



Trustee Recruitment Pack 2026

Manchester City of Literature is the charity that manages the City's UNESCO designation on behalf of Manchester City Council, the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. We are seeking new Trustees to join the charity's Board. See below for more information on the role, the charity and how to apply. The closing date for applications is **18 May 2026**.



Poet Reece Williams on stage at 'Our City Speaks'

About Us

[Manchester City Of Literature](#) is a small and dynamic charity that manages Manchester's UNESCO Creative City designation on behalf of a partnership of 40+ literary organisations led by Manchester City Council, The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University.

Our mission is to connect the city's literary sector to local communities and to international opportunities and collaborations. We want to ensure that literature in all its forms, diverse voices and languages are celebrated across Manchester and we deliver this through programmes such as the [Festival of Libraries](#), [International Mother Language Day](#) and the work of the [Multilingual City Poets](#). Read more about our achievements below.

Manchester City of Literature

After our first six successful years, we are now seeking new Trustees to help lead the charity through its next stage of development.

The Opportunity

We are looking for Trustees who believe in the power of reading and writing to change lives, who want to ensure that the literary ecology in Manchester continues to grow and who will be passionate advocates for all our work.

In return you will have an opportunity to put your knowledge and passion into the development of the city's UNESCO designation, and the development of Manchester City of Literature as a convener of the city's literary ecology. Through our extensive partnership work and global connections, you will increase your knowledge and experience of cross-cultural exchange. You will become part of a team of friendly, passionate individuals, some who joined with no prior governance experience, who bring insight and experience from community, civic, academic and industry perspectives to lead the organisation..



Jordan Stephens and Griot Gabriel on stage at Manchester Poetry Library

Who We Are Looking For

We are keen to find Trustees who can support our ambitious plans to build international connections, to connect more communities to reading and writing locally and to raise the profile of Manchester as a home for writing and reading nationally.

We are particularly interested in Trustees from voluntary, commercial or cultural sector backgrounds who can:

- help with navigating the shifting political and policy environment that we now work in;
- help with advising on robust finance and fundraising plans;
- input into our influencing and advocacy work on behalf of the city's literary sector.

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Governance experience is desirable. A passion and commitment for our [Vision and Values](#) is essential.

We are particularly keen to attract applications from those with characteristics under-represented in arts governance including people with a global majority background, LGBTQ+ background and/or neurodivergent, Deaf and disabled people.



Manchester Central Library during a live performance by Quarantine at Festival of Libraries

The role of a Trustee is to:

- Provide strategic direction for Manchester UNESCO City of Literature;
- Oversee the work of the Executive Office and ensure good management of the charity;
- Ensure that financial and other resources are well managed and used effectively;
- Use your skills, knowledge, experience and contacts to help shape the development of the organisation;
- Participate in working groups with Network members on specific areas of work or time-limited projects;
- Demonstrate and uphold the organisation's core values;
- Act as spokespeople for Manchester City of Literature and advocate for its work.

Time commitment

You will be required to attend four Board meetings, each lasting about two hours, per year and held online, including reading Board papers ahead of the meeting. As part of a working group, you may be required to meet outside these times on specific tasks. Trustees will be invited to attend Partnership events and to represent the organisation at such events and meetings.

Manchester City Of Literature will provide an induction for new Trustees, with extra support for anyone new to the role of Trustee.

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Exhibition of young people's artwork from a collaborative project between Manchester City of Literature and Nanjing City of Literature at Festival of Libraries

How to apply

Please send an application letter or video stating why you are interested in this opportunity and how you meet the points in the role specification section together with a CV. Please keep the application letter/video to no more than two sides of A4 or a 5-minute video. Please send your application and CV to ivan.wadeson@manchestercityofliterature.com.

Closing date for applications: **Monday 18 May at midday**

Online Interviews: Tuesday 26 or Wednesday 27 May

Successful candidates will have the opportunity to observe the next Board Meeting on 17 June, online 5-7pm.

Expenses

This is a voluntary role, without a salary, but reasonable expenses incurred in relation to the role may be claimed back from Manchester City of Literature. These include: travel, accommodation, child care, postage and phone calls.

Length of appointment

Trustees on the Manchester City of Literature Board will be appointed for a term of three years, with a possible extension for another three years.

Eligibility

Candidates need to be at least 16 years of age.

To ensure the organisation is truly independent, candidates must not:

- be a current employee or elected member of Manchester City Council;
- be a current student or paid employee of the University of Manchester or Manchester Metropolitan University;

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Candidates must be legally eligible to become a Charity Trustee and Company Director. More information on legal eligibility can [be found here](#).



Nóra Blascok, a Manchester multilingual City Poet performing at an international poetry festival in Barcelona City of Literature

Company Information

Manchester City of Literature is a Company Limited by Guarantee (12002661) and a Registered Charity (1189456). The organisation had an annual turnover of £242K in 2024-25. Manchester City of Literature has funding agreements in place until March 2028. Alongside its core funders of Manchester City Council, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester, the charity has previously secured project funding from Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Foyle Foundation and the British Council. The organisation currently employs 2.6 FTE staff supplemented by freelance and project staff, and supported by our forty partner organisations.

Recent Achievements

- Festival of Libraries won the [Best Event at the Manchester Culture Awards](#) in 2024 and was named as the [2nd most inclusive literature festival in the UK](#) according to Inclusive Books for Children
- Securing British Council funding to deliver the Manchester-Nanjing Artist Exchange '[Real Contentment](#)'
- Delivering four successful years of the [Multilingual City Poets](#) who were shortlisted for the Made In Manchester award at the Manchester Culture Awards in 2023.
- Producing a poetry anthology in English and Kurdish with Slemani City of Literature, '[My Body is not Yours](#)'
- Hosting and performing at the global slam event [Slamovision](#), a Cities of Literature project which we have won twice in 4 years.
- Supported twelve Manchester writers to secure international writing residencies including long-term cultural exchanges with Nanjing, Québec City, Barcelona and Tartu

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Young people in Oldham enjoying 'Look For A Book', our book treasure hunt that takes place across all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester each year.