

WYSING ARTS CENTRE
FOX ROAD BOURN
CAMBRIDGE CB23 2TX
WWW.WYSINGARTSCENTRE.ORG

T + 44 (0) 1954 718881
INFO@WYSINGARTSCENTRE.ORG



WYSING ARTS CENTRE CHAIR

RECRUITMENT PACK FEBRUARY 2023



Brooke Palmieri / Camp Books workshop as part of *From the Ground Up:*

The Gathering, July 2022. Photo: Loukas Morley

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About Wysing Arts Centre

“Wysing was founded with a utopian vision to create space for artists to live and work. Today it is ... pioneering an experimental approach to artistic practice, learning & curating.” **Louise Benson, Elephant Magazine, 2019**

Established in 1989, Wysing Arts Centre is a progressive organisation in a rural setting. We enable artists and publics to engage their imagination freely and take creative risks; we believe that everybody has the right to time and space for creativity, away from the distractions of daily life.

The site is ten miles from Cambridge city. It holds 20 subsidised studios, accommodation for up to 80 visiting artists annually, recording and ceramics studios, flexible space to experiment, present and learn, fields, woodland, and several outdoor outworks. Work made at Wysing is seen worldwide. An accessible digital offer increases reach and archives our work; our youth programme empowers future generations.

Wysing invites artists from across the world to stay and reflect on their practice without the pressure of producing new work: time spent without a plan can often be when the best new ideas emerge. We take a proactive, intersectional approach to equity and inclusion, and often support artists who have not been well supported by mainstream gallery and funding systems. Several artists who have spent time at Wysing have gone on to be Turner-prize or Paul Hamlyn Award winners. Some artists go on to be

commissioned by Wysing to make artworks, music and performance; many participate in Wysing's lively events.

Wysing engages people of all ages through artist-led workshops, events, online projects, gatherings and an alternative art school called *The Syllabus*. Our young people's programme has a focus on reaching people from rural areas. In 2022, Wysing initiated a Youth Council who will have decision-making powers in the organisation.

We are funded principally by Arts Council England through its National Portfolio scheme. Further funds are raised through Trusts, Foundations and via individual giving. Wysing recently received significant support from the Freelands Foundation to grow and deliver *The Syllabus* over the next decade. More can be discovered about Wysing's programme and history at wysingartscentre.org/ and wysingbroadcasts.art/ In 2023 we will be launching a new brand and integrated, accessible website.

The Role: Overview

Wysing Arts Centre is looking for an exceptional Chair or Co-Chair, to lead the organisation into the next chapter following the appointment of new Director, Rosie Cooper, in 2021, and confirmation of continued Arts Council support as a National Portfolio funded organisation in 2022.

We are looking for an influential, compassionate and knowledgeable person (or persons) to provide leadership to the wider board. You will move strategic decision-making forward through insightful, collaborative problem solving; you will achieve consensus through informed discussion.

Ideally, you will have charity experience and a full understanding of the requirements of good governance, combined with the imagination needed to shape even better governance in the future. You will have good financial acumen, excellent relationship building skills, a passion for supporting art and artists, and a desire to build a more equitable world. You will have a strong commitment to the core mission, aims and values of Wysing Arts Centre.

"It's been a huge privilege to have been Chair of Wysing Arts Centre over the past five and a half years, and to work alongside such a talented team and our committed, generous Board of Trustees.

"Wysing will continue to build on its national and international reputation for a pioneering, inclusive approach to artist support and commissioning and as a leader for its intersectional approaches to

anti-racism and support of marginalised artists. Going forward, Wysing aims to do more to support creative practice in the East of England, creating impact through a programme that actively uses its rural location to increase environmental sustainability. Wysing also has plans to develop new approaches to income generation which reflect its identity and values.

“Wysing is an exceptionally well-run organisation with accountability and equity at its heart. It's a rewarding and inspiring role and I'm looking forward to welcoming the next Chair to Wysing.” **Jo Marsh,**
Wysing Arts Centre Chair



Ravioli Me Away, The View from Behind the Futuristic Rose Trellis, 2019.

Photo: Jay Parkeh

What to Expect:

The role of the Board is to be accountable for the strategic direction and effective running of Wysing Arts Centre, ensuring financial stability, compliance with governance legislation. The Board also supports Wysing's Directorate by sharing expert advice.

