



Birmingham  
Museums



# **Birmingham Museums Trust & Birmingham Museums Trading Limited**

**Recruitment Pack:  
Chair and Director of Trading Company (also serving as Trustee of Board  
of Birmingham Museums Trust)**

**Directors of Trading Company**

**(Voluntary)  
May 2026**

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Birmingham Museums Trust. Registered Office: Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square, Birmingham B3 3DH  
Company No: 07737797 | Charity No: 1147014 | VAT Reg No: 765 3574 02**

## Welcome

Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) is an independent charity, spun out from Birmingham City Council (BCC) as a Trust in 2012 and entrusted with a contract until 2043 to manage its world class, accredited and designated collections and nine museum sites. Through the development of our 2025-30 Strategic Plan, we have begun the work of investing in the city's greatest cultural asset, to create a world class museum service, which can be at the forefront of making Birmingham a great place to live, work, play and visit. And even beyond this, to deliver our mission as part of the wider arts and culture sector.

We recognise our obligation to be more entrepreneurial and to generate more income to capitalise on both the core investment by the city (48% of BMT's income, 2024/25), and the support of Arts Council England (ACE) and our many other funders and supporters. As part of our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, our Financial Aim by 2030 is to be a sustainable, more independent organisation that provides affordable, surplus-generating paid services and experiences that add social and economic value to Birmingham. We will do this by growing each of our major earned revenue streams, capitalising on increased relevance and engagement to increase and diversify our audiences, positively impacting revenue.

Our Trading Company, Birmingham Museums Trading Limited is key to this, and the Board of our Trading company is key to that in turn. We are now seeking to recruit a new Chair and Director of our Trading company (who will also serve as a Trustee on the Board of Birmingham Museums Trust) as well as up to three additional Directors of the Trading company.

Closing date: 12 noon, Friday 12 June



Stephen Hughes,  
Chair of the Board



Sara Wajid MBE,  
Co-CEO



Zak Mensah,  
Co-CEO

## Statement from our Citizens' Jury, January 2025

*"At the beginning of this process we didn't know what to expect. Many of us haven't been to a museum in a long time, we didn't know what Birmingham Museums Trust was about, and what it could mean to us. We were not engaged and did not feel close to our museums.*

*As a result of the process, we feel more pride in our museums and the city. We heard a range of perspectives speaking on diverse topics that relate to how the industry works. As a group of different people with different lives we have different opinions but have found consensus in our shared aspirations for Birmingham Museums Trust to thrive. We feel more connected to our museums and hopeful for their future. We have enjoyed being a part of this decision-making process and it has made us advocate for and promote our museums in our own communities.*

*Our museums need to update how they are perceived in Birmingham and on a national stage. The re-opened Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is much more appealing; we hope to see this continued across the other sites and that the Trust makes sure the people are aware of the amazing things it has to offer and the process it has gone through.*

*We acknowledge our museums are fighting for their survival; they must take risks in their bid to be inspiring, educating, engaging to all. It is important for our museums to involve and represent the communities they are responsible to, i.e. the people of Birmingham and they shouldn't be precious about doing so. We deserve museums that are proud of us, that we can be proud of, that celebrate what's unique about Birmingham.*

*The voice of the museum is to some extent, the voice of the people, and we want everyone to hear us a mile coming."*



## **Our mission, vision, impact and values**

### **Our Mission**

Bring Birmingham out by shining new light on people's stories, collections and creativity.

### **Our Vision**

A radical reinvention of the museum as a catalyst of cultural and social change.

### **Our Impact on Birmingham**

Birmingham is a vibrant, interconnected city where cultural richness thrives, citizens are empowered, communities find joy and belonging, trust is nurtured, inequalities are diminished, and sustainability and equity are central to our society.

### **Our Values**

- Radical inclusion
- Collective spirit
- Discovering wonder
- Taking care



## About Birmingham Museums Trust

We operate nine museum sites, showcasing the heritage and communities of Birmingham:

- Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
- Thinktank
- Museum Collection Centre
- Aston Hall
- Blakesley Hall
- Museum of the Jewellery Quarter
- Sarehole Mill
- Soho House
- Weoley Castle

Across those, we manage Birmingham's museum collection on behalf of the City Council: Birmingham's greatest cultural asset, it is one of the top three most important civic museum collections in the UK - a priceless resource for learning, engagement and creativity.

