



BENSLOWMUSIC

Trustees Recruitment Pack

Introduction

Benslow Music is looking for new Trustees to join the charity's Board of Trustees.

Now is an exciting time to join the organisation as it continues to shape and develop its programme. Following the arrival of a new Chief Executive at the beginning of the year, the organisation is entering a period of strategic renewal and building towards its centenary in 2029.

Benslow Music's Trustees have legal and financial responsibility for the charity and are responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the organisation in partnership with the Chief Executive. Day to day management of the organisation is delegated to a professional administrative team led by the Chief Executive. Trustees are also ambassadors for the charity, supporting the team in fundraising and developing networks that will enable Benslow Music to realise its ambitions.

We welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds, lived experience and professional knowledge. Following a recent skills audit, we are keen to hear from individuals with experience in the following areas:

- Professional experience in the cultural/music education sectors
- Finance
- Marketing and communications
- Fundraising
- Strategic development
- Health & Safety and/or building/estate management
- HR
- Charity governance

Application timeline:

Opportunity launched	24 April
Deadline for applications	22 May
Conversations with potential Trustees	3-17 June
Appointment	July

Please see the **How to Apply** section for further details.

About Benslow Music

Benslow Music creates music learning experiences for people of all ages. We support individual development, inspire curiosity, celebrate creativity, and share all the life-long benefits music brings. We do this through a programme of residential, day and online music courses, a concert series and an instrument loan scheme.

At our campus in Hitchin, we welcome and provide learning opportunities to adult musicians of all abilities. We support everyone from late-starters to early-career professionals in unlocking their potential. We offer around 150 short courses throughout the year, covering genres from classical to jazz to folk, and opportunities to explore solo, small and large ensemble playing. Through regular concerts we provide a platform for emerging and acclaimed artists.

Benslow Music is home to the Benslow Music Instrument Loan Scheme, which holds a collection of over 800 string and woodwind instruments that are lent to young musicians aged 7-25. Each year over 500 loans ensure that borrowers, regardless of background, are able to grow and develop as musicians.

Benslow Music began as the Rural Music Schools Association in 1929, offering musical education to people of all ages who were outside urban centres. In 1952, the four-acre Victorian estate in Hitchin was bequeathed to the RMSA and has since developed into a lively campus for music activity, with two recital halls, practice rooms and accommodation for around 50 people. Renamed Benslow Music Trust in 1986, the Trust subsequently took responsibility for the Benslow Music Instrument Loan Scheme.

Plans for the future include ongoing development of creative music activities for all ages, an expanded online offer, additional collaborative and partnership working, and further development of our site facilities and accommodation. In short, Benslow Music weathered the pandemic and is now poised for continued evolution and diversification to reach new audiences in each area of activity. This is an exciting time at which to be joining the organisation, as we look towards our centenary celebrations in 2029.

About the Trustee role

Trustees play a vital role in ensuring that Benslow Music is able to achieve its vision and charitable objectives, providing critical challenge and oversight. The Board is a collective body. All Trustees share responsibility for decision making, being expected to act in the best interests of the charity.

Trustees have several areas of responsibility, some of which are defined by the [Charity Commission](#). Additionally, Trustees are expected to:

- Ensure that the organisation uses its resources to pursue its charitable objects
- Oversee the strategic direction of the organisation, supporting its development through good governance
- Ensure that the organisation complies with legal requirements, particularly in the areas of finance, health and safety, and safeguarding
- Use personal skills, expertise and time to support the organisation's development
- Actively participate in board meetings, committees and working groups as required.
- Act as an ambassador for Benslow Music
- Undertake tasks required by the Board from time to time

Time Commitment

The expected commitment is roughly equivalent to one day per month, although more may be required from time to time.

The Board meets four times per year, plus an Annual General Meeting held in June. These meetings are hybrid, and can be attended virtually or in person at Benslow. Where possible we encourage Trustees to attend meetings in person. Time will also be needed to read meeting papers.

Alongside, further informal meetings are held online, designed to give Trustees more space and time to discuss additional strategic areas. Trustees will usually be allocated to committees and working groups with delegated responsibilities based on their expertise and interests. Trustees are also expected to attend events at Benslow as their time permits.

Terms

Trustees are subject to periodic re-election by members on a rotational basis, typically every three years. There is currently no limit to their total length of service but this is under consideration by the Board. All Trustees are required to sign a declaration that they understand the legal responsibilities of being a Trustee and meet the [eligibility requirements](#). All Trustees are also required to complete an enhanced DBS check.

Being a Trustee is a voluntary role, however reasonable expenses are paid to Trustees to ensure they can effectively participate in Board meetings. This may include expenses such as travel or a contribution towards childcare.

About you

We are seeking individuals who are forward-thinking, fair-minded and committed to the continued development of the organisation. You will be enthusiastic about the work of Benslow Music, sharing our values and vision and excited to join an organisation going through a period of change.

We are keen to hear from individuals who can show:

- Commitment to Benslow Music and its values
- Curiosity
- Openness and integrity
- Ability to make sound and informed decisions
- Creative and strategic thinking
- Ability to collaborate and communicate with a team
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Strong advocacy skills to act as an ambassador
- Understanding of the legal responsibilities of being a Trustee

We would like the Board to represent a broad range of skills, knowledge and lived experiences to help with its critical and strategic oversight. We are open to hearing from all professional backgrounds, in response to a recent skills audit we are keen to appoint Trustees with experience in:

- Cultural, music or music education sectors
- Finance
- Marketing and communications
- Fundraising
- Strategic or business development
- Health & Safety and/or building/estate management
- HR
- Charity governance

There is no requirement to have previous Trustee experience and training will be given to first-time Trustees.

We welcome all applications from people of all backgrounds, in particular from those who will diversify the lived experience of the Board, for example in terms of gender, disability, age and ethnic background.

Organisation structure

Benslow Music is a group of three entities led by Benslow Music Trust, a registered charity (313663) and a company limited by guarantee (408404). Trustees are both Trustees of the charity and Directors of the company. Benslow Music Trust is the corporate Trustee of Benslow Music Instrument Loan Scheme (BMILS), a registered charity (313755). Benslow Music Enterprises (registered company 10967344) is a trading subsidiary of Benslow Music Trust through which we conduct non-charitable activity.

The Board of Trustees currently numbers 11, with a number of Trustees due to retire at our next AGM. The Board is a welcoming and collaborative group which enjoys discussion and debate. Trustees act as critical friends to the organisation while meeting their legal and governance obligations.

Management of the organisation is through the professional staff team. This is led by the Chief Executive with support from senior management team (Heads of Finance, Music, BMILS, Operations and Development) and the wider staff team in administration and hospitality, numbering around 40 people in total.

How to apply

To apply, please email Michael Duffy, Chief Executive on michael@benslowmusic.org with the following:

- Your CV
- A supporting statement (max 2 pages of A4) explaining why you are interested in becoming a Trustee of Benslow Music and how your skills and experience will support the strategic oversight of the organisation. Please state in the letter that you are eligible to become a Trustee and your willingness to complete an enhanced DBS check
- A completed equal opportunities monitoring form (this is anonymous and will be stored separately from your application)

Deadline for applications: **10am on Wednesday 22 May**

Applications will be reviewed by the Nominations Committee of current Trustees, who will shortlist candidates to invite for further conversations during 3-17 June to be held via videocall.

We anticipate that selected candidates will be invited to attend and observe a Board meeting before being formally appointed as Trustees.

If you would like to arrange an informal pre-application conversation to discuss the role further, please email michael@benslowmusic.org.

We are keen to ensure that our recruitment process is accessible to everyone. If you have any access requirements or barriers to application, please email michael@benslowmusic.org to discuss how we might make reasonable adjustments to the process.