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Brief for the position of Trustee

Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society Ltd (The Poly) 2023

The RCPS Ltd (The Poly) is inviting applications to join its Board. We are seeking people with the experience, knowledge and commitment to support our existing work and to ensure our Board represents the diversity of the communities we serve. We've been encouraging innovation and culture for 190 years and would like to expand our Board with trustees who can bring core skills, experience and fresh ideas to support our manager and staff team as we continue to rebuild our programme, our audiences and upgrade our building.

We are a registered charity promoting engagement in the arts, sciences and Cornish history through film, live events, exhibitions, lectures and workshops. The Poly's roots are in artistic and technological innovation and local industry.

Based in an iconic Grade II listed building on Falmouth's high street – in the heart of the community – we are the proud guardian of locally, nationally and internationally significant collections of heritage archives and art works by Henry Scott Tuke (1858-1929).

Within Cornwall we are uniquely placed to foster creative connections between heritage, art and science to support innovation, with the possibility of engaging with a wide range of constituents and partnerships, from children and young people, to locally-based HE providers and businesses.

Our Values

- Connecting heritage, art and science
- Supporting innovation
- Community-centred
- Environmentally and socially responsible

Our Vision

To be a place where everyone feels welcome to be entertained, engage with culture, and be creative

Our Mission

As a key cultural and community hub in Cornwall, to provide inspiring, inclusive and innovative entertainment, learning and development opportunities across the arts, sciences and history

Governance and Board of Trustees

The work of the organisation is delivered by a small but dedicated staff team, working with a larger group of volunteers, and governed by a Board of Trustees, which provides strategic direction and support to staff. We are looking to appoint up to four new trustees including, the role of Treasurer to the Board. The Board of Trustees meets every two months and has a number of sub-committees (finance, HR, programme, marketing & fundraising). To provide effective governance it is important that our Board reflects the range of skills and experience required to support the needs of our small but multi-faceted organisation.

Board members are both directors and trustees of RCPS Ltd, a charitable company limited by guarantee, and they are elected for a three year term. The original Polytechnic Society, which was founded in 1833 and given Royal Patronage in 1835, continues in existence as a subsidiary charity. Trustees of RCPS Ltd are the only members of the subsidiary charity, which retains ownership of the main building, most of the investments and historic assets such as the Tuke Collection which is cared for and housed by agreement at Falmouth Art Gallery.

What are we looking for?

We need Trustees who are passionate about our work and who have a strength or knowledge in one or more of the following areas:

- Accountancy or financial management
- Building or property management
- Fundraising
- Digital media technologies
- Science and technology

We welcome applications from young people and individuals with diverse backgrounds.

What does it involve?

Being a trustee involves attending and contributing to Board meetings, and by agreement joining a committee or sub-group, being prepared to engage in any follow up work, taking part in an annual business planning process, as well as generally supporting The Poly both externally and by attending our events. Trustees must: Commit to the vision, mission and values of RCPS Ltd, adhere to its code of conduct and the legal duties and responsibilities of the trustee role, contribute their skills and expertise fully to the Board's collective decision-making and be an advocate for RCPS Ltd.

Being a Trustee is a voluntary role, however if necessary your expenses will be covered in order to support your work on The Poly's behalf. New Trustees will be offered mentoring if appropriate, so while previous experience as a Trustee is desirable it is not essential. Younger Trustees may be offered a one-year appointment if this provides them with greater flexibility, however, the role is not recommended for full-time students.

- Trustees, by law, must be at least 18 years old
- Trustees must be members of the Poly from the point of submitting their nomination
- New trustees can be coopted by the Board, but they are formally elected at our Annual General Meeting on 27th September 2023

How to apply

Please email the following information to Ginny Button, Chair of the Trustees at ginny@thepoly.org: Provide a couple of paragraphs (max. 500 words) explaining how your experience, knowledge and skills might match those we are seeking, and attach a short version of your CV.

Based on your application you will be invited to an informal meeting (in person or via Zoom). If you have any questions, or would like an informal conversation with the Chair about becoming a trustee, please let us know either by email ginny@thepoly.org or by phone: 01326 319461 (10am-5pm).

Treasurer to the Board: Role Description

While financial matters are the responsibility of all trustees, the primary role of the Treasurer is to monitor the financial administration of the charity and reporting to the Board of trustees, in compliance with the governing document. The Treasurer will oversee the financial affairs of the organisation and ensure they are legal, constitutional and within accepted accounting practice. This is a key role in the effective governance of the charity.

We would like to appoint a Treasurer able to fulfil the job description as described, however, if you have financial or accounting competencies and would like to support our work in some way we would be pleased to hear from you.

Specifically, the role of The Poly's Treasurer to the Board includes:

- Chairing The Poly's Finance Committee
- Ensuring the charity keeps proper accounts and financial records
- Ensuring that the charity has robust and effective financial controls and procedures
- Reviewing financial performance (Finance Committee reports at Board meetings)
- Reminding fellow committee/board members of their financial obligations and taking a lead in interpreting financial data to them
- Overseeing the production of an annual budget and proposing its adoption at the last meeting of the previous financial year.
- Presenting budgets, internal management accounts and annual financial statements to the Board Appraising the financial viability of plans, proposals and feasibility studies.
- Liaising with staff and with the charity's independent examiner
- Liaising with the charity's bank, and acting as a counter signatory on cheques and applications to funders
- Overseeing financial risk-management
- Leading on policies for finance and investment and liaising with the charity's investment advisors
- Liaising with the charity's insurance brokers and insurers and ensuring adequate insurance is in place at all times
- Monitoring and advising on the financial viability of the charity, including the financial implications of the charity's strategic plan