An encyclopaedic collection of over one million objects and specimens covering art, human history, science and industry, and natural science, it represents all corners of the globe, and the pre-historic to the contemporary.

Most of the collections are Designated by Arts Council England as being of national importance while many are of international significance such as the finest collection of pre-Raphaelite art in the world and the Ancient Near Eastern archaeological collection and – closer to home - the Anglo-Saxon Staffordshire Hoard.

We have, more recently, won awards for an audience-led approach to contemporary collecting, developing the collection so it better represents and reflects the stories, histories and creativity of the people of this ever-changing and increasingly diverse city.



## Our Funding

BMT receives £6.3m per annum from Birmingham City Council to deliver the Services Contract and cover rent for Thinktank. This requires BMT to:

- Operate the museum sites to the UK Museum Accreditation standard
- Manage, care for and develop the museum buildings and collection owned by the Council in accordance with the lease agreements, UK Museum Accreditation Standard and the Code of Ethics for Museums.
- Deliver museum services that engage the public with the collection and buildings including community engagement, participatory practice, learning programmes.
- Attract growing and increasingly diverse audiences of residents and visitors to the city.
- Provide advice on heritage and public art to the Council.

We also currently hold a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) agreement with Arts Council England's to deliver their Let's Create Strategy for 2020 – 2030 set around:

- Three outcomes – Creative People, Cultural Communities and A Creative and Cultural Country
- Four investment principles – Ambition & Quality, Dynamism, Environmental Responsibility, Inclusivity & Relevance
- The agreement is dependent upon BMT delivering against the activity plan and investment principles plan submitted in BMT's NPO application.
- BMT's current NPO agreement is for £3,078,107 spread evenly over three financial years from 2023/24 to 2025/26. An extension was applied for an additional year for 2026/27 for a sum of £1,026,107.

The remainder of our funding is self-generated which includes that through Birmingham Museums Trading which includes Retail, Food & Beverage, and Venue Hire, with 2026/27 having a budgeted income of over £2.4 million and a net profit budget (returned to the charity) of £140K.

Other income streams include: admissions charges and ticket income, schools' visits income, unrestricted donations & grants income and some income generated through museum specific tax refund schemes (like Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR)).



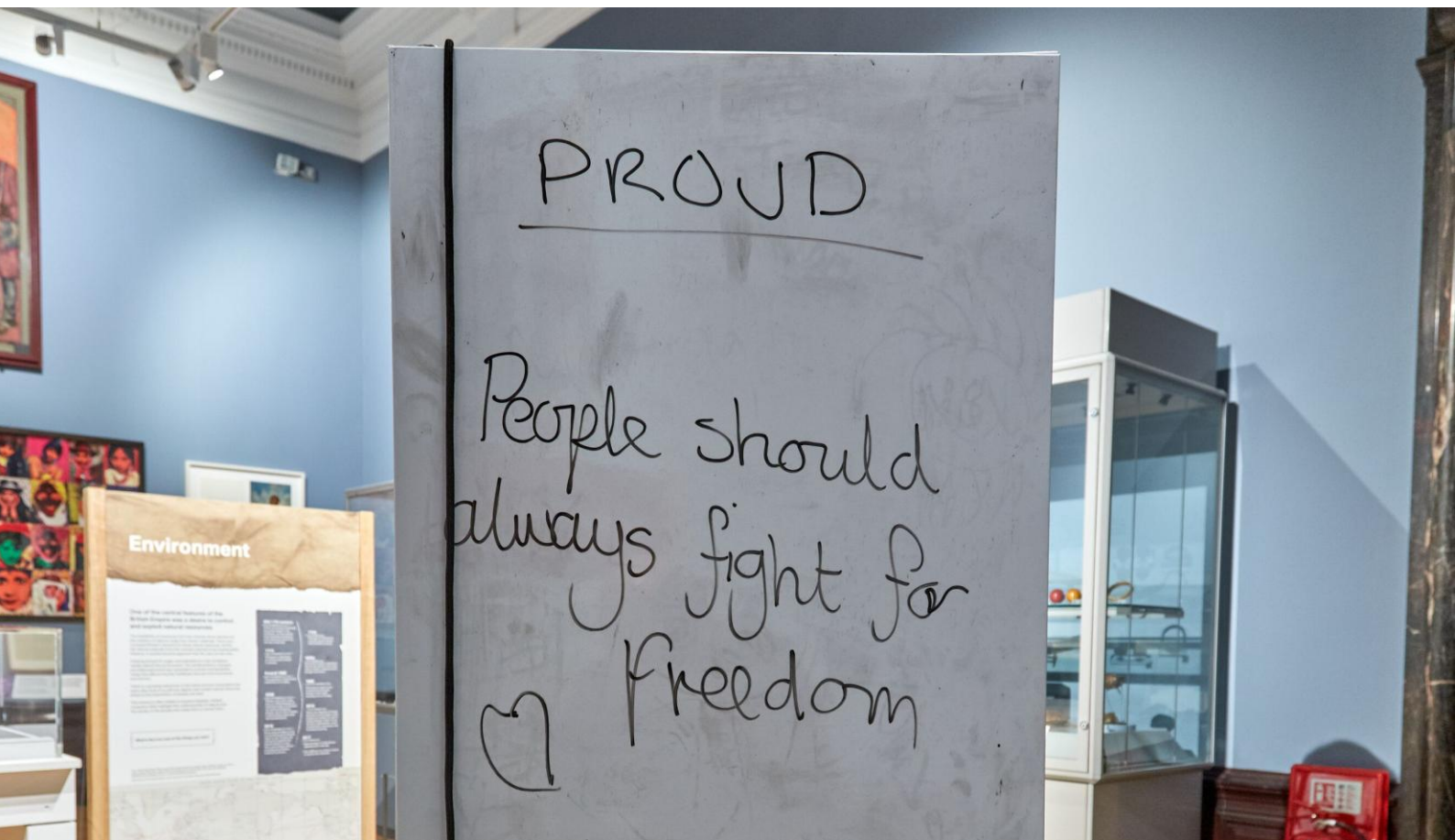
## About Trading Activity

Activity is led by Kingston Myles (Director of Enterprise & Innovation), supported by Adam Keegan (Head of Enterprise) who leads the operational teams of F&B, Retail, and Venue Hire each of which is led by a manager specialising in their commercial field.

Our largest and most visited site, BMAG is budgeted to deliver a significant proportion of the income (~£1.1M) seconded by our science museum, Thinktank (~£900K). Our smaller collections of sites contribute the remaining trading income mainly through venue hire. Our latest commercial venture at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter sees that site now home to a dedicated Cafe/ Bar.

The Retail business is responsible for 2 stores, 1 at Thinktank and 1 at BMAG with pop-ups at our smaller sites to support the visitor experience. There are 3 major F&B venues – The tearoom at BMAG, Signal Box at Thinktank and a new Cafe/Bar at the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. The venue hire business delivers hire activity at our main Museum sites alongside smaller events and private hires at our other sites. We're building a portfolio of filming location hires at our smaller sites to help further drive income.

Birmingham Museums Trust and its trading company is moving from turnaround to growth - building new income sources. We're ambitious, commercially minded, and always exploring new opportunities. We don't believe in "how things have always been done." As a multi-venue organisation with national reach, we embrace innovation, continuous improvement and inclusive ways of working including digital-first practices and shared decision-making to widening participation and better reflecting the communities we serve.



## About Birmingham Museums Trading Company

**Birmingham Museums Trading Ltd** is the commercial engine of Birmingham Museums Trust - a wholly owned Private Limited Company that drives income-generating activity to support and sustain the Trust's cultural mission. Profits generated by the Trading company are reinvested directly back into the charity, helping Birmingham Museums thrive, innovate, and grow.

The Trading company is made up of an independent Chair and a group of experienced external Directors, working alongside Zak Mensah (Co-CEO, Birmingham Museums Trust) and Kingston Myles (Director of Enterprise & Innovation, Birmingham Museums Trust). Together, the Trading company brings commercial expertise, strategic insight, and entrepreneurial thinking to support the organisation's long-term ambitions.

### The role of the Trading company Directors

- **Shaping commercial strategy** by defining which KPIs for activities which sit within the scope of the Trading company
- **Driving innovation and growth** through the development of new income streams, partnerships, and commercial ventures.
- **Providing strategic financial oversight** by advising on budgets and investment priorities connected to Trading company activity.
- **Maximising earned income opportunities** across activity both directly within the scope of the Trading company and parallel activity from within the wider Trust.
- **Championing commercial excellence** by ensuring the Trading company operates to industry best practice, remains customer-focused, and delivers strong commercial performance.
- **Unlocking the value of Birmingham Museums' assets** by advising on investment opportunities and supporting sustainable, long-term returns.

