Trustee Recruitment Pack

Tonic industry event, 2023. Photo by Sally Faith Photography

Tonic is expanding and we are recruiting for several new trustees to join our board. Now in its 14th year, Tonic is an established charity which has had a significant impact across arts and culture over the last decade.

Looking to the future, Tonic has good cause to be optimistic about what comes next for us, and the role we can play in supporting the sector through the coming years. We are in the process of widening our remit and focus and have ambitious plans for our next steps. We are seeking trustees who will be energised by our vision for the future and who will be committed to supporting our team to achieve it.

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Tonic Changemakers session, 2024. Photo by Tom Lovatt

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1. Our Work to Date

Since 2011, Tonic has enabled the arts and cultural sector to achieve greater equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Through a broad programme of cross-sector projects, one-to-one training and consultancy, industry-facing events, and publishing of books and resources, we've consistently been at the forefront of EDI work within arts and culture.

Our work has been ground-breaking and highly original, creating templates for changemaking which have generated genuine, tangible shifts and which have been widely emulated by others. Always practical and collegiate, our approach has led to embedded, multi-year relationships with some of the country's biggest institutions such as the National Theatre, Royal Opera House, and Sadler's Wells.

We also work broadly across the arts ecology and, having delivered work to hundreds of organisations, our impact can be felt in galleries, museums, libraries, schools, universities, community arts centres, theatres, dance houses and concert halls across the UK and in Europe.

Over the last five years the pandemic - and the upheaval it precipitated - required Tonic to alter its focus, structure and working methods. This was a challenge we responded to extremely effectively, meeting it with courage, creativity and enterprise.

Tonic industry leaders event, 2018. Photo by Stephen Wright

Looking to the Future

Tonic's strategy for the 2025-28 period sees us expand our focus. Going forward we will also **"support the workforce of the arts and cultural sector – its leaders, artists, technicians, administrators, emerging talent and volunteers - to be more diverse, resilient and adaptable"**. This is a broadening of our remit to reflect our growing ambition. It also responds to the fact that resilience and adaptability (as well as a diverse workforce) are the qualities needed if the sector is to effectively reimagine itself and be one that thrives in the coming years.

Tonic's work has always had a clear social agenda: we believe that arts and creativity underpin happy, healthy societies, and that having access to them enriches people's lives. Consequently, our mission is to support the arts and cultural sector to be robust, resilient and accessible to as many people as possible. The arts and cultural sector makes a vital contribution to the confidence, economic vitality, and sense of joy within our society. Our work strengthens and enhances this.

In our current social and political context, Tonic feels the role of art and culture has never been more important. At a time of increasing division, the arts foster empathy; in an age of technological alienation, they create human connection; as we face unprecedented challenges, they teach creative thinking and adaptability.

But the arts and cultural sector, besieged by years of difficulty, is fatigued. There has been a lot of inwardness in recent years, largely due to the survival tactics necessitated by the pandemic.

Tonic sees its role as helping the sector raise its eyes upwards and onwards; to find new ways of doing things and to be thoughtful and proactive about the kind of future it wants to design for itself. Tonic is a convenor, with longstanding connections right across the sector. We have a track record as drivers of innovation and enablers of the spread of good ideas.

In the coming years we plan to expand our operation into other areas where we see a growing need for work like ours, for example film and television. We will continue to up the ante by driving those conversations that are vital to the sector's regeneration, inspiring confidence, creativity, and a renewed positivity.

Tonic industry event, 2023. Photo by Sally Faith Photography

Tonic as an Organisation

Tonic is led by Founder and Director, Lucy Kerbel. We have a core team of eight staff who work a combination of full and part-time, either from Tonic's office in Herne Hill, London or remotely from across the UK. Our board of trustees is small and engaged. The Chair, Sarah Holmes joined Tonic in summer 2024.

As a charity, Tonic takes an entrepreneurial approach to our financial model. We generate the vast majority of our income ourselves, meaning we are not reliant on grant funding, either to cover core costs or to underpin projects. Being financially autonomous has contributed significantly to our longevity as an organisation and gives us the freedom to pursue those lines of work which we feel will enable us to deliver our charitable objectives in the most impactful way.

The Trustee Role

Tonic is keen to hear from potential Trustees who feel excited by our vision for the future and who have the expertise and capacity to play an active role in achieving it. We are not necessarily expecting applicants to have previous board or charity governance experience although they should have a commitment to and passion for arts and culture.

The Trustee role is as follows:

Responsibilities

The Trustee, in partnership with the Director and the Chair of the Board, will guide the strategic development of the charity.