As Chair, you will work closely with Wysing's Director and Deputy Director to develop and deliver Wysing's priorities. In addition to supporting artists and ensuring that Wysing is an equitable, inclusive place for all, our priorities for next year include increasing Wysing's environmental sustainability and diversifying its income streams.

As an artist-centred organisation, we are open to models such as Co-Chairing, shorter term, or other options that would make this opportunity possible for an artist. Charity law means that the Chair role is voluntary, but we can provide reasonable travel and sustenance expenses.

Trustees meet four times a year in a hybrid fashion. Trustee sub-groups based around distinct areas of Wysing's work meet at other times. A Board away-day to discuss vision and mission happens annually. The Chair meets with the Director each month for an hour to discuss the progress of the organisation.



Deborah Findlater and Lottie Poulet, Soundscapes workshop for Wysing's Youth Festival, 2022. Photo: Chloe Page

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:

As a Disability Confident Leader, we guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the vacancy. Please indicate whether you are d/Deaf or disabled in your application.

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone regardless of their background. We acknowledge that people from certain backgrounds are under-represented in the arts, and we're committed to doing what we can to correct this. We are particularly keen to receive applications from those who identify as global ethnic majority, d/Deaf or disabled people, people who identify as being LGBTQ+, people who have a mental health condition, and people who identify as working class now or in the past.



Wysing Ceramic Studio Open Morning, with Wysing studio artist Isobel
Meredith-Hardy, 2022. Photo: Chloe Page

Position: Chair

Salary: Voluntary, due to charity law. Reasonable travel and sustenance expenses covered.

Location: Quarterly Trustee meetings are hybrid, but we try to meet in person as much as possible.

Hours: Approximately 40 hours per year.

Contract: Flexible term to be agreed. Expected minimum of 3 years, 5 years maximum.

Key Responsibilities

The Chair is a company director appointment by Wysing Arts Charity.

Leadership

- Provide leadership and direction to the Board, creating clear expectations in relation to Wysing Arts Centre's mission, vision, values, resources and business plan objectives;
- With Trustees, oversee the development of long and short-term objectives, priorities and goals, in order to meet the needs of artists, publics and partners;
- Lead the Board on monitoring performance, interrogating output and outcomes as required.

Governance

Working with Wysing's Director and Deputy Director

- Ensure that the Board fulfils its governance responsibilities and company objectives in accordance with its Memorandum and Articles of Association, and charity law;
- Ensure that Wysing is solvent and well managed, reviewing and approving risk registers and policies, together with Trustees;
- Ensure that Wysing is meeting its requirements as an Arts Council England National Portfolio funded organisation;
- Ensure that strategic plans are in place to deliver Wysing's strategic plans and artistic vision;
- Ensure that Wysing maintains an effective, engaged and diverse board of Trustees who hold the expertise and experience needed to support Wysing;
- Act as spokesperson and advocate for Wysing, when required, and build relationships with external stakeholders where appropriate.

Board business and meetings

- Chair quarterly Trustee meetings efficiently, ensuring that the Board functions effectively, enabling everyone present to actively participate in discussions and deliberations, with access needs accounted for;

- Work with Wysing's Director and Deputy Director to set the agenda for meetings, ensuring Board papers are prepared and circulated in a timely manner, review and approve minutes and other documents including annual accounts and charity commission filings;
- With the Treasurer and Trustees, ensure prudent financial management;
- With the Director, review the composition of the Board's sub-committees annually and serve as a member of sub-committees as appropriate;
- Take decisions with Trustees, between Board meetings where necessary and within parameters agreed with the Board;
- Arrange for another Trustee to chair meetings in your absence.

Board Membership

- Actively participate in Trustee skills audits, and consult Trustee members on their roles and attendance at Board meetings and sub-groups;
- Address and imaginatively develop Wysing's governance structures to create effective frameworks for visioning and decision-making;
- Lead discussion to approve the business plan and other key documents (policies, major funding agreements) prepared by the Director and Deputy Director;

- Work with the Trustees, Director and Deputy Director to ensure renewal of Board membership, and to support the recruitment and induction of new Trustees;
- Respond to any concerns management have in relation to the role of the Board or Trustees. Work with the Director to respond to the concerns of the Board and other constituencies;
- Actively participate in training and development offered by Wysing or the networks it is part of (e.g. Plus Tate, Contemporary Visual Arts Network, DASH), and encourage fellow Trustees to do likewise.

