

# Recruitment Pack

---

## External Council Member



# Hello

---

**Thank you for your interest  
in applying for the role of  
External Council Member.**

It is our people who have made the Royal Academy of Arts what it is today — a living academy for artists, art-making and art lovers. Since 1768 the RA has been alive with artists, academicians, educators, students and visitors alike.

Today we are also meticulous technicians, imaginative storytellers, considerate caretakers and welcoming hosts.

Whether we are back of house or on the front desk, we are committed to the same belief; we are all here to share the enjoyment, and importance, of art.

**We are excited you want  
to join our Board.**

# Job overview

---

## Remuneration

Not Remunerated

## Term

2 years (renewable for two further terms of two years)

## Location

London, Piccadilly

---

## Overview

The Royal Academy of Arts is looking for an exceptional individual to join its main governing body, the Royal Academy Council, as a charity trustee and company director. This individual will also be expected to serve, as required, on at least one Committee or Advisory Group

Total time commitment is estimated to be the equivalent of 18 full days per year. This includes six scheduled Council meetings per year, Committee/Advisory Group meetings, plus ad hoc engagement. However, this is an indication only. Specific matters may arise which require extraordinary meetings of Council, as well as additional engagement from individual Council members

## About the Royal Academy of Arts

---

There is no other art organisation in the world quite like the Royal Academy of Arts, we are a dynamic body of eminent practising artists and architects; a leading academy of practitioners, teachers and

students; a world-renowned curator of ground-breaking exhibitions; and the custodian of a unique collection of art and architectural works

*We are an intriguing mix of old and new*

*We are proud of our legacy but forward-thinking*

*We are deeply respectful of our heritage but constantly working to confront, challenge and create anew*

*We are committed to our founding mission but perpetually evolving*

*We are a living academy*

The RA is an independent charitable organisation which receives no government funding. It raises the majority of its revenue through self-generated income from:

*Admission to temporary exhibitions*

*Its relationship with sponsors and corporate members, donors, patrons and members*

*The Friends of the Royal Academy membership scheme (operated through a separate charity)*

*Its trading arm comprising catering, retail, publishing, product development*

Further information on the RA's activities can be found in its annual reports – [here](#)

The RA's five-year strategy for 2023-2028 laid out a plan which respects the challenges it faces but also honours its founding mission and legacy, affirming its readiness to adapt and evolve. The 2023-28 Strategy is available to view [here](#)

In common with the wider sector, the RA has been significantly impacted by the challenging macro-economic situation. Costs have risen and there has been a sector-wide drop in visitor numbers. It is a core focus of the governing Council to draw on the RA's unique strengths and attributes to face these challenges and secure future financial sustainability. Organisational transformation is underway to help achieve this, and this role will bring the opportunity to contribute directly and strategically to the RA's future success and sustainability

---

## Role Specification

The role involves serving on the Royal Academy's main governing body – the Council of the Royal Academy - as a charity trustee and company director

The RA Council is the main governing body of the Royal Academy. Its Trustees and Directors are collectively responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Academy, acting in the best interests of the charity, making key decisions and overseeing how it is run. The Council consists of 13 'Royal Academicians', and up to three 'external' individuals (who are not Royal Academicians) and the President of the Royal Academy, as Chair

The Royal Academicians are practising painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, printmakers and draughtsmen elected by their peers for their distinction as artists. There are up to 100 Royal Academicians who form the General Assembly and a number of Senior Academicians who remain active stakeholders. Royal Academicians and Senior Academicians constitute the membership of the Royal Academy as a company and charity

There are five 'core' Committees which assist Council in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities: Finance & Performance; Audit & Risk; People & Remuneration; RA Schools; and Exhibitions & Displays. Members of each Committee include Royal Academicians and external members with relevant professional expertise

The External Member of Council assumes a critical leadership role within the organisation at a time when the arts in the UK have come under increasingly challenging pressures. This position provides an exceptional opportunity to join the RA and play a key role in driving forward its strategy

---

## Person Specification

The ability to contribute effectively to board-level discussion and wider policy and strategy development and an ability to understand and interrogate organisational performance, prioritising and focussing

# Job overview continued

on the most significant matters. This includes supporting the implementation of a strategy for future financial sustainability, at a critical time for the organisation

Considerable experience and understanding of governance, and what good practice looks like, in an organisation operating through several charities, several trading subsidiaries, with an active membership base. To include experience of, and participation in, formal procedures governing internal matters such as dispute resolution, investigation, grievance or similar

