



## **Libraries Connected Trustee Pack**

### **Foreword/welcome from Ayub Khan, President of Libraries Connected and Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Dear colleagues,

**We are currently recruiting for two of our members to join the Board of Trustees.**

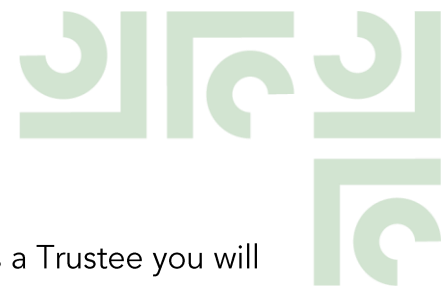
Public libraries help tackle some of society's biggest challenges by providing community infrastructure, access to culture, literacy and the written word, learning opportunities and the essential digital resources for modern life and we must ensure that decision-makers at all levels understand that libraries are crucially important to communities and must be funded accordingly.

**Our vision is an inclusive, modern, sustainable and high quality public library service at the heart of every community in the UK.**

**The core mission and purpose of Libraries Connected is to act as a connector and catalyst to enable public libraries to have greater collective impact on big societal challenges.**

Since becoming a charity in 2018, Libraries Connected has grown rapidly and delivered a wide range of national programmes, training and support to public libraries. We are pleased to have received a new funding settlement from Arts Council England as an Investment Priorities Support Organisation for the public libraries sector, and this will help us to deliver an ambitious strategy between 2023-27.

However, we have a lot of work to do. We are looking for people who understand the challenging financial situation we all find ourselves in and the need for strong and empathetic sector leadership at this time. We also need to diversify our Board and to enrich it by appointing people who are younger, Black, Asian and



ethnic minority candidates or D/deaf and disabled people. As a Trustee you will be a leader of the library sector.

This information pack will provide you with information about the key skills and attributes we are looking for in a trustee. We want everyone who believes they can contribute to Libraries Connected's board of trustees to feel welcome to apply and we particularly welcome applications from people aged under 35, Black, Asian and ethnic minority candidates and D/deaf and disabled people.

It is our responsibility to make the application process accessible, and to give you the information you need to decide whether you might wish to apply. If you require the pack or any further information in a different format, or have any questions before you apply, please get in touch with [info@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:info@librariesconnected.org.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Ayub Khan MBE**

**Libraries Connected President and Chair of the Board of Trustees**



## 1. About Libraries Connected

We became Libraries Connected in 2018 and our current work builds on 20 years' experience as the Society of Chief Librarians. Our programmes and support now extend beyond heads of public library services to all library workers. We generate income from membership subscriptions, commissioned services, events and grants, including from Arts Council England as an Investment Principles Support Organisation for the public library sector.

Across the areas we serve there are 178 individual library services, with around 3,000 branches, serving over 61 million people. Each has a unique local offer that reflects the needs of its communities, but by connecting and working together, libraries can act with greater impact.

We are focussing on the following four core areas of action over the next four years:

- **Drive** innovation at scale
- **Grow** and empower the sector through skills and diversity
- **Connect** individual library services to realise ambitions for the sector
- **Engage** and influence decision-makers to invest in the sector so that it can reach its potential

Through everything we do we seek to:

- Support climate responsibility and sustainability
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- Harness connection and collaboration
- Support sustainable financial models
- Operate at national and regional scale

Our website will provide you with more information about our programmes and what we do: [www.librariesconnected.org.uk](http://www.librariesconnected.org.uk).

You can also find a link to our new strategic plan here: [Libraries Connected publishes new strategic plan | Libraries Connected](#).



## 2. Trustee role

Our Board of Trustees comprises 13 Trustees:

Two people elected from our membership (President and President Elect), seven people appointed from our membership based on their skills and experience and four people appointed as independent trustees.

We are recruiting for two of our members to join the Board of Trustees. We are particularly looking for people with strong strategic management skills and a record of advocacy and influencing within and for the sector.

### Benefits of being a trustee

- You will have the chance to make a real and positive difference to public library staff and communities across the country through your skills and experience
- You will gain an insight into how the public library sector is innovating and delivering impact by visiting library services and attending events launching new programmes and initiatives
- You will gain new skills and experience that could help you develop professionally and in your personal life
- You will hone and develop your critical thinking and strategic skills
- Previous trustees say that experience as a Libraries Connected trustee has given them confidence to go on to take other governance positions

*'I have really felt that by being a trustee I have made a valuable contribution to the sector. I am able to share my skills, but have also learnt a great deal and gained strategic experience. I think sitting on the board helped me to develop and grow, but also gave me an opportunity to help and support others in the library world' (Carol Stump, former President and Chair of the Board of Trustees)*



## **Time commitment**

- This role will take approximately 12 days per year
- You will need to attend 4 to 5 meetings of the Board per year, with 4 meetings on average lasting a day and 1 meeting likely to stretch over 2 days.
- In addition you may be asked to be a member of a board Committee which generally meet 3 times each year.
- Trustees meetings will normally be held in person either in London or another city
- Whilst this is a volunteer role, reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed.
- The term of appointment will be three years initially with a review of performance for renewal for a further three years and again after this period for a maximum of nine years.

## **Trustee responsibilities**

Board members of Libraries Connected will be both directors of a company and trustees of a charity. They will therefore, have duties and responsibilities under company law and charity law.

As a trustee you will need to:

- Uphold and adhere to standards of charity governance as set out by the Charity Commission <https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/front-page>
- Ensure Libraries Connected complies with our articles of association and carries out our charitable objectives for the public benefit
- Share responsibility for ensuring that Libraries Connected complies with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Contribute to the strategic direction of the charity
- Monitor the performance of the executive against the organisation's strategic and operational plans
- Contribute to the identification and monitoring of risk
- Safeguard the good name and values of Libraries Connected
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of Libraries Connected
- Ensure the financial stability of Libraries Connected



- Ensure equality and diversity is prioritised in all aspects of the organisation's business and operation

Formal guidance on the responsibilities of trustees is issued by the Charity Commission: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

As well as being a registered charity Libraires Connected is a company limited by guarantee.

## **Trustee behaviours**

In addition to the legal responsibilities of a trustee, we expect all Libraries Connected trustees to:

- Attend all four board meetings a year, with a minimum attendance of three.
- Read all board papers in advance and arrive at Board meetings prepared.
- Participate in meaningful discussions at Board (and committees) with your expertise, skills, knowledge and experience.
- Scrutinise Board papers and challenge the Board, Executive and Board's advisers constructively, ask questions, be inquisitive and welcome challenge back.
- Active input into discussions, apply good judgement and contribute to the decision-making process.
- Be prepared to support the charity outside of board meetings.
- Build constructive, positive relationships with other Trustees and staff with a willingness to listen and understand.
- Seek and increase knowledge, understanding and be willing to learn and improve.
- Have courage to make difficult decisions when required.
- Be an ambassador and an advocate at all levels for the future of public libraries and for Libraries Connected.
- Maximise your networks and identify opportunities that will benefit Libraries Connected and public libraries.



### 3. How to apply

To apply to be a trustee, please send a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and covering letter setting out how you feel you will contribute to the Board and the leadership of the sector to

[info@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:info@librariesconnected.org.uk)

- All applications will be assessed by the Governance sub-committee of the Board
- **Please apply by the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.**
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to attend an interview on either the 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> of February. Interviews will be held in either London or Birmingham.
- Reasonable travel expenses will be paid for those invited to attend interviews
- The current Trustees are really keen to share their insights with those thinking of applying, so to arrange a conversation please email [info@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:info@librariesconnected.org.uk) by 3 February