

# TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK

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# A Welcome from the Chair, Ava Plowright



Dear candidate,

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a trustee of Awen Cultural Trust.**

As Chair, I am proud and privileged to be part of a dedicated and passionate team who resolutely believe in Awen's purpose of '*making people's lives better*'.

This vision is far-reaching and impactful. We will improve wellbeing by providing opportunity for people and communities to experience, enjoy and be inspired together by culture.

I am delighted to be part of an organisation which has positive and meaningful engagement with over one million people living across South Wales each year.

Whether they are part the audience at one of our theatres, a visitor to our country park, a member of our library services, or a trainee at our work-based programmes for adults with learning disabilities, each person and each community is significant to Awen.

At Awen, we are taking an agile approach to dealing with the challenges and opportunities currently facing the charity sector, changing the way we deliver our services and using our places and spaces differently in light of the cost of living crisis and financial pressures facing local authorities

We are constantly seeking new and innovative ways to reach more people, to embrace our Welsh identity, culture and language, to champion equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, and to demonstrate our commitment to environment sustainability.

Due to several trustees approaching the end of their terms of office, we wish to appoint individuals who can commit to the ongoing success of Awen Cultural Trust.

These roles will contribute to the strategic direction of Awen, whilst providing steer and good governance to the organisation. They will be proactive, be prepared to challenge and make high quality decisions in pursuit of our charity's objectives and in support of our beneficiaries.

Candidates should be committed to our vision and values, able to offer an objective perspective, enthusiastic and able to act as an advocate and ambassador for the organisation.

We are proactively encouraging applications from people of all ages, genders, anyone representative of the global majority, those who are LGBTQIA+, disabled and/or offer lived experience who can contribute to the work of Awen.

Our trustees will be fully supported with training and mentoring from fellow board members and Awen colleagues, enabling them to make a positive and long-term contribution to the charity. Trustee positions are voluntary, however out of pocket expenses will be paid to support inclusion.

We look forward to hearing from you.

**Ava Plowright, Chair**

# ABOUT AWEN CULTURAL TRUST

**Awen Cultural Trust is a registered charity. Our purpose is to make people's lives better. We do this by providing opportunity for people and communities to experience, enjoy and be inspired together, by culture.**


Awen works with partners in several sectors and is proud of the three local authority partnerships with Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf councils. Through these partnerships we operate a range of cultural facilities and activities, which include theatres, libraries, community centres, a country park and two work-based projects for adults with learning disabilities.


Awen also has a wholly owned trading subsidiary, Awen Trading Ltd, whose aim is to develop a group of socially responsible businesses that compete commercially, meet customer expectations and generate healthy profits which in turn are gifted aided to the parent charity.

To read our most recent Report of the Trustees, Strategic Report and Consolidated Financial Statements, please visit the Charity Commission website: <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/> and search for charity number 1166908.


## Our values

**At Awen, our values underpin all that we do.** They define who we are, what we say and do, and how we behave:

 **CREATIVE**  
Exploring fresh, creative ways to continually improve our operation, championing innovation and responding to the changing world.

 **COLLABORATIVE**  
Developing positive relationships internally and externally with colleagues, stakeholders and partners.

 **EMPOWERING**  
Empowering people to achieve their potential and make good things happen.

 **FAIR**  
Striving to be fair in all our dealings, respecting one another and the community.

Awen's work supports the seven goals outlined in the **Well-being of Future Generations Act**, which aims to improve the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Wales.

**A PROSPEROUS** Wales

**A RESILIENT** Wales

**A HEALTHIER** Wales

**A MORE EQUAL** Wales

A Wales of **COHESIVE COMMUNITIES**

A Wales of **VIBRANT CULTURE** and **THRIVING WELSH LANGUAGE**

**A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE** Wales

## Our strategic aims are focussed on three key areas:

### PEOPLE

We want to be a force for good in tackling social isolation and improving wellbeing, using culture to connect people, sustain communities and reducing barriers to participation.



### PLACES

We want to foster a sense of place and support local economic recovery by investing in our facilities, promoting their heritage, encouraging visitors and where we can, buying locally.



### GOOD BUSINESS

We will listen to our workforce and support their wellbeing; and we will maintain a focus on being a responsible, well governed and sustainable business.







## CREATING CULTURALLY VIBRANT COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE FEELS THEY BELONG

We will be launching our new strategy for 2025-30 in April.

Our goal is to create places and experiences that give people a sense of purpose, identity, expression and most of all a sense of belonging.

We want to make Awen an organisation that everyone feels they can be part of, aspire to work for and where people feel safe to be themselves. We want to put a sharper focus on tackling inequality, focussing more on the places, people and communities who experience the greatest challenges and feel under-represented.

