



# Recruitment **Board of Trustees**



[www.ruralarts.org](http://www.ruralarts.org)

# Welcome from the Board of Trustees

Hello, and thank you for your interest in joining [Rural Arts](#).

Rural Arts is a brilliant organisation, bringing creativity to communities across 3,500 square miles – a geography eight times the size of Greater Manchester.

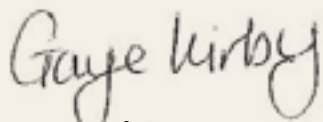
We're also unique, as the only [Arts Council England annually funded organisation](#) in North Yorkshire to work across the whole county and across all disciplines.

As we celebrated our 30th Anniversary in 2023, Rural Arts is more vital than ever, and by pursuing our vision and practising our values, we will continue to play our part in the cultural, social and economic wellbeing and future of our region and industry.

We hope this pack gives you all the information you need. If you have any questions, please email our CEO Ian Read ([ian@ruralarts.org](mailto:ian@ruralarts.org)) or call 01845 526 536.

We look forward to receiving your application, which we're asking you to submit by 09.00am on 24th May.

Best wishes,



**Gaye Kirby**

Chair of the Board of Trustees





# Rural Arts

Rural Arts is a registered charity that delivers inspiring and inclusive creative opportunities that enrich lives and connect communities. Working across 3,500 square miles of England's largest county, our vision is creativity at the heart of every community in North Yorkshire.

We provide over 400 events and activities each year at [The Courthouse](#), North Yorkshire's only professionally-run, cross-discipline arts centre, which is also home to an award-winning café, shop and rooms to hire.

We programme [70 professional performances](#) per year in rural venues and lead a range of [wellbeing and skills programmes](#) to support isolated and vulnerable people. A significant proportion of this is made possible by our strong relationships and collaborative working across the county, particularly via [North Yorkshire Together](#), our strategic partnership with fellow county-wide charities North Yorkshire Sport and North Yorkshire Youth.

Rural Arts was founded in 1993 and is an [Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation](#). Rural Arts has received a further three years of funding from the Arts Council in support of their Let's Create strategy.





*Left: A view across the North York Moors National Park. Top right: Whitby, a historic seaside town in the eastern district of Scarborough. Bottom right: The town of Skipton in the western district of Craven.*

# North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire is England's largest county, spanning over 3,500 square miles – that's eight times the size of Greater Manchester. 85% of this area is classified as 'super sparse' due to its intense rurality and low population density.

The county is home to stunning scenery, incredible artists, and very friendly folk. It also faces significant and unique challenges: a ['digital deficit'](#), an older population double the national average and three of England's most deprived wards.

While 78% of people in North Yorkshire live rurally – four times the national average – North Yorkshire is home to a number of market towns and is easily accessible from towns and cities in neighbouring counties. The county is undergoing an exciting period of change, including [Local Government Reorganisation](#) and the potential for future devolution. You can find out more about North Yorkshire [here](#).

Rural Arts has its base in The Courthouse; a Grade II Listed Building in the market town of Thirsk. [Thirsk](#) is 15 minutes on the train from York and around a 30-minute drive from other towns such as Middlesbrough. The Courthouse is a short walk/cycle from Thirsk train station.

We are adopting a blended approach to remote working, whereby staff whose roles can be completed outside the office are able to balance their time between working from home and at The Courthouse. All roles are required to spend at least half of their working time in The Courthouse or on site at activities across the county.



