

## SANSARA Chair of Trustees - Recruitment Information Pack 2024

A fantastic opportunity to chair an arts charity that is building a unique offering in choral music, focussed on social impact, and at a potentially transformative moment for increasing the scale of its work.

We are recruiting for a new Chair of Trustees to chair our board that has strong governance, public health, finance, and creative arts experience, from the 1st of August 2024 or earlier, as our current Chair resigns on the 31st July 2024.

Our current board is as follows:

- Dr Simon Tanner (creative health lead trustee)
- Rosamund Hatfield (development lead trustee)
- Benedict Inman (treasurer trustee)
- Michele Price (governance and legal trustee)
- Sarah Rennix (creative industry trustee)
- Henry Southern (creative industry trustee)

We welcome applications from people who are currently underrepresented in SANSARA and across professional choral music, particularly candidates from Black and Minoritised Ethnic communities and disabled candidates.

Role title

- Chair of Trustees

Location

- UK
- Board meetings are held virtually and in-person

Time commitment

- Quarterly Board meetings for approximately two hours (usually held on weekday evenings)
- Monthly operational and finance reviews with the executive for approximately one hour
- Various ad hoc requirements co-ordinating the board of trustees and supporting the Artistic Director
- Participation in working groups, committees and events as appropriate

Remuneration

- Reasonable expenses and training may be claimed

Recruitment process and timeline

1. Application by answering provided questions by 31.05.2024

2. Shortlisting by current Trustees and Executive by 10.06.2024
3. Virtual interview with two current Trustees and Artistic Director (between 10-24.06.24)
4. Offer of appointment by 01.07.24
5. Induction and welcome following appointment

### How to apply

If you feel you have the experience, energy, and commitment to make a meaningful contribution to the future of our organisation, we look forward to hearing from you.

To apply, please:

- answer the questions listed at the end of this document and send to [info@sansarachoir.com](mailto:info@sansarachoir.com)
- complete our [Equal Opportunities Monitoring form](#)

Submission format:

- Word/PDF document (preferred)
- Audio/video submission: Youtube/Vimeo/Soundcloud/cloud storage private link (no longer than 10 minutes)
- *Please contact us if you would like to discuss alternative ways to apply such as submitting answers by voice note or video.*

### Contact

If you have any questions about the position or would like to arrange an informal conversation before applying, please contact us on [info@sansarachoir.com](mailto:info@sansarachoir.com) and we will arrange a call with our Artistic Director.

### Questions for applicants

1. How can you demonstrate that you have the skills necessary for this role? Using examples, please describe your relevant experience in paid or voluntary positions. (500 words max.)
2. What opportunities for change do you see within the classical music sector and specifically for an organisation such as SANSARA? Please describe at least one area and how you think meaningful change could be delivered. (300 words max.)
3. In which areas would you be most committed to supporting SANSARA's work? (300 words max.)
4. What experience do you have of leadership through transformational periods in an organisation's development? (500 words max.)
5. Basic information:

- a. Name:
- b. Email address:
- c. Mobile number:
- d. Preferred pronouns:
- e. Any access requirements relevant to your application:

*You are welcome to include your CV with your application but this is not compulsory and won't affect the selection process.*

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*"Out of the plethora of vocal ensembles which we're fortunate to have in the UK, SANSARA stands out for me as something really exceptional" - JUDITH WEIR DBE, Master of the King's Music.*

SANSARA is a vocal collective making choral music that matters, giving voice to powerful human stories.

Drawing on the unrivalled expressive potential of the human voice, we connect new audiences with timeless music, offering unique opportunities for reflection and renewal.

Our work is rooted in artistic excellence and social engagement. Whether commissioning new music that brings refugee communities together or using ensemble singing to support the journey through bereavement, we believe in the transformative power of choral music to make meaningful connections in people's lives.

We respond to the present and breathe new life into our rich musical traditions.

We create artistic experiences which challenge the boundaries of form and genre, from intimate a cappella performances to immersive electronic soundscapes. We believe that working collaboratively, with authenticity and the highest levels of shared ambition, allows exceptional things to happen.

Established as a charity in 2018, SANSARA reaches 400,000+ audiences every year through our critically acclaimed programme of concerts, recordings and community partnerships. As a collective we are committed to developing a core group of musicians and musical entrepreneurs - with the skills and passion to explore a new purpose for choral music.

#### Why we exist

SANSARA believes that choirs are living, breathing entities with a unique expressive power to give voice to compelling human stories. We create opportunities for people to experience and explore what choral music can mean to them, via the very highest quality performances, recordings and partnerships.

The UK continues to be in the middle of a loneliness epidemic. 1 in 4 people are living with the devastating impact of social isolation on their physical and mental health. The legacy of a global pandemic, the climate emergency, cost of living and war in Europe and Gaza have all contributed to a peak in anxiety leaving many people grief-stricken, isolated and fearful. All of this in the midst of an over-stretched health system meaning that people need to find new ways to help themselves and each other.

Human connection is a crucial part of the answer.

*"exquisite...one of the few concerts I've attended that so thoroughly engaged with contemporary political events on such a sensitive scale"* - Audience member, Sanctuary & Solidarity performance.

Over the last seven years, SANSARA's unique choral offer and partnerships have created new spaces and contexts for connection, spirituality, reflection and growth. We have seen first-hand the impact that exceptionally high quality choral music can have on individuals and groups, whether at a concert or as part of a participatory experience.

SANSARA is open to everyone, sharing music we love in welcoming and beautiful settings. We invite our audiences to bring their own beliefs, experiences and emotions - and to join together in rare, genuine moments of connection.

