

UP Projects Trustee Board Members

Description of the role and person specification



Custom House is Our House, Jessie Brennan, 2019. Image: Thierry Bal

About UP Projects

UP Projects curates and commissions public art. The organisation was founded in 2002 by Emma Underhill, with a mission to support artists to make new work that has social relevance, engages communities, encourages learning and enriches the public sphere.

We work collaboratively with artists, communities and partners to create extraordinary projects. Our outlook is international, activating spaces across the globe and in the digital domain. Our work explores the multitude of ways in which people can encounter and connect with contemporary art in unexpected places.

UP Projects reaches millions of people through ambitious public commissions by a diverse selection of artists, informal learning activities, artist-led community engagement and events.

We believe art and artists play a vital role in stimulating debate, shaping our environment, encouraging participation, and effecting social change. UP Projects is therefore committed to nurturing artists' and curators' socially-engaged practice through our learning and development programmes as well as through our projects.



Still from The Terrarium (2020), VR, duration variable (feat. ecoLogicStudio and Graham Fitkin). Courtesy of UBIK Productions.

We work with a broad range of public and private sector partners including major public bodies such as the Greater London Authority, local authorities and government ministerial departments, cultural institutions including Barbican Centre, Wellcome Collection, Touchstones Rochdale and Flat Time House, corporations such as Crossrail and London Legacy Development Corporation, cultural festivals including Art Night London and Creative Folkestone Triennial, and education faculties such as Queen Mary University and Kings College London. We support our partners to be bold and innovative, bringing a breadth of experience and skills covering strategy writing, public art commissioning, digital commissioning, artist selection processes, community engagement, evaluation, and public event programming.

UP Projects receives regular funding from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). The organisation achieves a mixed income generation model including project related funding from Public Funders, Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship, individual donors and earned income. The organisation became a charity in 2017 with charity number 1170960. It is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 4971057.

Our Core Values

Artistic Excellence - UP Projects deliver artistic work and cultural experiences that represent the height of ambition, talent and skill.

Innovation - UP Projects provide an experimental platform for commissioning that challenges convention, questions our approach, supports risk taking and tests new ideas.

Relevance - UP Projects are responsive to contemporary life and the diversity of the UK today; we consider social, political, geographical and historical contexts.

Openness - We are open to collaboration, and to making our work as accessible as possible to people: conceptually, physically, geographically, considering disability and barriers to access.

Learning to Learn - We take a collaborative and non-hierarchical approach to learning for all.

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion

We want to create and sustain a productive, diverse and inclusive working environment. We expect everyone who works with us to champion this ambition and embed it in their day-to-day work and we monitor it through our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. UP Projects recognises that diversity and inclusion is critical to the success of our organisation and that it is essential that the organisation's team is representative of the diverse communities that we serve. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds and communities, and are particularly interested in receiving applications from people currently underrepresented within our organisation.



Newham Trackside Wall by Sonia Boyce, 2021. Image by Benedict Johnson

Who are the charity's Trustees?

The Charities Act 1993 defines charity Trustees as those responsible under the charity's governing document for controlling the administration and management of the charity. This is the case regardless of the terminology used to describe the role. At UP Projects, the charity Trustees are the board of directors of the organisation, known as The Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees comprises:

- The Chair of Board of Trustees
- The Vice Chair
- Up to eight appointed Trustees including the Founding Director

The role of the board of Trustees

At its simplest, the role of the board is to have responsibility for the governance, Management and strategic direction of UP Projects, making sure that its activities are charitable and for the public benefit. The trustee board has a responsibility to always act in the best interests of UP Projects, exercising the same standard of duty of care that a prudent person would apply if looking after the affairs of someone for whom they have responsibility. The board of trustees must act as a group and not as individuals.

Duties of a Trustee

The duties of a Trustee are to:

- Ensure that UP Projects complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Ensure that UP Projects applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects. For example, it must not spend money on activities which are not included in the objects, however worthwhile they may be.
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving firm strategic direction, approving policy, goals, targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- Safeguard the good name and values of UP Projects.
- Ensure the financial stability of UP Projects.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee uses any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions, and to support the Executive team in achieving their goals and targets. This may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

Minimum time commitment

Trustees are required to attend an induction session at UP Projects prior to their first board meeting. Trustees are required to attend all board meetings:

- Board meetings are held four times a year. Two meetings take place online and two in person and at different times in the day

(i.e. alternate within working hours, lunchtime, evening) to support accessibility.

- One meeting each year is allotted to strategic planning and is incorporated into an “Away Day” which can last either half a day or a whole day depending on the location. The other three meetings last approximately two hours.
- Papers are distributed one week in advance of meetings.
- Trustees are asked to join one of four board Steering Panels, each of which meets four times a year, usually online, for approximately one hour, during normal office hours.
- Trustees are invited to attend UP Projects’ events and launches and represent the organisation at industry events when appropriate.
- This is an unpaid role. Trustees can claim out of pocket expenses incurred in travelling to meetings.



The Floating Cinema, Extra-International, Open Air Weekender, King's Cross. Image: Hydar Dewachi

Board terms

UP Projects’ Trustees and Chair are appointed for a three-year term and are eligible for re-appointment for two additional three-year terms.

Person specification

Each Trustee must have:

- A commitment to the mission, vision and values of UP Projects
- A willingness and capacity to meet the minimum time requirement
- Integrity
- An ability to think creatively and strategically
- Good, independent judgement
- An interest in contributing towards the creation of an inclusive organisation
- A willingness to learn, understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship (training will be provided during the induction when necessary)
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and to take decisions for the good of UP Projects

We are aiming to recruit new Trustees to fill one or more of the following skills gaps:

- Artistic Direction and international art networks
- Fundraising
- Finance Strategy/Business modelling
- Diverse audience development
- HR policy, safeguarding and EDI
- Environmental sustainability
- Data and technology

Essential information

- This is a voluntary role
- Time commitment: Four board meetings a year, two online and two in person (in different locations). Additionally, Trustees are encouraged to join at least one of four Board Steering Panels which involves attending up to four online meetings per year plus ad hoc advice and discussion when needed. This role requires a minimum of 4-6 hours per month.
- Closing date: 31 October 2021, Midnight

How to apply

Please send us your CV, biography or equivalent, along with a short cover letter that summarises your interest in the Trustee role at UP Projects and the skills and experience you would bring to the organisation. We are also keen to hear how you match the person specification outlined above.

Applications can be submitted in written form or as a video file. Please send them by email to tamsin@upprojects.com no later than 31 October 2021, midnight.

Interviews will be held **online** on Thursday 18 November 2021.