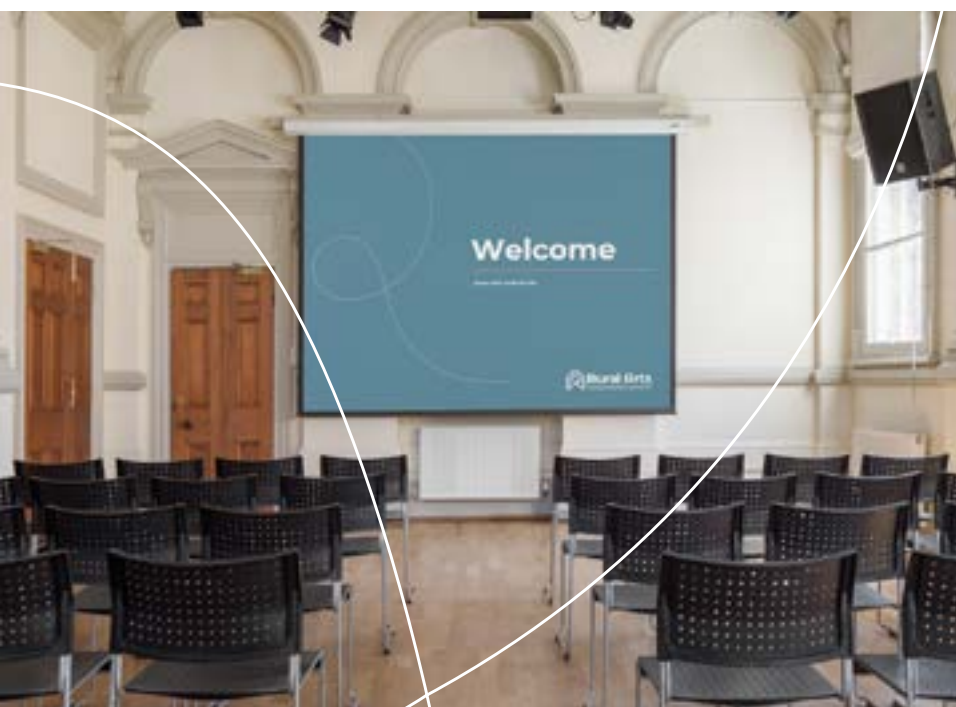
# The Role of A Trustee

## The role of a Trustee will have responsibility for:

Trustees are integral to making sure charities run smoothly and achieve their goals. Being a Trustee is a legal responsibility as well as a great way to support a cause you're passionate about.

For more general information about being a Trustee, click [here](#). You will also receive a more comprehensive list of roles and responsibilities before joining as a Trustee.

Trustees at Rural Arts serve a term of three years. They may be re-appointed for a second term of up to three years. During the course of their term, trustees are invited to take on specific roles on the Board, which currently include Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer, and Board Champions for the four ACE Investment Principles. Additionally, trustees are also expected to be a member of a sub-committee of the Board. Our sub-committees are: Finance; Artistic Planning; and Personnel & Succession Planning.





As a Trustee, legally you must:

- Act in the charities 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

When you join the Board of Trustees, you will be registered with the Charity Commission as Trustee. Rural Arts is also a company limited by guarantee so you will also be registered as a Director of the Company with Companies House.

As a Trustee, in general you will:

- Bring an external perspective
- Contribute your expertise, perspective, knowledge and skills
- Support the staff team, provide advice and guidance where appropriate
- Assess situations affecting the charity both internally and externally, and support the CEO to make strategic decisions
- Act as an ambassador for Rural Arts, promoting our work where you can and making connections to further our success

- Attend events, performances and workshops, visit our café and shop etc. where possible
- Attend and participate in quarterly Board meetings (January, April, July, October) and emergency meetings where appropriate
- Adhere to Rural Arts' policies and procedures
- Celebrate and champion diversity in all its forms

# Who We're Looking For

We are looking to appoint up to four new trustees who are enthusiastic and committed, and who want to contribute to the future of our charity.

We don't expect you to be knowledgeable about the arts but we do think it's important you support what we do.

We hope to have these new trustees in post on the Board by spring 2024, with an induction process commencing in July 2024. We expect you to commit to attending four 2.5 hour board meetings each year, and be prepared to provide on average 2 hours of other support to the charity each month. In addition, we expect to hold at least one away day for trustees each year.

Ultimately, we want to know why you'd be great at this role, and we don't mind how you share this with us.

This looks different for each Trustee: it could be providing some advice over the telephone, preparing for an upcoming meeting, or attending an event or exhibition.

We are open to hearing from applicants who would not consistently attend Board meetings physically, but we do think it's important that at some time you're able to visit in person to understand the communities we work in and the way we do things.

Following a skills audit of current Trustees, we have outlined a number of areas in which we could strengthen the support the Trustees provide to Rural Arts.







We are looking to appoint up to four new trustees who are enthusiastic and committed, and who want to contribute to the future of our charity. We don't expect you to be knowledgeable about the arts, but we do think it's important you support what we do. To complement our current board members, we are particularly interested to hear from people who have experience (professional, personal or voluntary) in the following areas:

**HR/Personnel:** We have a team of 16 staff, supported by 6 volunteers, and would welcome someone at Board level who can help us ensure we continue to develop our people so that they can best utilise their skills, talents, knowledge and experience to maximise the outcomes for our audiences and participants. We would also like this person to join to the Personnel and Succession Planning sub-committee to help with our medium to long-term planning.

**Environmental Sustainability:** From our home at The Courthouse in Thirsk, to the multiple venues in which we work, we want to lead the way in sustainable practice and build this key principle into all aspects of our work. We are looking for someone to join the board who can be a strong advocate for environmental sustainability, help us to take opportunities to be greener and challenge us when we're not doing enough to reduce our environmental impact.

**Artistic Programming:** We want to ensure our work is of the highest quality and relevant and engaging for our communities. To that end, we're keen to have a member of the Board who understands this ambition, either from a producer or audience/participant perspective, and can help challenge us produce a diverse programme that engages new audiences and is highly rated by audiences, participants and peers.

**Marketing and/or Fundraising:** Our work is diverse and delivered right across North Yorkshire, so engaging with audiences and participants through effective marketing and securing funding from a range of organisations to support this delivery is key. We would welcome hearing from anyone that has skills and knowledge in either or both areas which they can bring to the board to inform the way we think about audience development and financial resilience.

We hope to have these new trustees in post on the Board by autumn 2024, with an induction process commencing in June 2024.



# What we can offer

Being a Trustee is a voluntary role, but that doesn't mean you don't get anything out of it.

It can give you personal satisfaction, deepen your interest in or understanding of the arts and even complement your wider career / life ambitions or aspirations.

For Trustees who require it, we can reimburse travel costs. Trustees also benefit from exclusive invitations to events and activities and participate in team-wide training and development opportunities.

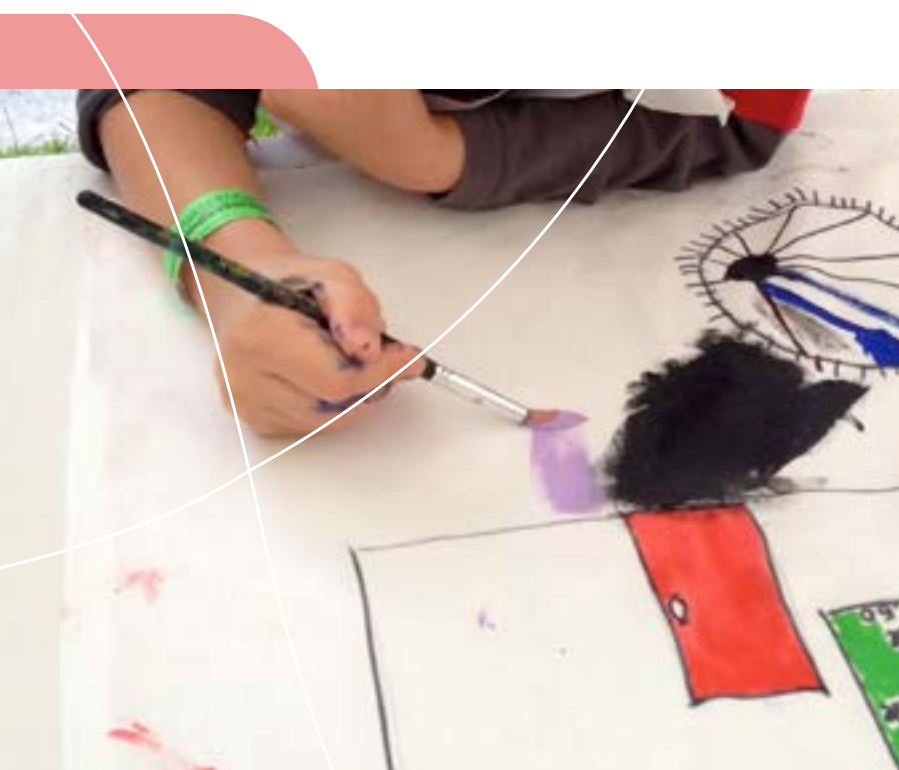
## Expressing interest

We're really excited that you want to join us.

To get to know more about you, we'd be grateful if you could share the following with us via email:

- The reasons you'd like to be a Trustee for Rural Arts
- What you think you'd bring to the Board of Trustees
- Up to one additional document or Link, this could be your CV, business website, portfolio etc.

We'd also encourage you to complete our Equal Opportunities monitoring form by clicking [here](#).





If you have any questions, or need to submit your application in another way, please contact our **CEO Ian Read** ([ian@ruralarts.org](mailto:ian@ruralarts.org)) or **01845 526 536**.

Recruitment  
Rural Arts  
The Old Courthouse  
4 Westgate  
Thirsk  
YO7 1QS

Deadline: **9:00am** on **24th May 2024**

## What happens next?

We recognise how much time and effort goes into crafting and submitting an application, so we'll review each with the same care and attention. We do this by anonymising applications and scoring them using a set of guiding principles. These processes also help us to avoid bias.

We plan to invite people who we feel would make a strong addition to the Board to an informal interview with the Chair, CEO and one of our current trustees. We have scheduled this to take place on week commencing 10th June 2024 at The Courthouse in Thirsk, but an online option will also be available.

You may then be invited to attend a Board Meeting as an Observer, before officially joining the Board as a Trustee.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to hearing from you.

# Championing Diversity

**Rural Arts strives to champion diversity in all its forms.**

In this call out, we are particularly keen to hear from individuals currently underrepresented in the creative and cultural sectors. This includes, but is not limited to people of global majority\*, people from traveller communities, disabled people, LGBT+ people and young people between the ages of 18-25 years.

\*This includes, but is not limited to, people of Black Caribbean, Black African, South Asian, East Asian, South East Asian, Middle Eastern, Arab, Latinx, Jewish, Romany and Irish Traveller heritage.

People from these groups are currently under-represented in the arts nationwide, and Rural Arts is committed to challenging and changing this.

We are also particularly keen to hear from people who have lived experience of or affinity with rurality, rural isolation and/or the work we do to enrich lives and connect communities.

We are recruiting for potential, so learning in the role is expected and training opportunities will be offered where beneficial to fulfill the role.

## Accessibility

If you require this or any further information in an alternative format, please email [ian@ruralarts.org](mailto:ian@ruralarts.org).

You are encouraged to share any access requirements you may have for interviews in a covering note your application.





Enriching Lives, Connecting Communities

[www.ruralarts.org](http://www.ruralarts.org)