We are not expecting individual Trustees to contribute to or have a track record in all the areas outlined below. But we are looking to build a group of people who, between them, can bring their skill and experience to cover the following:

Strategy and planning

- Monitoring and oversight of the implementation of strategic planning
- Scrutinising budgets to ensure financial resilience
- Review of major risks and associated opportunities to ensure that Tonic is in a place to take advantage of opportunities and manage and mitigate risks
- Sensitively encourage positive change and risk-taking where appropriate
- Provide leadership and support to the staff and be accessible and available to Tonic outside of Board and subgroup meetings
- Engage with the inclusive, cohesive, and collaborative nature of the board culture ensuring clarity of purpose, accountability, effectiveness and respect of others' views

Board meetings

- Bring to the meetings your opinion, expertise and enthusiasm for Tonic
- Report to meetings on specific areas/subgroups that have been designated to you because of your expertise and interests
- Bring to the meetings information on best practices from your contacts both within and outside of the cultural sector

Governance

- Work with other Trustees and the Director to further the growth and successful achievement of Tonic's charitable objectives

- Work with the Board to ensure the Board of Trustees fulfils its statutory and professional responsibilities for the governance of the Charity, and that Tonic acts in accordance with regulatory, Charity Commission and financial reporting requirements
- Review and ensure the governance of the Charity is compliant and suitable for its needs

Support for the Tonic Staff

- In consultation with the Director and the Chair of the Board, identify ways you as Trustee can provide practical and emotional support to staff, alongside being a sounding board for ideas and needs for the organisation
- Where possible and as appropriate, be available to Tonic outside of Board and subgroup meetings
- Ensure that the staff have the opportunity for professional development and appropriate professional support
- Ensure safe working and wellbeing are in place for all in Tonic employment

Advocacy

- Advocate for Tonic externally, building the profile of its brand and helping to establish and strengthen opportunities
- Make the most of relevant professional and/or personal networks to advance the interests of Tonic
- Represent Tonic at its key events

These tasks are indicative only and not exhaustive. Trustees may be expected to perform reasonable additional duties.

Tonic industry event, 2023. Photo by Sally Faith Photography

Person Specification

All Trustees are expected to be passionate about Tonic's mission and knowledgeable about the landscape in which Tonic operates.

Essential

- Commitment to Tonic's mission and values and a willingness to devote time to carry out the responsibilities of the role
- Self-aware, emotionally intelligent, strong interpersonal and diplomatic skills
- Ability to think creatively in the context of Tonic, the arts and culture sector and wider society
- Strategic and forward-looking thinking
- Integrity and an ability to exercise fair judgement
- Ability to support, challenge and act as a sounding board to the organisation
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties entailed in Trusteeship and charity governance
- Awareness of and commitment to high principles and standards of charitable practice, always considering the reputation of Tonic

Desirable

- Experience of EDI in sectors or industries other than arts and culture
- Experience of working within business and commercial sectors on business growth
- Experience of being able to provoke and challenge constructively
- Connections to networks that may be advantageous to Tonic

We are particularly to hear from applicants with expertise in the following areas:

- Business, innovation and commercial thinking
- Data and measuring impact
- PR, marketing and communications

Tonic Participate Workshop, 2024. Photo by Justin Slee

Further Details

Start date: Spring 2025

Term: Trustees serve for a maximum term of five years, after which they may be eligible for re-appointment.

Location: Trustees meet in London and occasionally online. Trustees must be able to travel to London for the Board commitments.

Time commitment:

- A year-round connection to, and awareness of, the charity and its work
- Four Board meetings per year (generally 2 - 2.5 hours each), plus specific subcommittee meetings. Annual board away-day
- Un-specified time spent in support and guidance of identified specific delivery aspects of the charity
- Attendance at Tonic events

Remuneration: The role of a Trustee is not accompanied by any financial remuneration, although certain expenses may be claimed, in line with guidance provided by the Charity Commission.

Tonic Awards 2019. Photo by Stephen Wright

How to Apply

Applications should consist of:

- **Covering letter** outlining why you are interested in applying to be a Trustee
- **CV**

Please also complete an **Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**. The form can be found here.

Applications should be submitted by **Wednesday 30th April at 09.00am** via email to info@tonictheatre.co.uk with the subject header TRUSTEE APPLICATION.

If the application formats that we are providing don't work for you, please let us know by contacting us at info@tonictheatre.co.uk.

If you have any questions, or would welcome an informal conversation with Tonic's Chair Sarah Holmes about the role to help you decide on whether to apply, please email our Office Coordinator, Sally Johnson, sally@tonictheatre.co.uk and she will be happy to arrange this.

Tonic training session, 2024. Photo by Justin Slee