An understanding of key fiduciary duties of charity trustees/directors and how to apply these in practice, including acting in the best interests of the organisation, ensuring the organisation applies its resources in pursuance of its charitable objects, complying with its constitutional documents (including the RA Laws)

Experience in some or all of the following areas (particularly as applied to a visitor attraction): commercial activities; retail; digital; marketing

An understanding of media, communications (external and internal) and reputation management and the ability to help guide a response to media attention and issues as they arise

Experience of property / construction / major projects would be advantageous

An understanding of risk analysis and management as applied to a large

charity operating through historic physical premises, open to the public and undertaking a wide range of activities, including educational, artistic, commercial and others

Sufficient financial understanding to interrogate financial information and reports provided to the Council as the governing Board of a significant arts institution

Commitment to the RA's core mission and a willingness to represent and act as an advocate for the RA in the public realm

The ability to constructively challenge and hold to account, at the same time as supporting, senior leadership (executive and non-executive) and others

It will also be important that the successful candidate can interact effectively with Royal Academicians – the artists and architects who form the organisation membership – and understand their varied perspectives. As one of only three 'external' (non-Academician) members of Council, the successful candidate will need to be confident in bringing an objective, external view to those interactions, so the RA can learn from the 'wider world'

You do not need to have knowledge or experience in the arts but a passion for the sector would be a distinct advantage

## Term of Service

The term of service for external members of Council is two years, with eligibility for re-appointment for two further terms of two years (maximum six years total)

## Fees and Expenses

This is an unpaid, voluntary role, but all reasonable travel and out-of-pocket expenses will be paid. All Council and committee members have an induction as well as ongoing support in the role. The individual will be covered by insurance relevant to their role

## Time Commitment

Council meets six times per year. Committees generally meet four times per year. These bodies may from time to time hold an extraordinary meeting or ask members for input or advice on a specific matter. Time will be required for meeting preparation and follow-up, and ad hoc involvement in RA business

## Conflicts of Interest

This appointment is made on the basis of trust, a key component of which is to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest between this appointment and posts held elsewhere. The RA maintains a 'conflicts of interest register' and requires any specific conflicts to be declared at relevant meetings

## Current Board Composition

*(note the composition of the Board changes in October every year)*

Rebecca Salter CBE PRA, President and Chair

Ron Arad RA

Fiona Banner RA

His Honour Judge Tony Baumgartner

Tony Cohen, Chair of the People & Remuneration Committee

Anne Desmet RA

Dame Tracey Emin DBE RA

Ryan Gander OBE RA

Vanessa Jackson RA

Katherine Jones RA

Fiona Rae RA

Conrad Shawcross RA

Emma Stibbon RA

Alistair Summers, Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

Gillian Wearing OBE RA

Louise Wilson, Jane and Louise Wilson RA, Chair of the RA Schools Committee

# How to apply

---

**To apply for this role, please follow the link below and submit your CV and Application form via the RA careers portal.**

<https://royalacademyarts.current-vacancies.com/Careers/RA-vacancy-search-page-3191>

We are committed to being a truly inclusive place and welcome applicants from all backgrounds, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, marital and civil partnership, or pregnancy.

# Need support?

---

**Here are some of the things we can do to help:**

— If you would like us to talk you through the role or anything in this pack to make it clearer for you, please contact us and we can arrange to do that with you (and please do the same if you have any questions)

— If you are selected for interview, we can arrange to do the first-round interview online should you be unable to make it on site. (We usually do second round interviews in person for all candidates so that they can get a feel for the journey, the building, and the workplace)

— We can send interview questions in advance so that you have the opportunity to prepare

— We can schedule interviews for quiet times at the academy so that you don't have to navigate a busy building

**On site at the RA**

— We have two entrances - Burlington House (via the courtyard on Piccadilly) and also one the other side of the building on Burlington Gardens. You can enter via either of them (we may let you know the easiest but either are fine)

— All areas are accessible via lift

— We have quiet areas where you can sit and prepare for your interview

— There are two cafés and plenty of toilet facilities

— We have a welcome team who are happy to answer questions and give you directions if needed

**If there is anything else that would be helpful for you, please do ask**

# Contact us

---

Should you have any questions about the role or wish to discuss your candidacy further, please contact us at

[recruitment@royalacademy.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@royalacademy.org.uk)

**Royal  
Academy  
of Arts**