



RPS Trustees

ROLE BRIEF



Pictured: Leeds-based sitar player Jasdeep Singh Degun, performing at the 2024 RPS Awards where he won the Instrumentalist Award; 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 from Peckham at the heart of Multi-Story Orchestra's *The Endz*, recipient of the 2023 RPS Impact Award

This document details the role of Trustee 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.

RPS and its charitable objects	3
Role overview	5
Responsibilities	6
Person specification	7
Terms	8
How to apply	8
Current RPS Board and Council	9

Royal Philharmonic Society

The Royal Philharmonic Society – a registered charity – has been at the heart of music for over 200 years, creating opportunities for musicians to excel, and championing the vital role that music plays in all our lives.

Through our programme of grants, commissions, professional development and performance opportunities, we help many performers and composers overcome barriers to progress and fulfil their potential. Through the annual RPS Awards – newly described by *The Sunday Times* as ‘the biggest night in UK classical music’ – we celebrate musical accomplishments UK-wide and tell a vital story of what music-makers do for the benefit of others. Through RPS Membership and our events and advocacy, we aim to cultivate greater pride and curiosity in classical music. Through all our endeavours, we are dedicated to proving classical music’s rightful and powerful place in society.

Our history dates back to 1813, when a group of musicians set out to build a wider audience for 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 enthusiastic public: most famously, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. In its founding gesture, the Society created a lasting culture. Other orchestras found their footing and their music continues to resound across Britain. We are proud of our heritage that we are taking forward in a way that we hope is reflective of the range of people who make classical music today in a diverse, multicultural 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

BBC Last Night of the Proms. James says 'I'm immensely grateful to the RPS for their support, endorsement, and ongoing advice. It's been crucial for me personally, and pivotal to my success.' In refreshed aims and objectives defined by Trustees and management this year, we are working to build national recognition for the support and care the RPS gives classical musicians, engaging more partners and funders to collaborate with us in initiating further beneficial ventures.

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. Increasingly, organisations Given the national story it tells, we were pleased to present 2024's RPS Awards out of London for the first time, to a capacity audience at Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music. Among the winners, the BBC Singers' Jonathan Manners said 'This has meant so much for the BBC Singers, and we are so grateful to the RPS for your support, not just leading up to the Awards but in the last year. It's a wonderful way for us to begin our centenary celebrations.' Local MP Barbara Keeley said 'Thank you for the RPS Awards. It was a joyous event and I'm so glad it was held in Manchester. It was great to see the joy the nominees and winners took from the occasion, and the performances and films celebrating each nominee were excellent.' In March 2025, we present the RPS Awards in Birmingham. With the conviction that we are at our strongest when we come together, we are proud to present the RPS Awards with support from an ever-growing range of organisations across the sector who are proud of the association it brings. Within our new aims and objectives, we have ambitious plans to build the scope and impact of the RPS Awards to generate greater national pride and appreciation for classical music.

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 more than 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. Our new aims and objectives set out our aspirations to foster a brighter national conversation around classical music, and boost nationwide profile and trust for the charity as a leading source and standard-bearer for positive, relatable storytelling and advocacy in classical music.

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 charity's Patron is His Majesty The King.

The Society is governed by a dedicated Board of Trustees – responsible for its effective management and charitable objects – who collectively possess outstanding expertise in classical music, arts management, business, fundraising and the charity sector.

Chaired by Angela Dixon, the Board generally comprises up to ten people. Two Trustees fulfil the roles of Honorary Secretary (currently Sarah Gee) 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), Cathy Hare (Programme Manager), Emily Porter (Administrator) and Alison Pavier (part-time Development Consultant).

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, namely its historic Gold Medal and Honorary Membership, as well as its newer Gamechanger Award. RPS management contacts all Council members well in advance to convene meetings.

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.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Trustees are to:

- ensure the RPS fulfils its charitable objects and carries out its purposes for the public benefit, comply with the Charity Commission, and with the law
- ensure the charity remains solvent, accountable, and that its resources are managed responsibly
- oversee the long term strategy and direction of the charity, working with and supporting the Chief Executive and management team in the delivery of agreed aims and objectives
- keep pace with the organisation's artistic, financial and operational progress year-round and attend occasional activities
- be an active ambassador for the RPS and act in its best interests, helping to raise its profile and fortify its cultural and financial position
- give reasonable time, thought and energy to providing expertise, insights and contacts to help the organisation fulfil its plans
- where possible introduce individuals and organisations who could be integral to enabling and advancing the charity's aims and objectives
- collectively appraise potential risks and ensure sound procedures and safeguards are in place
- act with care, skill and integrity, avoiding and declaring any personal conflicts
- be Members of the Royal Philharmonic Society for the duration of their tenure

