



Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall
President: HRH The Duchess of Gloucester



RSN Trustee Role Profile

The Royal School of Needlework (RSN) has 150 years of history and continues to grow and develop. Embroidery is practised worldwide and, as with many arts and crafts, is experiencing a revival following the recent pandemic. We're ensuring that traditional skills and techniques are preserved for future generations while also remaining relevant today. We provide courses for those wanting a career in fashion, textiles and embroidery to Degree level as well as tuition and leisure activities for beginners through to serious hobbyists.

While similar organisations struggled to survive and/or continue operations during the pandemic, the RSN transferred activity online within two days of lockdown. Our small but hugely dedicated team of staff ensured teaching continued, creating a global community and a lifeline for many in enforced isolation as well as providing significant health and wellbeing benefits.

You can lend your own professional experience and expertise to help support our endeavours. This role comes at a time when we are actively reviewing how we learn from and build on the experience of the last two years and successful applicants can help in leading our strategic direction and continued development as we re-establish face-to-face teaching and capitalise on the global online audience attracted during lockdown.

We also have a commercial business comprising retail activities and the RSN Studio which undertakes new commissions, conservations, and restorations. Our extensive Textile Collection and Archive forms the basis of exhibitions and talks and has helped us reach students and customers in nearly 40 countries worldwide.

Trustees sought in 2022: Qualified Legal, HR and Financial professionals and those with Fundraising, Diversity & Inclusion, and Digital experience and expertise

As a result of natural turnover and completion of individual Trustee terms, we are seeking a number of new trustees through 2022 with a range of skills. We are particularly interested in applicants with any of the following expertise and experience to complement the skills of our current trustees: Qualified Legal, HR and Financial professionals and those with Fundraising, Diversity & Inclusion, and Digital experience and expertise. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified individuals.

Governance at the RSN

As a non-profit organisation, the role of Trustee is very important. The Council of Trustees is the governing body and comprises the Chair, Treasurer and up to 12 Council members who meet six times a year usually in February, April, June, July/Aug, October and December. The Council acts as a group and not as individuals.

Trustees receive various papers to read in advance of meetings so that they are prepared and may also, from time to time, be involved in working groups or other sub committees as required. In particular there is a Finance and Investment Committee which comprises the Hon Treasurer, the Chairman and up to three members of Council which meets four times a year for two hours midweek in central London.

In addition to being a registered charity the RSN is also a company limited by shares and all trustees are shareholders. There are a maximum of 29 shareholders at any time. The payment is £10; this is not returned. There is no financial benefit of share ownership to the individual.

We undertake a regular skills audit to ensure we have the skill support we need going forward. The Chairman meets with each trustee individually on a regular basis to discuss their experience and all trustees are asked to contribute to the evaluation of the Chairman and the Chief Executive

This is a voluntary role and trustees receive no remuneration. Reasonable expenses can be claimed, based on the pertaining expenses policy, for attendance at board meetings and other events necessary for the fulfilment of their trustee's duties. Trustees are expected to attend all board meetings.

Duties of a trustee board member

The statutory duties of a trustee are to:

- Ensure that the RSN complies with its governing document (its Articles of Association), charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that the RSN pursues its objects as defined by its governing document
- Ensure the RSN applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its charitable purpose.
- Contribute actively to the Council of Trustees by giving strategic direction to the RSN, setting overall policy, defining goals, setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the reputation and values of the RSN
- Ensure the financial stability of the RSN.
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the RSN, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Protect and manage the property of the RSN ensuring the proper investment of funds

Trustees should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Council reach sound decisions and where appropriate provide advice and guidance on new initiatives or other areas where the trustee has specific expertise.

In addition to understanding and accepting the overall responsibilities of a trustee, you will need to work collaboratively as part of our trustee team and be happy to give the time needed to understand the many parts of the RSN so that you can exercise good judgement to make the right decisions for our organisation. You will be offered a full induction programme to enable you to fulfil your role. A term lasts for three years, and Trustees may stand for two terms.

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Person specification

Being a trustee can develop your strategic thinking, provide new experiences and perspectives, and help you gain valuable governance experience. You'll contribute to discussions and decisions on all aspects of our operation, get to know more about our history and royal heritage, and share your own professional expertise as appropriate. We look for the following attributes in trustees;

- A commitment to the mission of the RSN and willingness to meet the time requirement
- Integrity and good independent judgement
- Strategic Vision
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as part of a team and to take decisions for the good of the RSN

Further details

Please visit our website <https://royal-needlework.org.uk> to find out more about the RSN. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact us at p.w@royal-needlework.org.uk

To apply please send a CV and covering letter by 8th July 2022 explaining what you could bring to this role and why you would like to be a Trustee of the RSN via our advertisement on <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/> or to p.w@royal-needlework.org.uk