*"The whole experience was almost unbearably moving"* - Audience member, Traces of the White Rose performance

Winners of the London International A Cappella Choir Competition, performance highlights include concerts at the Barbican, Kings Place, St John's Smith Square, V&A, St Martin-in-the-Fields and several leading UK festivals. Recent collaborations include projects with renowned viol ensemble Fretwork, United Strings of Europe and viola da gamba player Liam Byrne.

Our debut recording *Cloths of Heaven* (Convivium Records, 2017) received high praise for its "perfect intonation and clean, pure sound" (The Observer) and "breathtaking interpretations" (Choir & Organ). *The Waiting Sky* (Resonus Classics, 2019) was highlighted by Gramophone, The Observer, and BBC Music Magazine. The group's third album *Invisible Cities* (Resonus Classics, 2021) is a sequence of choral and electronic works by our Associate Composer Marco Galvani, recorded in the midst of the pandemic in late 2020.

Recent releases include *My North*, a commission by Rebecca Dale which we premiered at a commemorative event at the National Covid Memorial Wall, and *A Quiet Night - Tyhoyi Nochi* by Ukrainian composer Natalia Tsupryk, commissioned for Ukrainian Independence Day in August 2022. Our recordings have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and 4 (The Choir, Breakfast, Essential Classics, The World Tonight), Scala Radio, Soho Radio and NPO Klassiek.

Our latest album *Traces* was released in February 2023.

During the pandemic lockdowns, the choir produced two innovative digital projects with support from Arts Council England.

The group also performs at private events and has sung for Her Late Majesty the Queen.

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#### Role summary

- Providing leadership and direction to the Board of Trustees, enabling them to fulfil their responsibilities for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation.
- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its objects as defined in its governing document and guiding any changes in vision and mission.
- Working in partnership with the executive leadership, helping them to achieve the aims of the organisation and optimising their relationship with the Board.
- Facilitating the Trustees by stimulating creative, ambitious and carefully considered strategic decision-making.

#### Main responsibilities

##### In relation to the Board

- Formulate strategic plans and regular review of long-term strategic aims of the charity.
- Develop organisational policies, define goals, targets and evaluate performance against agreed targets.
- Approve the annual cycle of the board meetings, meeting agendas, chair and facilitate meetings, monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented.
- Liaise regularly with the Finance Manager to maintain a clear grasp of the charity's financial position and to ensure full and timely financial transparency and information disclosure to the Board.
- Lead and mentor other Board members to fulfil their responsibilities and enable access to training/coaching/information to enhance the overall contribution of the Board.
- Annually review the Board structure, role, staff relationships and ensure implementation of agreed changes/developments are carried out.
- Encourage team working among Board members and encourage them to identify and recruit new trustees as required.
- Create a strong, profitable and fulfilling working relationship with Trustees and the Artistic Director through review and self-reflective evaluation of contributions and effectiveness of the Board.

##### In relation to the Artistic Director (AD)

- In participation with the Board, lead the process of appraising and constructively guiding the performance of the AD.

- Assume guardianship of the legal and financial integrity of the organisation.
- Consult with and support the AD on matters of strategy, governance, finance and HR.
- Oversee the AD's activities in the context of the implementation of the Charity's strategy and policies.
- Maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the organisation.
- Receive regular informal progress reports of the organisation's work and financial performance through the AD and Finance Manager.

#### In relation to the community and code of conduct

- Represent the organisation as a spokesperson at appropriate events, meetings or functions.
- Lead the Board in fostering relations with potential partners/funders/donors.
- Act as final stage adjudicator for disciplinary and grievance procedures if required.
- Facilitate change and address conflict within the Board of Trustees, within the organisation and liaise with the AD to achieve this.
- Undertake review of external complaints as defined by the organisation's complaints procedure/safeguarding policy.
- Ensuring adherence and compliance around key policies to e.g. Equality of Opportunity, Health & Safety and in all decisions and discussions of the Board and its sub-committees.
- Attend and be a member of other committees or working groups when appropriate in role as Chair.
- In order to perform the above role, the Chair should have reasonable access to all staff and information, in line with the Board's fiduciary duties.

#### Benefits

- Lead the board of an ambitious and forward-looking arts organisation, guiding the next stage of its growth journey
- Lead on excellence in governance and strategic planning
- Gain experience in charity governance within the arts and culture sector
- Work alongside high calibre colleagues at Board and Executive level
- Expand network in the music sector

#### Qualities

##### Essential

- Demonstrable experience and expertise in one of the areas outlined above
- Commitment to the charity's objects, aims and values

- Commitment to devote time to carry out responsibilities and willingness to be available on an ad hoc basis for advice and enquiries
- Strategic and forward-looking vision in relation to the charity's work
- Analytical and evaluation skills, sound independent judgement, impartiality and confidentiality
- the ability to think creatively in the context of the organisation, including the conviction to make unpopular or challenging recommendations to the board
- Good communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to work effectively as part of a team
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship

#### Desirable

- Experience of chairing meetings, committee work, some experience of charity finance, charity fundraising
- Leadership skills exercised through a period change
- Prior experience as a trustee of a successful arts organisation
- Ability to connect the organisation with potential donors and/or corporate sponsors, industry contacts, potential partners/collaborators, established venues
- Knowledge of charity fundraising, financial management, safeguarding

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#### The Charity's Objects

(As set out in our current Constitution)

To promote the art of choral music for the public benefit by:

- A. the organisation and/or presentation of concerts of high educational and artistic merit, the production of recordings;
- B. the commissioning and performance of new music and/or the presentation of musical works of particular historical and cultural significance, research and presentation of musical editions;
- C. the organisation and presentation of concerts, workshops and collaborations with community musical groups, schools and other places of education;
- D. by such other means as the Board of Trustees shall from time to time determine.