Quarterly Trustees meetings do not usually exceed two hours, and dates are agreed well in advance. Trustees should strive to attend as many meetings as they reasonably can, though the charity recognises other commitments may occasionally limit this. Meetings are usually in central London and, dependant on venue, some permit remote participation via Zoom/Teams as an occasional resort for those occupied elsewhere. A week ahead of each meeting, the Chief Executive will digitally circulate papers which Trustees are asked to read before the meeting. These will always include an overall report on the artistic and financial progress of the charity accompanied by the latest quarterly Management Accounts. Minutes of each meeting are formalised with the Chair and circulated to all Trustees for approval at the outset of the next meeting. Occasionally, Trustees are asked to meet to address exceptional issues, and annually to convene with members of the wider RPS Council to review key honours, as detailed above.

Person specification

Prospective RPS Trustees should:

- be passionate about classical music in all its forms in the 21st century
 - as a professional musician or someone who works in the music profession
 - as someone with lateral expertise and/or influence who actively engages with music and regularly attends performances
- be recognised as a distinctive figure, emerging or established, in their respective field
- have discernible expertise to lend the RPS that helps fulfil its strategic aims, and reasonable time to commit to this
- have contacts, and willingness to introduce them, who may be of help to the RPS in its objectives
- be fit to play a senior advisory role in a charity and act with integrity in the organisation's best interests

Alongside this, we would particularly welcome applications from candidates who may embody any of the following attributes:

- composer or chamber / orchestral / solo performer who represents and actively addresses what it means to be a 21st century musician
- connection to prospects who could become valued high-level Members of the charity
- experience in evolving the position / communications of a charity or business to build greater national recognition and trust

We strive for our Board and wider Council to be reflective of society and we are working to ensure diverse representation of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

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, supporters and audiences. Naturally, all Trustees are expected to demonstrate the same dignity and respect in their role representing the RPS. The Chair and the Board would review the status of anyone whose deeds 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

All Trustees act in an entirely voluntary capacity, without remuneration or other personal benefit for their role in managing the charity. The Board is covered by Trustee Liability Insurance.

Trustees are proposed by the Board and approved by Members of the Society at its Annual General Meeting in May. The Articles of Association permit the Board to co-opt Trustees at any stage mid-year (following majority approval of the appointment among the Trustees) and that individual may then act as a Trustee forthwith. Their appointment is formally approved by the Members at the next AGM.

We are hoping to co-opt new Trustees in April 2025 and their formal appointment be approved at the AGM in May 2025.

Trustees are usually appointed for a three-year term. Towards completion, this is subject to a review with the Chair and may be extended by up to two further terms maximum if mutually agreed that the Trustee may still play an active and valued role in helping the charity fulfil its current priorities at the given time. Such renewal of terms is also subject to approval at the AGM.

How to apply

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

- our most recent published [Annual Report and Accounts](#) for the year ending August 2023
- the film of the [2024 RPS Awards](#) presented in March 2024
- 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 Wednesday 12 March 2025**.

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

- a **covering letter** addressed to Angela Dixon, Chair, 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 RPS Trustee. 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 2025. 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 be part of 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 expect to invite select candidates for interview, ahead of new Trustees being co-opted by the Board in April, and formally approved at the AGM in May.

For any further information about the RPS Board of Trustees or any other aspects of the charity's governance or its wider work, please contact RPS Chief Executive James Murphy on 020 7287 0019 or james@philharmonicsociety.uk.

Current RPS Trustees and Council

Trustees

Angela Dixon Chair

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

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.

Sarah Gee Honorary Secretary

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

Alexander Armstrong

Classic FM presenter, bass-baritone, and ambassador for the Cathedral Music Trust.

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 Hannah French

BBC Radio 3 presenter, writer and academic.

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 and the BBC Proms.

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

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

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.

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



Clockwise: Composer **Arvo Pärt**, with his son Michael, receiving the historic RPS Gold Medal in 2024 from RPS Chair Angela Dixon and Chief Executive James Murphy; **Discover**, our dedicated RPS Members bulletin; percussionist **Rosie Bergonzi** introducing the handpan in a filming session at the RPS office; one of our filmed events, giving audiences the chance to see inside artists' creative process, with pianist **Joanna MacGregor** and baritone **Roderick Williams**.