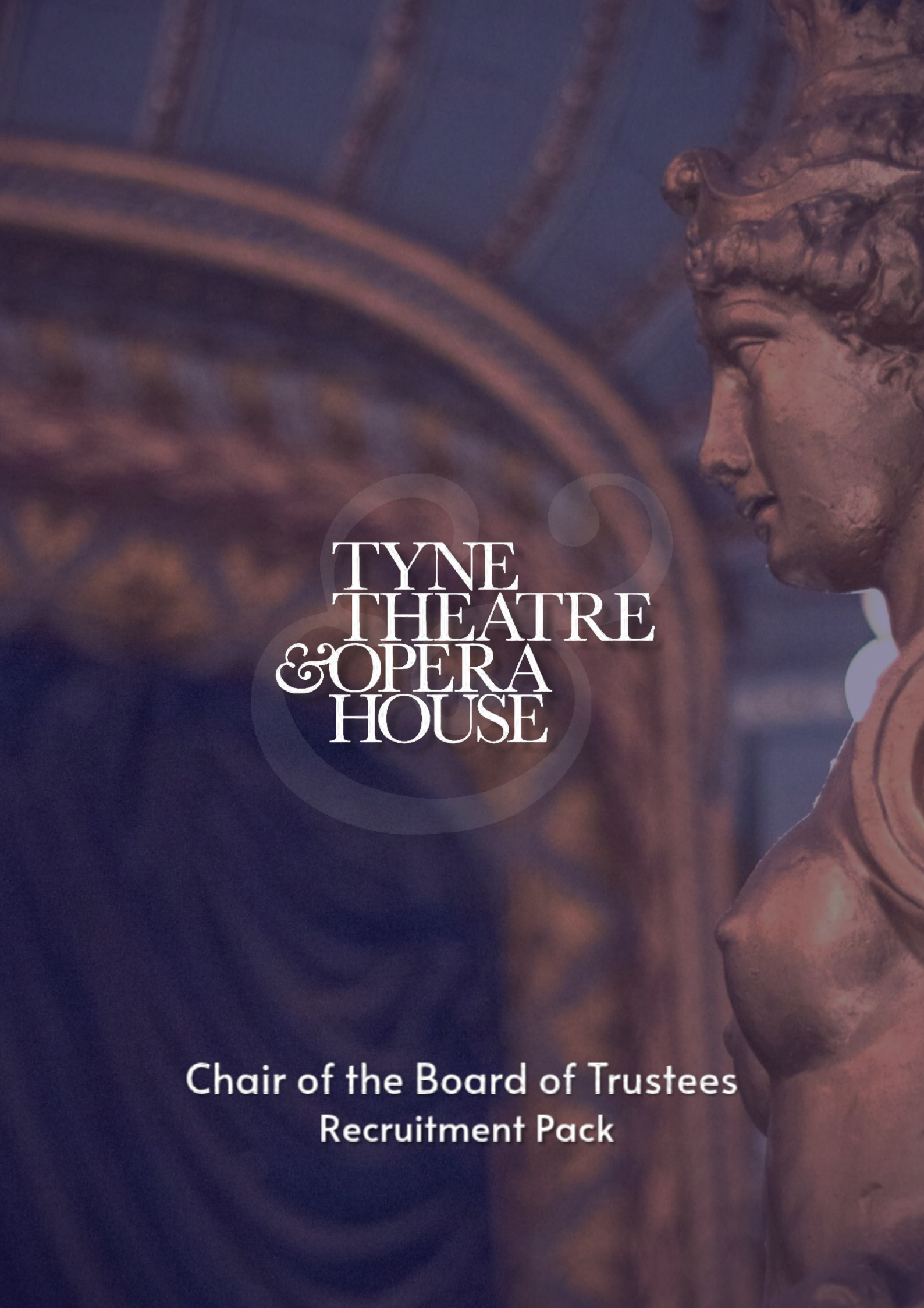




TYNE THEATRE & OPERA HOUSE

Chair of the Board of Trustees
Recruitment Pack

Welcome from our Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust.

The Tyne Theatre and Opera House stands as one of the North East's most treasured cultural landmarks. A Grade I listed Victorian gem, founded in 1867 by Joseph Cowen to be "a Theatre for the People." More than 150 years later, that vision continues to shape who we are.

Our theatre remains a place where communities come together, where creativity thrives, and where the famously warm Geordie welcome is felt by audiences and artists alike.

The achievements of the Trust are deeply rooted in this ethos. As an independent, not-for-profit charity, every success we celebrate is reinvested directly into the preservation and revitalisation of this remarkable building. From safeguarding original Victorian stage machinery to improving our accessibility and audience experience, the Trust has worked tirelessly to protect and enhance the theatre for future generations.

We are now entering one of the most exciting chapters in our recent history. The Trust is progressing ambitious funding and capital development plans that will secure the long-term sustainability of the building, strengthen our heritage offer, and elevate the artistic and community impact of the theatre. This is a pivotal moment - full of opportunity, challenge, and the potential to shape the theatre's future for decades to come.