### Our strategy themes include how we will play our role in supporting:

- Health inequality
- Those most vulnerable in society
- Volunteering
- Adults with learning disabilities
- Town centre regeneration
- Children's literacy / digital literacy
- Creative and cultural industries / skills and learning
- Climate emergency
- Organisational growth
- Welsh language
- Participation
- People

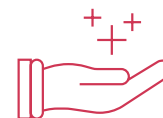
### Our strategy sets the direction and priority areas for our work for the next five years by outcome.

1. A healthy environment where future generations will benefit from a cleaner, more resilient and better understood planet.
2. Vibrant places to live and work with growing local economies and a proud sense of identity.
3. Everyone with the opportunity to achieve their potential with access to skills, support and help when they need it.
4. Healthy communities where everyone has the chance to lead healthy lives.
5. A sustainable organisation with Awen viewed as a responsible, fair, trusted employer and a partner of choice.

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

## OVER 1 MILLION

Individuals who have engaged with our work



**11,147** (2023-24)



**Library staff interactions aimed at improving social, digital and economic inclusion, wellbeing and community engagement**

Key to our success is developing new ideas, being passionate about what we offer, and innovative collaborations and partnerships.

**456,272** (2023-24)



**Library items borrowed**

Helping people to enhance their physical and mental health by preventing cognitive decline, increasing empathy, building their vocabulary, reducing stress, aiding sleep, alleviating depression, and enjoying escapism through the pleasure and experience of reading.

**359,371** (2023-24)



**People who visited the library**

Ensuring everyone has equal access to the power and pleasure of reading, information and ideas, experiencing new ideas, getting lost in wonderful stories, meeting new people, while at the same time providing a sense of place.

**207,499** (2023-24)



**Visits to Bryngarw Country Park**

Evidence shows that enjoying the great outdoors and engaging in our natural environment has many social, physical and mental health benefits, contributing to a healthier Wales.

**917** (2023-24)



**School children attending our environmental education programme at Bryngarw park**

Studies show that outdoor learning has a wide-reaching positive impact on children and young people's health and wellbeing, wider achievement, attainment levels and personal development.

**19** (WOOD-B)/ **33** (B-LEAF) (2023-24)



**Trainees at Wood-B and B-Leaf**

Our trainees are adults of all ages with learning disabilities, who are supported to achieve their full potential, and helped to lead confident, healthy and independent lives within a safe and nurturing work-based setting.

**91,064** (2023-24)



**Number of people who attended events at the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl, Blaengarw Workmen's Hall and Met, Abertillery**

Our venues are warm, welcoming and accessible community spaces where people of all ages and background can connect and enjoy shared social experiences.

**546** (2023-24)



**Hynt tickets issued**

Hynt is national access scheme that works with theatres and arts centres in Wales to make sure there is a consistent offer available for visitors with an impairment or specific access requirement, and their carers.

**2,049** (2023-24)



**Number of people who attended Welsh language or bilingual events at the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl and Met, Abertillery**

We are committed to increasing our Welsh language programming across all venues, working in partnership with Y Mentrau Iaith, local Welsh language schools and creative partners from across Wales.

**3**



**Major redevelopments of cultural spaces completed or underway**

Following the successful reopening of Maesteg Town Hall and Y Muni in Pontypridd in 2024, work continues on the multi-million-pound redevelopment of the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl.

# OUR TRUSTEE OPPORTUNITIES

**Awen is governed by a voluntary board of trustees who are responsible for leading the charity and ensuring it is fulfilling its objectives.**

Trustees offer a wide range of skills, attributes, lived experience and community knowledge that collectively enable them to provide leadership, strategic direction and good governance.

We are looking for trustees who can strengthen the board and we are particularly interested in hearing from those with particular skills and experience in the following areas:

- Strategic management of finance and accounting
- Health and social care
- Fundraising and communications
- Arts and culture

As a trustee, you must be able to demonstrate:

- An understanding of and commitment to supporting Awen to achieve its aims;
- An ability to support the continued growth and success of Awen, and;
- A commitment at all levels to working in the best interests of the charity.

All trustees will play a vital role in the oversight of the charity ensuring that it delivers against its charitable objectives, is financially sustainable, has strong governance and safeguards the name and values of the organisation.

## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We are committed to ensuring our board of trustees is representative of our communities and offers a diversity of ideas in support of what we do. As an employer, we are proud of our Disability Confident Leader status and our current and past involvement in the Pathways to Board scheme.

We are constantly seeking new and innovative ways to reach more people, embracing our Welsh identity, culture and language, championing diversity, equity, inclusivity and accessibility, and demonstrating our commitment to environmental sustainability.

We encourage applications from people of all ages, genders, anyone representative of the global majority, those who are LGBTQIA+, disabled and/or offer lived experience who can contribute to the work of Awen.



# BEING A TRUSTEE

At Awen, we value fresh perspectives and new ideas, as well as experience. As a trustee, your time and contribution to the charity's ongoing success will be greatly valued. All applications will be treated equally.



## Further information on the role of a trustee

For more information on the role of a trustee and wider charity governance, please review the Charity Governance Code at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved)

## Time commitment

Board meetings are usually held in person, at least quarterly. Hybrid options are available to support participation when circumstances dictate. You may be also be called to attend very infrequent 'special meetings', either online or in person, if there is an issue that needs immediate discussion or needs additional time that a board meeting would not allow. On average, the board meets for around 2.5 hours every two to three months. Trustees are expected to spend time reading the board papers in advance of the meetings and keeping up-to-date with Awen's activities.

Awen also has a Trading board and other sub-committees for Risk and Audit, and People and Inclusion.

Most trustees sit on one of these, depending on their skills and development opportunities, but trustees may be invited to attend as an observer in the first instance.

Trustees play an important ambassadorial role for Awen and it is expected you will attend a variety of events throughout the year. Trustees are invited to attend special occasions throughout the year, such as the annual pantomime at the Grand Pavilion, the celebration evening for B-Leaf and Wood-B trainees, and opening and anniversary events across our venues. They are also expected to engage with our work and be visible at venues, for example as a member of a local library or theatre attendee, at other times.

## Training

To support your professional development, a comprehensive training and induction process will be provided to all trustees on appointment. This will include access to all current policies and procedures, governing documentation, and copies of annual reports and accounts.

New trustees may also be assigned a mentor – another experienced trustee on the board – to provide support and guidance for up to a year.

There is also an annual Away Day for trustees, where additional training courses and seminars may be provided, as well as opportunities to visit and experience our venues first hand.

## Other support from us

All meetings are conducted in an inclusive way, with regular rest breaks and refreshments.

Specific, reasonable adjustments for communication can be provided.

## Expenses

Charity law in the UK does not allow trustees of a charity to be paid to be a trustee. However, to support inclusion we will cover **travel, subsistence and childcare costs**, to attend meetings, away days, training etc. *and we will pay these in a timely manner.*

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

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## The Charity Commission outlines the six main responsibilities of trustees:

1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.  
There's no legal definition of public benefit, but generally your purposes must be charitable, beneficial and benefit the public or a sufficient section of it.
  2. Comply with your charity's governing document and the law.
  3. Act in your charity's best interests.
  4. Manage your charity's resources responsibly.
  5. Act with reasonable care and skill.
  6. Ensure your charity is accountable.
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Along with your specific skills, the following outlines our expectations of all Awen trustees.

Applications will be assessed on your potential contribution to the board, not just your previous experience. Overall, a willingness to work together as part of a board committed to helping Awen achieve its aims is critical.

- Committed to Awen's vision, mission and values. Able to communicate this enthusiastically to others.
- A passion for Awen's work within the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries.
- A willingness to learn about the legal duties, liabilities and responsibilities of trustees and clear on the difference between governance functions and management functions.
- Able to work well as part of a diverse team of trustees.
- Respectful of the opinions and ideas of others.
- A willingness to contribute work or lived experience to help inform strategy development.
- A good communicator with excellent interpersonal skills, able to both empower and challenge supportively.
- Willing to engage with contacts and networks, and/or fulfil an ambassadorial role for the benefit of Awen, including attending events and activities.
- A willingness to learn more about the context in which Awen works.
- Able and willing to devote the necessary time to the role and a willingness to travel to visit Awen's sites and activities.



# APPLICATION PROCESS

If you would like to have an informal discussion with the Chair or Chief Executive before applying, please email [nicola.ashman@awen-wales.com](mailto:nicola.ashman@awen-wales.com) to make arrangements.

You can apply using any of the following formats:

## WRITTEN

CV and covering letter including how you match our requirements and what you would bring to the board.

## VIDEO

Via YouTube or Vimeo.

## AUDIO

Via a sound file.

Please email to [nicola.ashman@awen-wales.com](mailto:nicola.ashman@awen-wales.com) using 'Trustee Application' as the subject line.

If you are submitting a large file, please send it via the free sharing platform **WeTransfer**, but let us know by email so we can download it.

The closing date for applications is:

**FRIDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2025**

Interviews will be held with shortlisted candidates mid to late March.

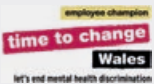
If there is anything we can do to make the recruitment process more accessible or inclusive for you, please let us know.

# awen



**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**  
We invest in wellbeing Gold  
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn llesiant Aur

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**  
We invest in people Silver  
Rydym yn buddsoddi mewn pobl Arian



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