



CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS RECRUITMENT PACK

ALL ABOARD!

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Push the Boat Out (PTBO) is an award-winning poetry-led arts charity, and a unique and vital part of Edinburgh and Scotland's cultural ecology. Founded in 2021 and established an SCIO in 2023, it is Edinburgh's first and only poetry festival, and one of only two in the whole of Scotland.

Our vision...

is of a world where poetry in all its forms can grow, evolve and expand its boundaries as a vibrant and meaningful part of people's everyday lives.

Our mission...

is to bring artists, audiences and participants together to access, create, celebrate and make meaning through the vibrant range of contemporary poetry and related artforms from Scotland and beyond, both through our annual festival and our year-round programme, with a strong community engagement element.

Fresh, vibrant and innovative, we strive to increase the diversity of poetry in Scotland – in form, in cross-art form pollination, in the voices we platform, and in who feels welcomed as part of our audiences and participants.

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

We are now seeking:

A new Chair of the Board who in addition to general Board Member duties, will provide leadership to the Board, support the Director, and ensure strong governance and strategic direction.

2–3 new Board Members who can bring skills, experience and enthusiasm to support our growth.

We welcome candidates from diverse backgrounds who can help shape the future of PTBO.

Time Commitment

As a small and young organisation we are looking for people who, while understanding the separation between Board and staff team, are able to roll up their sleeves and get involved. We anticipate a time commitment on average of no more than 1 day per month for general Board Members and 1.5 days per month for the Chair.

This includes a minimum of 4 annual board meetings (held online or in person), as well as an annual strategy session. Board members also contribute to sub-groups (currently Finance and Fundraising), task and finish groups around policy or other key areas. Intermittent email correspondence and occasional ad hoc meetings may also be required. The Chair meets up to twice a month with the Director.

Board members are also expected to be available during the festival (this year taking place from 21-23 November, 2025).



BOARD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Thank you for considering joining the Board of Push the Boat Out.

Strong and committed Board Members are vitally important to achieving our vision, mission and aims. Alongside the Chair and Director, they are responsible for setting our strategy and ensuring that it is implemented. They also ensure high quality governance, compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements and that the charity is resilient and sustainable.

Having recently secured multi-year funding from Creative Scotland, Push the Boat Out is ready to consolidate our success and continue towards our next chapter. This is a very exciting time to join us as we head into our fifth festival, grow our year round programme, and further develop our engagement work.

Main duties

- Ensure PTBO complies with its constitution, charity law and other relevant legislation.
- Contribute to the development and oversight of PTBO's strategy and activities.
- Provide scrutiny of financial management, risk management and organisational performance.
- Review and approve organisational policies.
- Act as an enthusiastic and engaged advocate and ambassador for PTBO.
- Champion equality, diversity, inclusion and environmental sustainability across all areas of PTBO's work.
- Support fundraising and partnership development as appropriate.
- Act as the employer for all staff and freelancers, with key responsibility for appointment, supervision and support of the Director.
- Recruit future members of the Board.
- Share expertise, advice and contacts related to your specialist field, providing advice and support to the Director between meetings if necessary.
- Ensure that conflicts of interest are declared.



BOARD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION (CONT)

Person specification

- Commitment to PTBO's vision, mission and values.
- Interest in literature, poetry and the arts and commitment to becoming well-informed about the work of PTBO.
- Enthusiasm and willingness to contribute time and networks to support the charity.
- If relevant, prepared to share knowledge, contacts and experience and to make introductions and broker relationships.
- Ability to think strategically, work collectively as part of a Board and offer constructive challenge where appropriate.
- A willingness and ability to work collaboratively to find solutions.
- A high level of integrity and ability to treat sensitive information confidentially.
- Understanding of the role of a charity board and of good governance.

We are particularly keen to hear from people with expertise in:

- Fundraising and philanthropy
- Financial management
- Legal and/or HR
- Literature and/or poetry
- Equality, diversity and inclusion

Practical Details

- This is a voluntary, unpaid position. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.
- Location: Edinburgh / hybrid / online.
- Term of office: 3 years, renewable for a further three years.



CHAIR ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Chair of the Board is also a Board Member as outlined above, with additional critical internal and external roles.

Key to role of Chair is providing leadership to fellow board members, and spearheading effective governance of the organisation. They will develop a supportive and collaborative relationship with the Director to help them achieve the organisation's strategic aims.

Main duties

The Chair will fulfil the duties of a general Board Member outlined above and in addition will:

- Provide leadership to the Board, to ensure that all members are engaged and providing effective oversight and scrutiny of our activities.
- Work in close collaboration and act as a sounding board and critical friend to the Director, as well as overseeing their work.
- When required, play a key public-facing role representing the charity and festival, as well as developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders and advocating for the organisation.
- Plan the annual cycle of board meetings and set the agendas.
- Chair Board meetings and the annual strategy session.
- Ensure board meetings are minuted and that decisions taken in board meetings are clear and subsequently implemented.
- Support Board development and succession planning.



CHAIR ROLE DESCRIPTION (CONT)

Person specification

In addition to the general Board Member specification above, we are seeking a Chair with:

- Prior experience of charity board membership.
- Ideally, previous experience as a Chair (not essential).
- Strong understanding of charity governance.
- Understanding of management of small charities and senior experience in a charity, cultural or public sector context.
- Strong communication and facilitation skills.
- Ability to lead and motivate a diverse range of board members constructively, supportively and with integrity to reach agreed actions.

Practical Details

- This is a voluntary, unpaid position. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.
- Location: Edinburgh / hybrid / online.
- Term of office: 3 years, renewable for a further three years.



HOW TO APPLY



Please send a letter of interest (max. 2 pages) stating which position you would like to be considered for and highlighting your relevant skills and experience. Please also send your CV to recruitment@pushtheboatout.org.

We particularly encourage applications from people who are under-represented on charitable boards and who will bring diversity to our approach and perspectives. If you need any additional support to enable you to apply for this position then please get in touch at the above email address.

Deadline:

9am, Monday 3 November 2025

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet the interview panel online.

If you would like an informal conversation before applying, please contact recruitment@pushtheboatout.org and our Director or current Chair will be in touch.

For further information about PTBO, please visit pushtheboatout.org and our social channels (@PTBOPoetry).