Director

- Act as the Director's line manager and agree an annual programme of work, monitored throughout the year through regular contact meetings and an annual appraisal;
- Provide support, advice and act as a sounding board to the Director and Deputy Director;
- Manage any grievance and disciplinary procedures, if required;
- Manage the recruitment of the Director and Deputy Director, if required;
- Ensure Board resolutions are delivered, working collaboratively with the Director and Deputy Director;

- Step in to provide impartial support and guidance in the case of any dispute arising within Wysing's team or with any stakeholders (for example artists, publics, partners), where appropriate or necessary.

Communications and Advocacy

- Fulfil such assignments as the Chair and Director agree are appropriate and desirable for the Chair to perform, and act as ambassador and spokesperson where appropriate, to help raise the profile of Wysing Arts Centre, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Make every effort to see the work that the organisation produces, attending events and launches and encouraging other Trustees to do likewise;
- Actively work to build Wysing Arts Centre's reputation and extend its contacts in discussion with the Director and in a way that most benefits Wysing Arts Centre;
- Foster a positive working relationship with other Trustees and the organisation's staff.

Other

- Work in accordance with Wysing Arts Centre's Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, GDPR and Environmental Policies at all times.
- Work in accordance with Wysing's Code of Conduct.

Personal Attributes, Skills & Experience

- A strategic thinker and skilled communicator, able to build relationships and consensus amongst different people;
- An understanding of the responsibilities of a Board;
- A measured approach to challenges, opportunities and negotiating change;
- An understanding and empathy for the work of Wysing Arts Centre, and the immense value that artists have in the world;
- An understanding of the contemporary art sector;
- Understanding and knowledge of fundraising, networking and advocacy;
- The ability to give time commitment (or plan with a co-Chair effectively) to achieve the key objectives and be flexible in approach when there is need to respond quickly.



Desktop Studio Visit: Helen Cammock with John Eng Kiet Bloomfield and Kate MacGarry, 2021.

Wysing's Vision, Mission, Values and Aims

Vision: To cultivate the freewheeling imagination.

Mission: Wysing believes in the transformative social and personal benefits of art and creativity, and that a more just world can only be achieved if everyone has equal access to the time and space needed to imagine it. Wysing provides accessible opportunities and resources to think and create, outside the habits of daily life. We support artists to develop their talent; we advocate for the immense value they have in the world, and we work to create the conditions necessary for them to have sustainable careers.