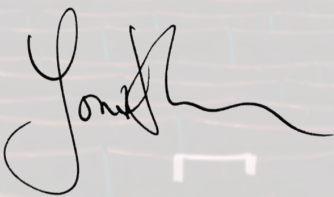
In this context, the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees is of profound importance. We are seeking an individual of experience, gravitas, and genuine passion for culture and heritage. You will bring significant leadership experience, either from senior executive positions or previous trustee roles within a cultural charity; and the confidence to guide the Trust through a period of strategic growth and transformation.

This is a rare opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the future of one of Newcastle's most beloved venues, and to honour our heritage, while helping shape an ambitious, sustainable, and inspiring future.

We hope you feel energised by this prospect and encouraged to apply. Please do consider carefully the time, commitment, and preparation required for the role; the impact of your leadership will be felt not only by the organisation, but by the audiences, artists, and communities we serve.

We look forward to reading your application and to welcoming the next Chair who will help guide this remarkable theatre into its next era.

Very best wishes,



Jonathan Higgins



About us...

The Tyne Theatre and Opera House Preservation Trust is an independent charitable organisation dedicated to the preservation, restoration and sustainable operation of the Tyne Theatre and Opera House – a magnificent Grade I listed building dating from 1867.

Our mission is to protect, preserve and celebrate the heritage of this iconic building, ensuring it continues to serve as a vibrant venue for live performance, creative learning, and community engagement.

Working in partnership with our operating company, the Trust plays a crucial role in fundraising, advocacy, strategic development, and oversight of major capital projects.

Our recent achievements...

In recent years, the Trust has made significant progress in strengthening the theatre's position both culturally and financially. Highlights include:

- Securing major funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and other partners for restoration and improvement works.
- Completing significant heritage and audience development projects, including the Gallery Reseating Project, which transformed the auditorium and increased capacity.
- Investing in accessibility, safety, and building conservation – ensuring the theatre meets the needs of modern audiences while safeguarding its historic character.
- Establishing a revitalised collaboration between Trustees and the operating company's executive team, delivering a sustainable business model rooted in artistic excellence, commercial resilience, and community impact.

This progress provides a strong foundation for an ambitious long-term vision: to secure the theatre's future as a world-class heritage venue and a cornerstone of Newcastle's cultural life.



The Role of Chair

The Chair will lead the Board of Trustees in setting and overseeing the strategic direction of the Trust, working closely with the Chief Executive and fellow Trustees to ensure the charity fulfils its mission and operates with integrity, effectiveness, and ambition.

This is a role for a highly engaged leader who can dedicate time and energy to both governance and hands-on involvement, offering more active support than is typically expected of a Trustee. The successful candidate will act as a visible champion for the Trust, fostering strong partnerships, guiding strategic development, and supporting the Chief Executive and team to deliver major initiatives.

Key Responsibilities:

- Lead the Board in providing strategic guidance, oversight, and governance.
- Work closely with the Chief Executive as a trusted partner, providing constructive challenge and support.
- Represent the Trust publicly, building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, funders, and partners.
- Actively contribute time beyond formal meetings, engaging directly in advocacy, development, and major projects.
- Ensure the Board operates effectively, promoting a culture of openness, collaboration, and accountability.

Our Executive Team and officers of the Trust will support our new Chair to ensure they understand their responsibilities in accordance with the charity's Articles and Objectives.

Training will follow the Charity Commission guidance and offers a 'core syllabus' covering the basics of charity governance that all Trustees should be familiar with.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

- Chief Executive
- Company Secretary
- Trustees
- Directors of the operating company
- Executive Management Team



Who We Are Looking For...

We are seeking a Chair with significant leadership experience in a relatable charity setting. The postholder will possess a deep interest in theatre, culture and the arts. The ideal candidate will bring a blend of strategic thinking, practical involvement, and an ability to inspire others.

You may have experience as a board or executive leader in arts or cultural management, or possess demonstrable knowledge of charity or trust governance. Beyond technical expertise, we are looking for someone who can commit time, energy, and enthusiasm to the role, and who takes genuine pleasure in helping an organisation grow and flourish.

We particularly welcome individuals who can demonstrate:

- Experience of chairing or leading at board or senior executive level.
- Understanding of charity governance and best practice.
- Passion for heritage preservation, performing arts, or cultural leadership.
- The ability to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and act as an ambassador for the theatre.
- A willingness to be actively involved in the Trust's work beyond formal meetings.

Practical Details

- Role: Chair of the Board of Trustees (Voluntary, non-remunerated)
- Commitment: Minimum of four Board meetings per year in Newcastle upon Tyne. Regular engagement with the Chief Executive, sub-committees, and at events.
- Term: Initial term of three years (renewable)
- Location: Newcastle upon Tyne

How to Apply

To express your interest, please send:

- A covering letter outlining your interest in the role and what you believe you could bring to the Trust.
- A CV summarising your professional experience and relevant skills.

Please email your application to riikka.heiskanen@ttoh.uk (for the attention of the Chief Executive) by 5.00pm on Wednesday 31st December.

For an informal conversation about the role, please contact Jonathan Higgins, Chief Executive, via the same email address.

Forward Together...

This is a pivotal moment in the Tyne Theatre's story. Our new Chair will play a defining role in protecting an irreplaceable piece of our shared cultural heritage - and in shaping an inspiring, sustainable future for one of the North East's most treasured theatres.

Thank you for your interest in the role. We look forward to hearing from you.