



Chair Vacancy - Specification

About the Organisation

Founded in 1980, the award-winning Finborough Theatre in Earl's Court, West London, presents plays and music theatre, concentrating exclusively on vibrant new writing and unique rediscoveries.

It has been described as "probably the most influential fringe theatre in the world" by *Time Out*, and "one of the best batting averages of any London company" by *The New York Times*, with productions regularly transferring to the West End, Off-Broadway and internationally.

The Finborough Theatre has an unparalleled track record of attracting the finest talent who have become leading voices in British theatre. Under Artistic Director Neil McPherson, it has discovered some of the UK's most exciting new playwrights including Laura Wade, James Graham, Mike Bartlett, Jack Thorne, Nicholas de Jongh and Anders Lustgarten.

The Finborough Theatre won the 2020 and 2022 *London Pub Theatres* Pub Theatre of the Year Award, *The Stage* Fringe Theatre of the Year Award in 2011 and nominated in 2026, the Empty Space Peter Brook Award in 2010 and 2012 and nominated in 2023 and 2024, and was nominated for an Olivier Award in 2017 and 2019. Neil McPherson was awarded the Critics' Circle Special Award for Services to Theatre in 2019. It was the only non-public funded theatre ever to be awarded the Channel 4 Playwrights Scheme bursary twelve times. It recently received a significant organisational development funding grant from Arts Council England.

The business of fringe theatre remains challenging. The board and management have developed a new set of strategic objectives, to ensure that the quality of the work remains world class, and address the sustainability of our business model.

The theatre is a charity registered with the Charities Commission, and a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by a board of directors who are also trustees and members of the company.

The role

The Chair will provide strategic leadership to the Finborough Theatre's board, ensuring that it governs the charity effectively in service of its vision and mission. We are looking for someone with an enthusiasm for our theatre and a commitment to be an advocate for the organisation; someone with a willingness to actively engage with the work of the organisation and work as a member of the team.

The Chair will guide the team of directors to provide support and challenge to the Artistic Director, General Manager, staff and volunteers.

The Chair will oversee the governance, compliance and financial management of the charity, ensure that it maintains good practice, fulfils its charitable aims and achieves financial sustainability.

The Chair's responsibilities

- Bring a knowledge of the evolving landscape of London theatre, including sustainable theatre revenue streams, particularly in the context of a small fringe venue.
- Play a leading role in the charity's fundraising effort through their presence, contacts, or activity as appropriate.

- Ensure a clear and appropriate strategy is set and delivered.
- Lead a supportive and engaged board to ensure it fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the organisation.
- Working with other board members, ensure compliance with the law, Charity Commission, Companies House, financial reporting rules, and any other applicable regulatory bodies.
- Support board development including recruitment, induction and retention of suitably skilled and committed trustees.
- Optimise the relationship between the board, staff, and other stakeholders.
- Chair board meetings, AGMs, and contribute to meetings to support the trustees and staff.
- Serve as a spokesperson and ambassador for the Finborough Theatre.

Required skills, experience and aptitudes

- An understanding of the UK theatre industry, together with the broader arts sector and arts funding, or a commitment to gain such understanding. The board includes other theatre professionals to support this.
- Experience of leading skilled managers or professionals.
- Experience in developing and delivering strategy at a senior level.
- An open leadership style with the ability to listen and engage effectively, comfortable with challenge and debate, able to encourage that in others whilst fostering a collaborative board environment.
- Experience in championing an organisation's work, through personal networks, social media, and other channels, so as to secure funding, resources, partnerships and opportunities for the organisation.
- A strong personal commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion, and belonging.
- Ability to be responsive when advice, support or authorisation is needed.
- Ability to use financial reports effectively for decision-making (e.g. budgets, management reporting, balance sheet, profit and loss, cash flow)
- Experience of being a charity trustee is helpful, but not essential.

Personal attributes

Candidates with the following personal attributes will best fit our Board's objectives:

- Commitment and the ability to consistently engage and follow-through
- Intellectual curiosity
- Rational thinking
- Independent judgement with a willingness to speak out
- Effective communication skills
- Team player
- Willingness to serve as an ambassador for the Theatre, as appropriate
- Support for diversity and inclusivity

We will explore this further with candidates at interview stage.

Terms of office

The Chair, like other board members needs to attend full board meetings around ten times a year, generally held in the early evening in person where possible and via Zoom when not.

The Chair is likely to spend 1–2 days per month supporting strategic planning, recruitment, governance, and reporting, with the flexibility to respond swiftly to occasional urgent issues.

As with trustees, the Chair is expected to attend at least three of our shows every year.

The appointment is for an initial term of three years, subject to a majority vote of the Board.

Application

We encourage applications from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate based on disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, class or age.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact the current Trustees at chairofboard@finboroughtheatre.co.uk

To apply, please provide your customised CV and cover letter (maximum 2 sides), explaining:

- why you are motivated to join our Board as Chair
- how you meet our required attributes.

Applications should be addressed sent to chairofboard@finboroughtheatre.co.uk

The deadline is Friday, 31 July 2026 at 6.00pm

Website www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk