

Towner Eastbourne

Our mission

Proud of our unique place in Eastbourne, where the coast and South Downs meet, we support all artists and create experiences for everyone that connect, challenge and inspire.



Image: Lothar Götz, *Dance Diagonal*, 2019. Photo: Eva Eastman

Trustees Recruitment Brief

The Board of Trustees for Towner Art Gallery is seeking new Trustees to join the board and help the charity achieve its vision to transform lives and communities through the arts. We are particularly seeking trustees who are practising art professionals and/or have specialist experience in fundraising, financial management, capital project management and gallery governance.

Collecting and exhibiting contemporary art for almost 100 years, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, sits where the coast and the South Downs meet. Led by Director Joe Hill since 2018, Towner presents exhibitions of national and international importance for audiences in Eastbourne, the UK and beyond, showcasing the most exciting and creative developments in modern and contemporary art. Towner develops and supports artistic practice and collaborates with individuals, communities and organisations to deliver an inclusive, connected and accessible public programme of live events, film and learning.

This year the gallery celebrates its 10th anniversary in the current building, and in 2023 will celebrate its 100th anniversary as a public gallery and collection. This is a critical time for the board and team in establishing a confident vision and strategy for the future, building a strong profile as a sector leader and ensuring a resilient and sustainable future.

Towner is committed to ensuring an equitable working environment. We actively seek board members to reflect a multitude of experiences and backgrounds. We particularly encourage applications from BAME, LGBTQ+ and people with a disability.

The Board is seeking trustees who can demonstrate some of the following:

Experience:

- As a practising art professional.
and/or
- Specialist experience in fundraising, capital project management, or gallery/museum governance.
- Experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues.
- A track record of sound judgment and effective decision making.
- A commitment to promoting equality and diversity.

Skills and understanding:

- Commitment to Towner and a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort.
- Preparedness to make unpopular recommendations to the board.
- Willingness to be available to staff for advice and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.
- Good, independent judgment and strategic vision.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team.

Key Responsibilities:

- To ensure Towner complies with its articles of association and pursues its objectives as defined there.
- To ensure Towner applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives.
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to Towner, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of Towner.
- To ensure the financial stability of Towner.
- To protect and manage the property and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds.
- To appoint the Director /CEO and monitor his or her performance.
- To commit to four full trustee meetings a year, and be prepared to sit on sub-committees and working groups.
- Be prepared to represent Towner at key events.

If you would like to have a confidential discussion about this opportunity, please contact Michele Monteith on michele.monteith@townereastbourne.org.uk to arrange a time for a conversation.

If you would like to be considered as a trustee, please send a CV and a covering letter outlining why you are interested in the role and what you would bring to Towner to Michele Monteith. This can be submitted digitally to michele.monteith@townereastbourne.org.uk

Deadline for applications Friday 25th October 2019

About Towner

Towner presents an ambitious and high quality programme of temporary and collection-based exhibitions of twentieth century and contemporary art, and inspiring creative activities for 160,000 visitors each year including 55,000 participants of its Learning Programme.

It is a nationally and internationally significant gallery and an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). Founded in 1920 as a result of a bequest by Alderman John Chisholm Towner to create 'an art gallery for the people', this founding ethos remains at the heart of Towner's mission.

In 2023 Towner will have been collecting art for one hundred years. Landscape is at the heart of the Collection which dates back to Alderman John Chisholm Towner's original bequest in 1922 to create 'an art gallery for the people' of Eastbourne. From Victorian paintings of landscapes, animals and children by popular artists of the time, it grew through acquisitions of Sussex landscape paintings, extending to include pictures by Sussex artists regardless of subject matter and finally to work by non-Sussex artists. Towner's collecting themes now encompass Place, The Environment and Landscape and its collection now boasts almost 5,000 works. It is best known for its twentieth century British art including the broadest and most significant body of work by Eric Ravilious (1903-1942) – as well as a growing collection of international contemporary art and moving image works. The strength of the Towner collection lies in its holding of landscape based and coastal works and more recently its acquisitions themed around place, landscape and environment. Our programme includes temporary exhibitions of work by leading national and international contemporary artists, which alongside collection shows inspires conversations on wide-ranging contemporary issues and visual art.

The learning programme, which has recently been relaunched as Towner Art School, is considered exemplary by Arts Council England. It designs its programme inspired by its exhibitions and collection with its audiences as far as possible, to ensure relevance, build connection with audiences and deliver positive impact. It is recognised for its work with vulnerable groups, particularly those with lived experience of mental health issues, supporting them to grow in confidence and resilience to self-manage their conditions.