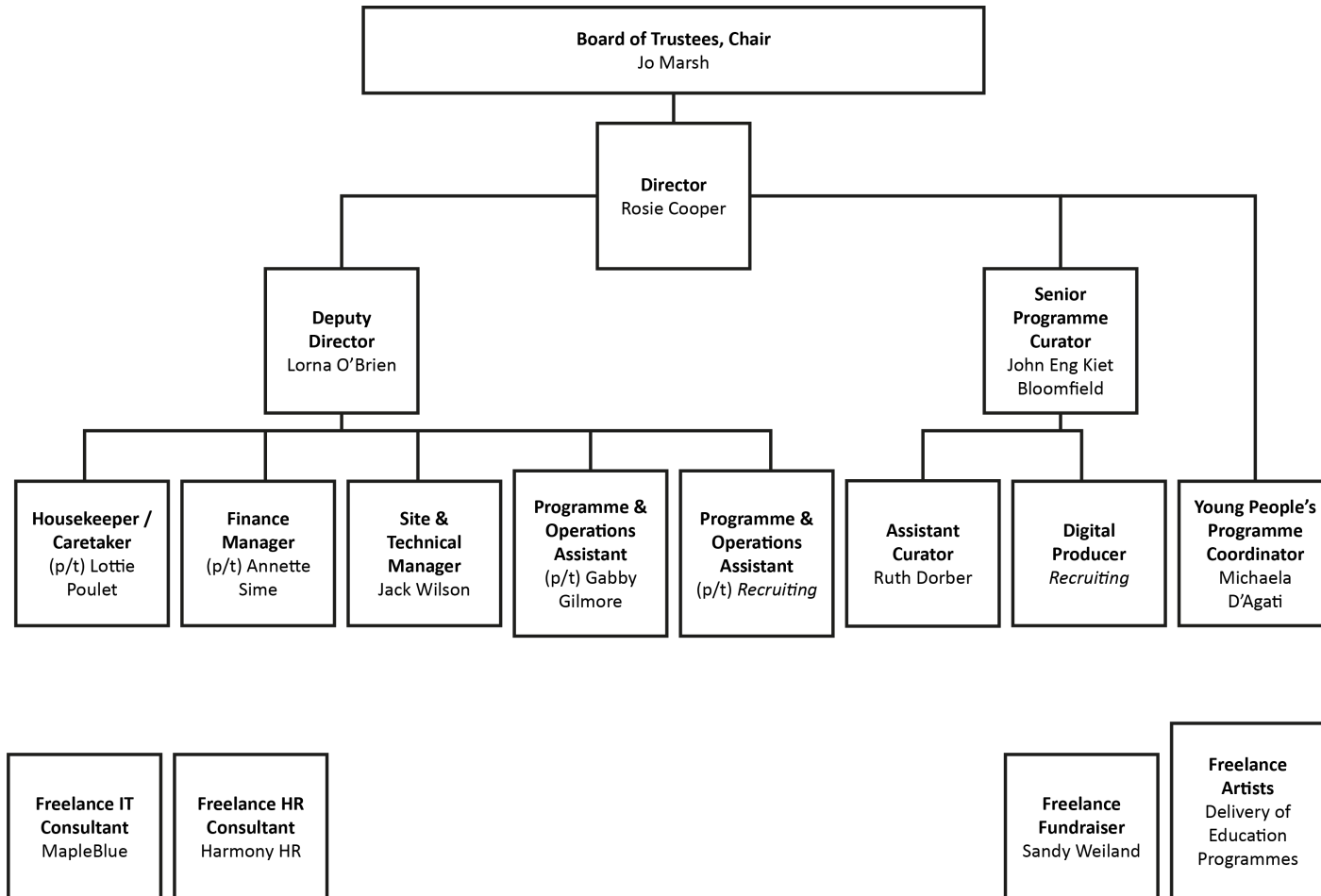
Values and Aims:

- **Collaborative:** Work together to build resources.
- **Generous:** Model change, sharing our resources equitably.
- **Agile:** Create and seize opportunity.
- **Attentive:** Listen to what people have to say, and respond effectively.
- **Transparent:** Build trust, and be open about how we work.
- **Ethical:** Avoid causing harm to people and the planet.



Club Urania, Wysing Arts Centre and Cambridge Junction's LGBTQ+ club night, 2022. Photo: Dani Oliver

Organisation chart



RECRUITMENT PROCESS

We would be happy to receive an expression of interest in the form of a CV (max 2 pages) and letter outlining your interest in being Chair of Wysing and how you meet the key criteria in the Person Specification (max 1 page). We welcome applications in video or audio format if preferable. If there is another method that you would prefer to use to apply due to your access requirements, please let us know. We want to remove as many barriers to applying as we can.

If you would like to discuss the role with either Wysing's Director, Rosie Cooper; Deputy Director, Lorna O'Brien, or Chair, Jo Marsh, then please email lorna.obrien@wysingartscentre.org to schedule a call.

The deadline for expressions of interest is **12 noon on 10 March**.

Expressions of interest should be emailed directly to recruitment@wysingartscentre.org.

EXCLUSIONS FROM HOLDING TRUSTEE POSITIONS

Sections 178 and 180 of the Charities Act 2011 disqualifies anyone who:

- Has been convicted of particular offences, unless the conviction is spent. Please see <https://knowhownonprofit.org/governance/improving-your-governance-practice/trustee-recruitment-and-induction/trustee-disqualification> for more details on the offences included
- Has an undischarged bankruptcy.
- Has previously been removed from Trusteeship of a charity by the court or the Charity Commissioners.
- Is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- Anyone who has entered into a composition or arrangement with their creditors which includes an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA), and is currently on the Insolvency Service Register.

USEFUL LINKS FOR PROSPECTIVE TRUSTEES

The Essential Trustee: What you Need to Know. The Charity Commission

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

The Hallmarks of an Effective Charity. The Charity Commission

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-hallmarks-of-an-effective-charity-cc10>

Conflicts of Interest: A Guide for Trustees

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees-cc29>