



RPS Chair of Trustees

ROLE BRIEF



Pictured: Sheku Kanneh-Mason performing a new RPS commission at the 2023 RPS Awards; a major new phase of the RPS Women Conductors programme with the Royal Northern Sinfonia; progressing from our Composers programme, Grace-Evangeline Mason has recently made her BBC Proms debut and gained a contract with Boosey & Hawkes; Aaron Akugbo who, as a student, the RPS helped buy a trumpet, and has now made his Proms concerto debut; the young creators at the heart of Multi-Story Orchestra's *The Endz*, recipient of the 2023 RPS Impact Award

This document details the role of Chair at the Royal Philharmonic Society and how to apply. If you would like this information in a different format for accessibility reasons, please contact us on admin@philharmonicsociety.uk or 020 7287 0019 and we will do our best to help.

One of the UK's foremost musical charities, the RPS is now looking for a new Chair to build on the remarkable legacy of John Gilhooly CBE who steps down in May 2024 following a period of significant growth and development for the charity. We hope you will be inspired reading about the role in the following pages.

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Royal Philharmonic Society

For over 200 years, the RPS has been at the heart of music, creating opportunities for musicians to excel, and championing the vital role that music plays in all our lives.

It all began in 1813 when a group of musicians set out to raise awareness of their work and established a series of orchestral concerts in London. The Society's performances attracted world-class artists including Mendelssohn and Wagner, and it commissioned exhilarating new music for an eager public to hear: most famously, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. In its founding gesture, the Society created a lasting culture. Other orchestras found their footing and their music resounds across Britain today.

Today, the RPS – a registered charity – continues to celebrate and empower musicians who, like our founders, strive to enrich society with all that they do. Through our programme of grants, commissions, courses and performance opportunities, we help many performers and composers overcome barriers to progress and fulfil their potential. Through the annual RPS Awards, we celebrate musical accomplishments UK-wide and tell an important story of what music-makers do for the benefit of the nation. Through RPS Membership and our new range of talks and events, we aim to cultivate national pride and curiosity in classical music. Through all our endeavours, we are dedicated to proving classical music's rightful and powerful place in society.

royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk

Charitable objects

Our activities, the people we help, and the difference we make to them, are best summarised around our three charitable objects:

Encouraging creativity in music

We support exceptional composers and performers, providing grants, mentoring, and high-quality step-change development initiatives, to ensure their talent can thrive in a tough profession. Since 2000 we have commissioned over 200 new works, nurturing within these 100 early-career composers of great promise, many of whom are now excelling as a result. In the same period, our scheme enabling outstanding music students of limited means to acquire the instruments they need has helped over 350 to progress. Our courses giving women the opportunity to further their skills in conducting and address gender inequality on the podium has benefitted 500+ participants nationwide. Through such ventures, we set out to change the system for good and define best practice for the profession to emulate. We draw together an array of partners in their delivery, uniting the sector behind good causes. Among the upcoming composers we have recently supported, James B. Wilson was invited to write new music for the 2023 BBC Last Night of the Proms. James says 'I'm immensely grateful to the RPS for their support and endorsement, and ongoing advice and assistance. It's been absolutely crucial for me personally, and pivotal to my success.'

Giving recognition to excellence in music

Through our awards and advocacy, we strive to present a vital and united story of music's worth to society, on behalf of a profession that dearly needs positive recognition. While resourcefully delivered on a modest budget, the annual RPS Awards generates valued exposure and acclaim for musicians and musical initiatives UK-wide. 2023's event drew its largest live audience yet of over 750 and was streamed online to 8,000+ viewers. Its keynote speech given by RPS Chairman John Gilhooly, defending musicians in the face of funding cuts, made broadsheet news. 2023 winner, soprano Anna Dennis said 'The event was so affirmative. I am thrilled to be recognised in such prestigious artistic company.' Lisa Tregale, Director of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, called it 'an amazing night for music'. Thomas Morgan from The English Concert said 'It was incredible to see such a heartening snapshot of the quality and range of work that has taken place over such a difficult period. Many thanks for all that you do on our behalf, and for being such a wonderful advocate.' In 2024, we will present the RPS Awards in Manchester, taking them out of London for the first time to reflect the truly national story they tell.

Promoting an understanding of music

Like our founders, we aim to cultivate the public's appreciation of classical music. We have revived RPS Membership as a way of fostering greater curiosity, pride and participation in classical music nationally. Here we have the scope to build an equivalent to the Royal Horticultural Society for music, in which the public feels more valued, heard and connected. Since its 2019 relaunch, RPS Membership figures have doubled, signifying the public's appetite for such connection. Carol Nixon, an RPS Member in Wales, says 'What a wonderful sense of being among friends I get from every communication from the RPS, and how much I appreciate your regular, informative bulletins.' Our new RPS Young Classical Writers Prize is also encouraging young people to speak up for classical music. This has generated over 200 entries in just 3 years, rousing voices nationwide, like our most recent winner, 20-year-old Oliver Picken in Southampton.

Role overview

The Royal Philharmonic Society is a charitable company, limited by guarantee, registered with the Charity Commission (number 213693), and with Companies House (number 00186522). The charity is governed by its [Articles of Association](#).

The Board of Trustees is currently chaired by John Gilhooly CBE who will step down from the role in May 2024 after an exceptional term. As Chair, John has overseen the bicentenary of the Society, the appointment of a new Chief Executive, the implementation of a new strategic direction, notable growth in charitable activities, and the major public re-launch of RPS Membership. In 2023, only weeks after the Coronation, John successfully engaged His Majesty The King in the endeavours of the RPS, in a landmark moment where His Majesty personally presented RPS Honorary Membership to composer and Master of the King's Music, Judith Weir CBE. We are tremendously indebted to John for his outstanding leadership, advocacy and care, and the exceptional term he has fulfilled on the RPS Board for more than a decade.

The Chair leads the Board which currently comprises eight Trustees who bring a significant range of expertise to governing the RPS. Two Trustees fulfil the roles of Honorary Secretary (currently Angela Dixon) and Honorary Treasurer (currently Rikesh Shah). Trustees are jointly and legally responsible for the Society and must act in accordance with the Trustee Act 2000. Trustees are deemed to be its Directors under Company law and are therefore subject to provisions of the law governing the role and responsibilities of Company Directors.

Trustees meet quarterly to review the progress of the organisation, and on occasion to address further exceptional issues, and they engage individually with the Chief Executive and management to support specific matters. Trustees delegate the day-to-day running of the charity to the Chief Executive and management but remain ultimately responsible for its governance, strategic direction, compliance and financial viability. The current Chief Executive is James Murphy who joined the organisation in 2018 and is driving the charity's new strategic plans. Working with James are Harriet Wybor (General Manager), Charlotte Smith (Administrator) and Alison Pavier (part-time Development Consultant). A further role (Programme Manager) is currently vacant with recruitment underway.

The Board of Trustees joins together with a wider cohort of around 15 further individuals to form a historic collective called the RPS Council, also led by the Chair. Those on the Council may be called upon by Trustees or the Chief Executive and management for their advice and advocacy. Beyond this, the wider Council convenes annually to consider and decide upon recipients for the Society's highest honours.

To ensure that both groups fulfil their roles to the highest possible standard, Trustees of the RPS continually strive for the Board and the Council to be knowledgeable about the classical music sector and also reflective of society, working to ensure more diverse representation of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

Key responsibilities

The principal responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- Provide inspirational leadership to the RPS and its Board, to ensure the organisation positively and impactfully fulfils its charitable objects for the public benefit, remains financially resilient, and complies with the charity's [Articles of Association](#) and all relevant legislation
- Oversee the long term strategy and direction of the charity with the Board and Chief Executive
- Develop good working relations with Trustees, the Chief Executive and management, and advisory Council
- Devote regular time and support to the Chief Executive to review and advance plans and ensure they can excel in their responsibilities
- Be a visible, recognised ambassador and spokesperson for the charity, acting in its best interests, forging links and helping to build its network
- Support fundraising, particularly the Membership drive and current efforts to enlist a greater array of stakeholders in the music profession to join and advocate for the charity
- Review the performance of the Board, ensuring Trustees are fully engaged and have the skills, knowledge and inclusive representation and outlook to oversee and advance strategic plans; review Board and Council membership and recruit new Trustees and Council members
- Effectively chair Board meetings, the Annual General Meeting, and occasional issue-specific meetings of the Board and Council; consult with the Chief Executive in planning meetings to ensure they run smoothly and productively; ensure actions agreed at meetings are minuted and fulfilled
- Attend key activities including the RPS Awards and other occasional events specifically where VIP guests and prospects are expected to attend
- Ensure the Board has procedures and policies in place to monitor the quality of the charity's activities, and to address and mitigate risk
- Be a Member of the RPS for the duration of their tenure

Person specification

The RPS is in good stead. Strategic steps since James Murphy was appointed as Chief Executive in 2018 have been warmly welcomed by the sector, and have set the charity on a stronger footing. Year on year, we are deepening the scope of how we fulfil our charitable objects, all the while building a stronger financial base. With the refreshed Membership offer newly established, subscriptions are steadily growing. At this moment, the charity seeks someone enlivened by our current endeavours to help us consolidate and evolve them, to further our current strategic direction. To achieve this, we are looking for an exceptional candidate who knows and cares about the RPS, and embodies the following attributes to a considerable degree:

- A highly-respected, inspiring and trustworthy figure, possessing excellent contacts in the classical music profession and the wider cultural sector, with willingness to introduce them to the charity
- Genuine understanding of the evolving role of classical music in all its forms in the 21st century, for example as:
 - a professional musician
 - someone who works in the music profession
 - someone with lateral expertise and/or influence who actively engages with classical music and regularly attends performances
- Positive personality and communication skills to fulfil an ambassadorial role for the RPS, representing the charity to a wide range of stakeholders and prospects
- Demonstrable success in fundraising and active commitment to undertaking it on behalf of the RPS
- Experience of governance and being part of a board for an arts charity
- Strong track record of strategic organisational leadership, growing a charity or business
- Experience of positively managing complex matters, exercising integrity, impartiality and sound judgement
- Sound knowledge of and strong commitment to the RPS and its charitable objectives

The RPS is proud to fulfil a role at the heart of musical life, and maintains this by acting attentively and respectfully towards musicians, colleagues across the music profession, and music lovers. Naturally, the Chair and Trustees are expected to demonstrate the same dignity and respect in their role representing the RPS. The organisation would review the status of anyone who may bring the Society into questionable repute.

For more information about general eligibility for charity trusteeship, see:

[gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3)

Terms of appointment

We expect to appoint the Chair for an initial term of three years, with the option to be re-elected for a further term of three years.

There is no set time requirement for the role though candidates may expect this to occupy the equivalent to approximately 1 to 2 days per month, occasionally more around major events such as the RPS Awards. As noted, the Board convenes every quarter for a meeting of around two hours. These are scheduled the prior year in consultation with the Chair to ensure they are available to attend. These usually take place in London and sometimes via a digital platform where necessary. In addition to chairing these meetings and the Annual General Meeting each May, the Chair is expected to connect regularly with the Chief Executive, and liaise with other Trustees as necessary between meetings, as well as engage with a range of stakeholders and prospects.

The post of Chair is voluntary. Reasonable expenses incurred in fulfilling the role will be reimbursed.

We expect the new Chair to be appointed in April 2024 then ideally attend the next Annual General Meeting in London at 6.00pm on Wednesday 22 May 2024.

How to apply

If you are interested in applying for the role, we recommend you take some time to familiarise yourself with everything the RPS currently does, on our website at royalphilharmonicsociety.org.uk. We are particularly pleased to draw your attention to:

- our most recent published [Annual Report and Accounts](#), for the year ending August 2022
- the film of the [2023 RPS Awards](#) presented in March 2023
- our [RPS Membership brochure](#) outlining its worth to music-lovers and music-makers
- the latest edition of [Philharmonic](#), the RPS Members magazine

You should submit your application using our online form [linked here](#) by the closing date of 10am on **Monday 19 February 2024**.

The application form simply asks you to provide your basic **contact details** and then upload:

- a **covering letter** addressed to Rikesh Shah, Honorary Treasurer, of no more than two pages detailing your interest and suitability for this role, and what you would hope to bring to the role of Chair of the RPS, saved as a PDF (not a Word document). Its file name should simply be: Forename Surname covering letter

or

instead of a covering letter, you may choose to provide a link to a **short film of yourself** talking to camera, ideally for around 3 minutes duration, telling us about your interest and suitability for this role, and what you would hope to bring to the role of Chair of the RPS. This need not be high-quality and we welcome it being filmed on a smartphone. This should be submitted as a link to YouTube, Vimeo or

equivalent platforms, and the footage should remain visible there till at least May 2023. You may send a link to footage that is 'unlisted' but please ensure to include any passwords with your link, if applicable, in the application form.

