

Board Chair

Role Profile and Person Specification

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1. Board Chair: Role Summary

- **Role Title:** TRACS Board Chair
- **Member of/elected by:** TRACS Board of Trustees
- **Reports to:** TRACS Board of Trustees
- **Main staff contacts:** TRACS Chief Executive Officer
- **Term of Office:** Three years (with re-election up to 2 further times)
- **Position:** Voluntary (unpaid); expenses

TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland)

Registered Office: Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR
 Scottish Charity No. SC043009 VAT Registration No. 269 2679 51



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2. About TRACS

TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland) is a co-operative network which champions our shared traditions of music, song, storytelling, dance, crafts, customs and indigenous languages.

Bringing together two artform forums - Traditional Music Forum of Scotland (TMFS) and the Scottish Storytelling Forum (SSF), alongside networks for traditional dance and crafts - TRACS exists to empower communities across Scotland to discover, develop and practise their unique traditional arts and cultural heritage as part of our everyday life.

As an accredited NGO advisor to UNESCO on Intangible Cultural Heritage, we celebrate the local distinctiveness of Scotland's places: our shared living heritage.

Key areas of work include: Intangible Cultural Heritage, the annual Scottish International Storytelling Festival, Forums' annual programmes, The People's Parish, the Traditional Arts Mentoring programme, and the emerging Scottish Traditional Arts Archive.

TRACS comprises a non-executive Board of Charity Trustees (minimum 3, maximum 14) and a team of 10 employees.

On a day-to-day basis, the ultimate responsibility for all TRACS' activities, strategies and management control rests with the TRACS CEO, who works closely with the Board Chair.

TRACS is supported by Creative Scotland through Multi-Year Funding and the City of Edinburgh Council

3. TRACS' Board of Trustees

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to further TRACS' vision and principles, ensuring it keeps within its charitable objectives in the exercising of its responsibilities and functions.

The Board of Trustees play a vital role in the development and delivery of TRACS' strategy at grassroots level as well as nationally and internationally.

The Board comprises up to 14 Trustees, drawn from the membership of its partner organisations (the artform Forums and networks) as well as from the wider traditional arts sector.

Four of these trustees are additionally nominated as Office Bearers, performing the roles of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Trustees are appointed initially for a fixed term of three years and are eligible for re-election for two subsequent three-year terms at the AGM.

Whilst these roles are unpaid voluntary positions, all reasonable expenses are paid, and a full induction is provided. Additional training opportunities can be arranged as required.

4. Board Chair: Role Description

The new Chair will be joining TRACS at an exciting time of change, expansion and development. Under outgoing Chair Andrew Bachell, (whose term of office expires at the end of 2026), TRACS submitted a successful bid to Creative Scotland for a three-year plan of activity, with ambition going beyond previous levels of activity and funding, with an award of nearly £1.8million for the years 2025-28. Not only does this provide for security for core activity, it allows TRACS to undertake a wide range of new work for the traditional arts communities of Scotland. Over this period, TRACS will extend current areas of work and representation in traditional music, dance and storytelling to include traditional crafts, as well as exploring opportunities for the future of its home base, the Scottish Storytelling Centre. As one of only three UK NGOs accredited by UNESCO under the banner of intangible cultural heritage, TRACS is increasingly providing an enhanced leadership role in this field, working closely with the UK and Scottish Governments to support the implementation of this key international convention for celebrating the diversity of traditional cultures.

The very positive position of TRACS is the product of significant work by staff and the Board, who are now looking to find a Chair who can help take full advantage of the opportunities we have. To do this, the Board is looking for a new Chair who, in addition to being able to fulfil the role and its responsibilities, will have many of the following attributes:

- A personal understanding of and involvement in the traditional arts communities of Scotland
- Experience of performance, promotion, administration or governance within the arts or charity sector
- Direct experience of working across sectors in forming and nurturing partnerships and the ability to facilitate or lead multi-stakeholder projects
- Demonstrable awareness of the funding and policy environment for the arts in Scotland, the UK and internationally

- Demonstrable success in networking and communications at a strategic level
- Confidence in supporting fundraising and advocacy for TRACS and the traditional arts.

Above all, at this vital stage in its development, TRACS is looking for an enthusiastic, energetic and effective advocate for the traditional arts and the part they play within the life of Scotland and of all its people.

5. Board Chair: Key Responsibilities

5.1. Governance

- Convene and Chair meetings of the Board, meetings of Forum Chairs and General Meetings as agreed
- Attend meetings of the Finance & Risk and Governance & Constitution Board Committees
- Consult with the Secretary, Treasurer and staff on the preparation of agendas and supporting papers
- Ensure meetings are run efficiently, and discussion and decision-making is democratic and fully participative
- Hold the casting vote in the event of a split decision
- Ensure that AGMs and EGMs are carried out in accordance with the charity's governing document
- Ensure effective, regular monitoring of the organisation

5.2. Line Management

- Line manage the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), including conducting their annual Personal Development Review
- Offer guidance and support to the CEO on a regular basis or upon request

5.3. Operational Overview

Working with TRACS' staff, Board and sub-committees, oversee:

- effective scrutiny of the financial status of the charity so that it operates within a realistic and agreed budget
- development of appropriate policies and that the organisation adheres to such policies in its day-to-day management, planning and decision-making

5. Board Chair: Key Responsibilities

- annual reviews of the charity's performance, salaries and staff

5.4. Advocacy

- Have a public relations role and to speak on behalf of the charity to the media and others when necessary
- Represent the charity in dealings with external agencies and organisations as required

6. Board Chair: Person specification

	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge & Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous Board experience• Previous line management experience• Commitment to TRACS' aims and objectives as defined in its Constitution, Charitable Objectives and Mission Statement• Knowledge of finance and/or employment and/or public/private sector funding.• Keen interest in the traditional arts• Understanding of the distinctions between governance and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience in the arts and/or voluntary sector and/or education sectors

Skills & Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to Chair meetings effectively and to ensure that all meetings are managed efficiently and decisions made and acted upon ● Ability to promote cohesion and trust throughout the organisation, particularly at Board level ● Strategic planning skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding of business planning and ability to translate this into practice ● Expertise in Charity and/or Employment Law ● Experience in the management of people and staff ● Contacts and a wider network with the voluntary, public and/or private sector and any other bodies that may be relevant to the work of TRACS
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Authoritative, knowledgeable, trustworthy ● Transparent, fair and constructive ● Committed to representing the best interests of the organisation 	

7. Time Commitment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TRACS Board Meetings: 2 hours, 6 times per year. These meetings rotate between in-person and online. ● Board Committees: Finance & Risk, and Governance & Constitution; Online approximately 6 times per year prior to board meetings, or as often as required. ● Meeting Preparation: Agree board meeting agendas and review board papers in advance of meetings. ● Regular Line Management of CEO: Weekly check-in and/or more frequently as required. ● Regular liaison with fellow Office Bearers: Vice-Chair, Board Secretary, Treasurer - as required
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- **Development Day:** Annual one-day development event for staff and boards of TRACS, the Traditional Music Forum of Scotland, the Scottish Storytelling Forum and other artform networks.
- **Training:** A range of training sessions are also offered which board members are invited to attend.

Appendix: General Trustee Responsibilities

a) Strategic aims

- Take part in formulating and regularly reviewing the strategic aims of TRACS
- Consider TRACS and its beneficiaries as a whole, whether as a member or trustee or any of its committees, sub-committees, groups etc.
- Reflect TRACS' vision and principles, strategy and major policies at all times
- Contribute specific skills, interests and contacts to TRACS and support its fundraising activities.

b) Policies and Practices

- Ensure policies and practices are regularly updated
- Follow the policies established by the Board at all times, particularly in exercising the functions of the trustees, or any of its committees, sub-committees and groups
- Attend Board meetings regularly
- Reflect the board's policies and concerns on all its committees, sub-committees, groups

c) Best Practice

- Ensure that the organisation functions with the legal and financial requirements of a charitable organisation and strives to achieve best practice
- Be an active member of the Board in exercising its responsibilities and functions
- Maintain good relations with staff, tutors, members and volunteers
- Take part in training sessions provided for the benefit of the board
- Fulfil such other duties as may be required from time to time by the Board Chair