, an exceptional record.

After several moves, by 1862 the RFSa had acquired its own premises in Bloomsbury in Queen's Square where the art studio is still being used. The charity retains the freehold of the property, now leased to an educational institution. Unusually for the time, from its beginning the RFSa took art teaching for women seriously: it aimed to find its students paid employment and it enjoyed an excellent reputation.

In 1908 it was absorbed into the Central School of Arts and Crafts by which time the London County Council had already taken over the running of the charitable foundation linked to the Royal Female School of Art which became known as the Royal Female School of Art Foundation.

In 1909 the Board of Education decided that the annual Queen's Scholarship and the William Atkinson Award were to be linked to the Central School of Arts and Crafts as it carried on the work of the RFSa. To this day, the trustees continue to award these prizes to students of Central Saint Martins, the internationally renowned successor to the Central School of Arts and Crafts.

Key changes in the running of the charity began in 1988 when the Charity Commissioners took over its administration and the former Inner London Education Authority was appointed sole trustee. After further changes, the 1998 Scheme allowed for three trustees nominated by educational organisations (the Mary Ward Centre, the Working Men's College and the University of the Arts London (formerly known as the London Institute)) and an additional two 'co-opted' trustees. A further new Scheme in 2012 allowed the charity to make grants to benefit not only female but also male students.

In 2016 the RFSa began the process of becoming a charitable company limited by guarantee, and as part of this process is now governed by new Articles of Association. The new incorporated RFSa was re-registered with the Charity Commission under a new registration number 1169925 (previous Charity No: 1006880). The RFSa Registered Company Number is 10388335. The new governing document allows for 3 'Nominated Trustees' (from Mary Ward Centre, Working Men's College and University of the Arts London) and 5 co-opted Trustees.

## Current activities

The charity's objects are specifically restricted to advancing the education (including social and physical training) of students:

1. Who reside in the Greater London area or study in the Greater London area but reside elsewhere; and
2. Primarily but not exclusively who may suffer disadvantage by reason of pregnancy, childbirth, caring or parenthood, with a preference for education in the subjects of art and design.

## Priorities

To achieve its aims of supporting the education of people residing and/or studying in Greater London, preferably in the subjects of art and design, the Foundation provides financial assistance to educational organisations to benefit individual students. Financial assistance can take the form of:

- grants awarded for bursaries to cover the cost of students' maintenance/ tuition fees and travel expenses;
- grants awarded for the purchase of equipment, tools and books;
- grants to support students (including prospective students) who by reason of pregnancy, childbirth, caring or parenthood suffer disadvantage;
- support for individuals' progression into arts education;
- support for the provision of progression routes into the arts, development of skills, enterprise and professional experience.

Each year the charity disburses around £100,000, to educational organisations, in the form of grants.

# Governance

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The charity has upto eight trustees forming a governing board who are responsible for directing its affairs. The RFSA would ideally like to recruit a trustee with expertise in one or more of the following:

- **Further Education background (priority)**
- Digital communications

Trustees are expected to make a positive and enthusiastic contribution to the work of the charity. This appointment would initially be for a term of up to four years, with the possibility of it being extended beyond this for up to four further years.

There have been significant changes to the regulatory environment for Charities in recent years and the Charity Commission has strengthened its approach to ensuring that Boards of Trustees have sufficient breadth and depth to meet its regulatory criteria. We would expect all candidates to have a commitment to, and understanding of, the importance of adult education and a keen interest in art and design.

The trustees would welcome expressions of interest from those who will be able to apply their professional skills and experience to the work of the charity.

## Commitment and expectations

The trustees meet in order to consider and agree grant applications, to monitor the use of grants and to agree the financial statements, amongst other business. Being a charity with only one part-time employee, the trustees are required to take executive decisions via email between meetings and to authorise payments on behalf of the charity. Trustees may also be required to take decisions relating to the freehold of the property which is owned by the RFSA. The trustees are expected to participate in at least one sub-group to aid in the implementation of the charity's strategic plan.

Meetings are held at least four times a year (March, June, September and December) normally for an afternoon at a location in central London. Meetings may last between 2 and 4 hours. Trustees should ensure they can commit to attending all four meetings, with the summer grant allocation meeting and winter AGM being obligatory.

The time commitment is approximately one day per month.

## Remuneration

This is a voluntary unpaid position, however reasonable out of pocket expenses are paid.

The posts are subject to eligibility checks to ensure that individuals are able to register and act as both a trustee and a company director.

# Trustee Role Description

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## 1. Overall Purpose

The RFSA trustees are responsible for:

- i. the overall governance and strategic direction of the RFSA;
- ii. ensuring that the RFSA's activities meet the charity's purpose and are in accordance with the governing documents, legal and regulatory guidelines.

## 2. Main Responsibilities

The following are the trustees' main responsibilities:

To assume and execute the responsibilities of a company director according to UK law and the ethical standards of the Charity Commission. In particular working with fellow Trustees:

- To ensure that the RFSA functions within the Charity Commission's legal and regulatory framework of the sector and in line with the governing document.
- To uphold the fiduciary duty invested in the position.
- To take appropriate professional advice in all matters where there may be material risk to the charity, or where the Trustees may be in breach of their duties. This course of action will ensure the obligation to exercise their duty of care.
- To determine the overall direction and development of the RFSA, in line with its charitable objectives.
- To ensure the RFSA's funds are prudently invested and that the property is effectively managed since it forms part of the charity's investment portfolio.
- To avoid any personal conflict of interest.

### 3. Main Duties

The trustees' main duties are as follows:

- To ensure the charity complies with legislative and regulatory requirements, and acts within the confines of its governing document.
- To act in the best interest of the charity, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times.
- To maintain sound financial management of the charity's resources, ensuring that expenditure is in line with the RFSA's purpose, and investment activities meet accepted standards and policies.
- To review and amend the reserves and investment policy, the charity's risk register, and other policy documents and guidelines.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the charity and its resources, striving for best practice in good governance.
- To assist in the implementation of the strategic plan.
- To approve and authorise online payments.
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received in the course of trustee's responsibilities to the charity.

### 4. Accountability

The trustees are responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of the charity and are therefore accountable in varying degrees to a variety of stakeholders, including:

- beneficiaries;
- the Privy Purse Charitable Trust;
- the Charity Commission;
- Companies House (as company directors).



## 5. Skills and Expertise

- Ability to act in the best interests of the charity at all times.
- Ability to fulfill and undertake the trustee responsibilities and duties set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 above.
- The individual must be eligible to be a trustee and a company director at all times and must not be disqualified.
- Ability to analyse and assess grant applications, monitoring reports and grant claims.
- Applications are particularly sought from individuals with one or more of the following backgrounds:
  - Further Education
  - Digital communications
  - Press and PR

## 6. Personal Attributes

- Willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Good, independent judgment.
- Honesty and integrity.
- Willingness to contribute at meetings in an open and sensitive manner.
- Willingness to contribute to the implementation of the strategic plan in an active manner.
- Willingness to act as a member of a team as a trustee.
- Responsible person who understands and accepts the legal duties and responsibilities of trusteeship