### Commitment (refer also to page 12):

- Chair and Director of Trading company & Non-Executive Directors:
  - Monthly catch-up meetings – informal in nature. Every third Monday for 1 hour, Teams.
  - Quarterly Trading company Board meetings on Teams, for approximately 2 hours, held prior to the BMT Board meetings.
- Chair and Director of Trading company only
  - Also serves as a Trustee of the BMT Board, attending quarterly 2-hour BMT Board meetings in person in Birmingham, plus additional time to review Board papers in advance of the meeting.

- Directors do not have any interest in the shares of the company or of its parent, which is a charitable company limited by guarantee.
- Director positions on the Board are not remunerated, but BMT will reimburse reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred while performing duties.

We are first and foremost a cultural organisation, and with one of our values being ‘Discovering Wonder’ it will be no surprise that there is a regular programme of exhibition openings and events to which you, as Director or Chair of the Trading company will also be warmly invited to attend.



### **About the Board of Trustees for Birmingham Museums Trust**

The museum currently has 7 Trustees, chaired by Stephen Hughes:

- Stephen Hughes (Chair)
- Jane Richardson
- Tony Simpson
- Louise Brooke-Smith OBE (Chair of the Estates Committee)
- Deborah Spence (Chair of the Finance & Risk Committee)
- Cllr. Robert Alden (Conservative appointment from Birmingham City Council)
- Cllr. David Barker (Labour appointment from Birmingham City Council)

Alongside three observers:

- Symon Easton (Birmingham City Council)
- Stuart Tulloch (Arts Council England)
- Kathy Fawcett (Arts Council England)

Further information about our Board is available [here](#)

The Board of Trustees have ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of Birmingham Museums Trust (the Trust), for ensuring that it is solvent and well managed and for ensuring that it delivers the charitable outcomes referred in the Articles of Association of Birmingham Museums Trust.

### **The Trustees have responsibility for:**

- Ensuring compliance with the objects, purposes and values of the Trust and with its Memorandum and Articles.
- Setting or approving policies, plans and budgets to achieve the objectives of the Trust and monitoring performance against them.
- Ensuring the solvency, financial strength and good performance of the Trust.
- Accountability to funders.
- Recruitment of the CEO and recommendations as to new Trustees.
- Obtaining legal or independent professional advice where appropriate.
- Ensuring that the Trust complies with all relevant laws and regulations and with the requirements of the Charity Commission.
- Setting and maintaining a framework of delegation and internal control.
- Agreeing or ratifying all policies or decisions on matters which may create significant risk for the Trust, financial or otherwise.
- Developing or have an understanding and empathy with the demographics and communities that make up the Birmingham City region.
- Through the work of the Trust demonstrate a commitment to Birmingham's Cultural aspirations, and an interest in the role that Culture has to play in the City's economic and social wellbeing.
- Demonstrating a commitment to Birmingham's collections and their care, curation, conservation and presentation to the public.

- Demonstrating an interest in education, in the broadest sense, to ensure it is in evidence through the work of the Trust.
- Upholding the principles set out in the Museums Association Code of Ethics.
- Demonstrating an understanding of the change agenda that will allow Birmingham Museums Trust to develop access to new sources of funding and new ways of working.

In addition, it should be noted that:

- The Board of Trustees must ensure that the Trust's vision, mission and activities remain true to its objectives.
- All Trustees may from time-to-time assist, support and sometimes lead fundraising initiatives that have been approved by the Board;
- Trustees are bound by an overriding duty, individually and as a Board, to act at all times reasonably and in the best interests of the Trust.
- Trustees must declare conflicts of interest and absent themselves from discussions where they may arise. They must seek approval from the Board to the existence of conflicts of interest arising from conflicts of loyalty.
- All Trustees are equally responsible in law for the Board's actions and decisions and have equal status as Trustees.
- Regardless of how a Trustees may have been appointed, all Trustees must act personally, and not merely as the representative of some other body.
- Trustees should focus on the strategic direction of the Trust and should not seek to become directly involved in the day-to-day operation of the Trust or in matters which have been delegated to employees of the Trust.
- It is the role of the Co-CEOs of the Trust to provide an effective link between the Trustees and the employees of the Trust. Equally, Trustees are entitled to hold employees to account through the Co-CEOs.