- an up-to-date **CV** of no more than two pages outlining your relevant experience, saved as a PDF (not a Word document). Its file name should simply be: Forename Surname CV

The online form also invites you to complete some standard inclusivity monitoring questions which should only take a moment. We are committed to ensuring that everyone feels welcome to work at the RPS, and to monitoring our progress so that prospective candidates reflect a diverse, multicultural society. The answers you give are confidential and reviewed separately from any application you may be making, or in connection to your involvement in any of our activities. You may complete as many or as few questions as you wish. Taking a moment to do this is so helpful to us all collectively in classical music.

Please note that late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted.

We will invite select candidates for interview in London on **Wednesday 13 March 2024**, ahead of a new Chair being nominated by the Board in April. As noted above, we hope the chosen candidate will be able to attend the AGM on Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 6pm in person.

If you are interested in applying and have any queries not addressed here, or would like to talk about any aspect of the role, outside of the formal application process, please email recruitment@philharmonicsociety.uk. Emails to this address will be received by Rikesh Shah (RPS Honorary Treasurer) and James Murphy (RPS Chief Executive).

Current RPS Trustees and Council

Trustees

John Gilhooly CBE Chairman

Artistic and Executive Director of Wigmore Hall, awarded multiple honours internationally.

Leon Bosch

Double bass player, noted soloist, chamber musician and – for many years – Principal of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Jo Buckley

Chief Executive of Impact Scotland, and former Chief Executive of Dunedin Consort.

Angela Dixon Honorary Secretary

Chief Executive of Saffron Hall. Former Head of Music at the Barbican.

Sarah Gee

Chief Executive of Spitalfields Music. Founder and former Managing Partner of Indigo Ltd. Also, a dedicated amateur French horn player.

Victoria, Lady Robey CBE

Founder Director of Music Masters and former Chair of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Rikesh Shah Honorary Treasurer

Project Director of the London Symphony Orchestra

Roderick Williams OBE

World-renowned baritone and composer.

Council

Edward Blakeman

Former Head of Music Programming for BBC Radio 3. Published several editions and books on music.

Anthony Bolton

Investment fund manager and successful investor, with a passion for new music and composing.

Dr Jerome Booth

Economist, entrepreneur and investor. Also, a dedicated amateur double bass player.

Helena Gaunt

Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Oboist and founder member of Britten Sinfonia.

Jess Gillam MBE

Saxophonist whose recordings have topped the Official UK Classical Charts. Presenter of BBC Radio 3's *This Classical Life* and BBC TV classical music coverage.

Sally Groves MBE

Former Creative Director of Schott Music, with a lifelong, passionate commitment to new music.

Sir Stephen Hough

Celebrated pianist, composer and writer.

Sam Jackson

Controller of BBC Radio 3.

Dr Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason

Advocate for music education. Author of the RPS Award-winning book *House of Music*. Trustee of Music Masters. Parent of the internationally-renowned Kanneh-Mason family.

Dr Leanne Langley Honorary Librarian

Cultural historian, writer and lecturer, with special interest in the history of the RPS.

Louise Mitchell CBE

Chief Executive of Bristol Music Trust and Bristol Beacon. Chair of the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain.

Gillian Moore CBE

Artistic Associate and former Director of Music at Southbank Centre. Broadcaster and writer.

Kenneth Olumuyiwa Tharp CBE

Renowned dance artist, consultant and cultural leader.

Janis Susskind OBE

Managing Director of Boosey & Hawkes music publishers.

Errollyn Wallen CBE

Renowned composer, pianist and singer-songwriter.

Thank you for your interest in the role and the RPS. We look forward to hearing from you if you apply.



Pictured (clockwise): BBC Radio 3's **Hannah French** and **Petroc Trelawny** presenting the 2023 RPS Awards at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. Percussionist **Rosie Bergonzi** introducing the handpan in a filming session at the RPS office. **Discover**, our dedicated RPS Members bulletin. One of our new filmed events, giving audiences the chance to see inside artists' creative process, with pianist **Joanna MacGregor** and baritone **Roderick Williams**.