### **Eligibility**

There are 7 Duties of a Company Director laid out by the Companies Act 2006, and require Directors to:

- Act within powers;
- Promote the success of the company;
- Exercise independent judgement;
- Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence;
- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Don't accept benefits from third parties;
- Duty to declare interest in proposed transactions or arrangements.

While only the Chair role will act formally as a Trustee, many of the requirements of the Charity Commission on eligibility will apply, including not having any unspent convictions, having an IVA or bankruptcy order, or are a disqualified company director.

## **Meeting dates**

Along with the meetings below, Trustees and NEDs are invited to attend optional events or activities including Exhibition Private Views, Commercial Launches and Fundraising Dinners.

### **Monthly catchups:**

Trading company Directors and key Enterprise staff meet every third Monday of every month, 4-5pm via Teams.

## **Birmingham Museums Trading Limited Board**

Meetings take place quarterly via Teams, following the closure of the previous financial quarter.

Dates will be confirmed on the commencement of new Trading Directors.

### **Trading company Directors**

- Liam Darbon (Chair and Director, Birmingham Museums Trading Ltd – stepping down due to term completion),
- Tracey Stephenson (Director, Birmingham Museums Trading Ltd – stepping down due to term completion)
- Zak Mensah. (Co-CEO, BMT; Director, Birmingham Museums Trading Ltd)
- Kingston Myles (Director of Enterprise & Innovation; Director of Birmingham Museums Trading Ltd)

### **The Chair of the Trading company will also join the BMT Board of Trustees.**

BMT Board meetings are held in person at one of the BMT sites, 4-6pm:

- Wednesday 29 July 2026
- Wednesday 21 October 2026
- Wednesday 27 January 2027
- Wednesday 24 March 2027

## Access & Inclusion

We want everyone who connects with us, physically or digitally, to feel included and to be enabled to enjoy our collections, exhibitions, programmes and venues.

We recognise that there are many barriers that currently prevent people from being able to do so, and which limit access to the full range of BMT's work. We aim to identify, challenge, and reduce these as far as possible through consulting with users, non-users, and specialists to identify barriers to access and inclusion, and put in place plans to mitigate or remove these.

At BMT, ensuring equity of access and inclusion is a part of everyone's role, and we encourage everyone to think about how they can ensure their work will meet the needs of as many people as possible. BMT also has specific working groups whose remit includes an oversight of this work.

Every member of Birmingham Museums Trust staff and every volunteer supporting our activity has a responsibility to ensure our services to visitors, customers and communities are delivered in accordance with our Access and Inclusion Policy.

Every member of staff and volunteer will:

- Eradicate, and hold as unacceptable, direct and indirect discrimination against individuals on any grounds.
- Participate in relevant training to maintain a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to increase skills and knowledge in this area.
- Be familiar and confident in the Birmingham Museums Access and Inclusion Policy.
- Identify barriers to access and opportunities for inclusion in their area of work.
- Understand and be proficient in the particular access responsibilities of their role.

Trustees are in particular responsible for:

- Reviewing and approve our [Access and Inclusion Policy](#) at least every five years.
- Ensuring Birmingham Museums Trust works in compliance with the relevant legislation.



## Application and Selection

Under the leadership of our Co-CEO's Sara Wajid and Zak Mensah there has never been a more exciting time to join Birmingham Museums. We can only excel however with the right people. We aim to be genuinely welcoming to all people from every background and to be representative of the many communities we serve.

You are invited to apply in confidence by submitting your CV, with a covering letter (maximum two sides of A4).

You may apply for EITHER or BOTH:

- Director of the Trading company
- Chair and Director of the Trading company (also serving as Trustee on the Board of Birmingham Museums Trust)

Please make clear in your application for which you are seeking to be considered.

If you would like a confidential conversation about either the Chair or Director role, please get in touch with [Lindsay.read@birminghammuseums.org.uk](mailto:Lindsay.read@birminghammuseums.org.uk) who can arrange a call on your behalf with either the Chair, or Co-CEO.

The closing date for applications is 12 noon, Friday 12 June

Interviews are expected to take place on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July and will be in person at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery; they will consist of a 30-minute meeting with members of the Executive Team, followed by a formal 60-minute interview.

We anticipate offers being made on or around Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July

We will acknowledge receipt of all applications (and invite you to complete an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion monitoring form); shortlisted applicants will be invited to meet with the panel.

To apply, please submit your covering letter and CV to: [recruitment@birminghammuseums.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@birminghammuseums.org.uk)