

THE ROYAL ARMOURIES – TRUSTEE
HISTORY, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
Museums in Leeds, The Tower of London and Fort Nelson, Hampshire

ROLE SPECIFICATION

1. Introduction

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual to join the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries, the national museum of arms and armour. Applications are welcomed from underrepresented groups to ensure the Royal Armouries reflects the diverse society it serves. The appointee will have skills and experience in research, history and education with relevance to the needs and ambitions of the museum, but not necessarily in arms and armour.

The appointment will run for an initial four year period. Meetings are held four times a year, normally twice in Leeds and once each at the Tower of London and at Fort Nelson, near Portsmouth. Trustees may also be invited to join and/or chair one of the three Trustee sub-committees, and may be asked to give advice or make decisions between meetings and to attend social, corporate and fundraising events as they arise. This is an exciting period in Royal Armouries' history, which, having recently transformed its commercial operations, is now making important progress in many areas and developing an ambitious Master Plan.

2. The Royal Armouries

The Royal Armouries is one of the most important museums of its type in the world. Its origins lie in the Middle Ages, and at its core is the celebrated collection originating in the nation's working arsenal, assembled over many centuries at the Tower of London. In the

reign of Elizabeth I, selected items began to be arranged for display to visitors, making the Royal Armouries heir to one of the oldest deliberately-created visitor attractions in the country, and in all but name its oldest public museum. The collection of c.75,000 objects and 500,000 archive items – apart from the c.2,400 loans to other bodies – is now displayed and housed not only at the Tower of London but also at the purpose-built museum in Leeds and at Fort Nelson, near Portsmouth. Since 2005 the museum has also managed the collection of small arms assembled since the early 17th century by the British armed forces (the former Pattern Room), now also in Leeds, and known as the National Firearms Centre.

The museum was established in its present form by the National Heritage Act (1983) and is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, via whom it received £7,834,000 in Grant in Aid in 2019-20. It currently employs about 180 staff and receives nearly two million visitors a year across the three sites. Admission is free except at the Tower of London, where the Royal Armouries' museum in the White Tower is within the pay perimeter of Historic Royal Palaces, who manage the site. Importantly, the Royal Armouries is now earning a substantial commercial income: in July 2018, with the financial and other support of H.M. Treasury and the DCMS, the Trustees took ownership of Royal Armouries International (RAI), the catering and events business operating in the museum building and nearby, now managed on its behalf by Levy Restaurants. Combined with income from related assets, this gives the Armouries the prospect of a bright and sustainable future. Building on this, the museum is developing an ambitious and exciting Master Plan for the organisation, intended to ensure its sustainability and to transform its public offer, with the complete redisplay of the Leeds museum as the first and principal component. Vital to this will be the successful use and development of expertise and a programme of research and conservation, and among the outcomes, we hope, will be vastly improved conservation and education facilities.

More information, including the Royal Armouries' Corporate Plan 2019-24 and the Annual Report and Accounts for 2018/19 can be found at <https://royalarmouries.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Royal-Armouries-Corporate-Plan-2019-2024.pdf> and <https://royalarmouries.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Royal-Armouries-Annual-Report-18-19.pdf>

3. The Role of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries consists of a Chair and ten Trustees who have statutory duties under Chapter 47 of the National Heritage Act 1983. This states that: The Board shall perform their functions for the general purpose of maintaining and exhibiting a national collection of arms, armour and associated objects, and of maintaining a record relating to arms and armour at the Tower of London.¹

The Act states that the Board shall care for the collection, make it available for research, 'generally promote the public's enjoyment and understanding of arms and armour...', and that it will 'provide education, instruction and advice and carry out research'. As such, the Board of Trustees is the organisation's overall governing body, responsible for overseeing the affairs of the Royal Armouries and determining its overall strategy. The Trustees' role also includes actively supporting and encouraging the museum's fundraising activities, supporting the Director-General and Master and the Executive Board in the performance of their duties, and providing specialist advice derived from members' individual experience and expertise.

In addition, Trustees:

- Should have and demonstrate energetic commitment to the Royal Armouries' stated Purpose, Vision, Aims and Objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and to upholding its Policies;
- Be active and positive advocates for the Royal Armouries, representing it to stakeholders such as funders and the education, regional and tourism communities, including local partners in Leeds and the surrounding areas;
- Will comply with the intentions of the Royal Armouries governance rules etc;
- Will in all respects embody the Seven Principles of Public Life.²

More specifically, the Board of Trustees is intended to offer the skills and expertise which DCMS and the museum believe will be needed to guide the strategic direction of the Royal Armouries in the foreseeable future, and specifically for the successful completion of the

¹ National Heritage Act 1983, Chapter 47, Section 18, paragraph 1

²

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life-2>

current Corporate Plan (2019-24) and the development of the Master Plan. These are intended to complement and amplify the skills and experience of the Executive Board rather than to replicate them.

The present Board membership offers skills and expertise in the fields of museum management and curation, finance, business, retail, marketing, public relations, education, history, property management and development and a range of others. The current vacancy arises on the retirement from the Board, after two four-year terms, of the acclaimed historian Professor Anne Curry, an expert on European warfare and related politics in the 14th and 15th centuries.

4. The role of this appointee

In the broadest terms, in addition to participating in the general business of the Board, the appointee will take an interest in and provide appropriate support to the achievement of the following Objectives in the Royal Armouries 2019-24 Corporate Plan.

Objective 1.3: Expand the range and quality of the education programme at Leeds and Fort Nelson to provide learning opportunities for visitors of all ages;

Objective 1.9: Continue to extend the publishing programme to engage national and international audiences with Royal Armouries' expertise;

Objective 2.2: Make appropriate investment in storage, conservation, library, archive and research facilities at all sites, taking in to account the development and outcomes of The Master's Plan;

Objective 2.3: Publish and implement the Royal Armouries' Research Strategy, identifying the main themes of investigation in the plan period and how it will support the development of the public offer;

Objective 2.4: Promote the development of an international Research Framework for arms and armour research;

Objective 2.5: Seek Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status and use to maximum advantage;

Objective 2.7: Develop international arms and armour and collections management related training, consultancy and knowledge exchange programme;

Objective 2.11: Develop a programme for the dissemination of the Royal Armouries' research output.

5. Specific skills and expertise

In their application, candidates will need to demonstrate how they meet the majority of the following essential criteria:

Essential:

- Personal expertise and a track record of publication in aspects of history – European or otherwise – of relevance to the activities and ambitions of the Royal Armouries;
- Experience of developing and managing major research projects and programmes and disseminating the results;
- An understanding of the role and potential of museums in providing an education service;
- An understanding of the role of material culture and its study in historical research;
- Experience of obtaining external funding to support research, including from the AHRC;
- The capacity to develop collaboration with higher education institutions and other bodies as appropriate;
- A sharp, critical and constructive eye for the highest intellectual standards, evidenced by related writing and communication and;
- A commitment to preserving cultural heritage in its place.

While recognising that no one person will offer skill and expertise in all the areas listed below, the Royal Armouries would be interested in candidates who also demonstrate the following desirable criteria:

Desirable:

- A broad grasp of world history with particular reference to conflict and its consequences;

- Profound expertise in an aspect or aspects of the history of warfare;
- Expertise in an aspect or aspects of the history of arms and armour;
- Employment by, or formal and active connections with, an institute of Higher Education;
- Experience of and success in popularising history for non-specialist audiences;
- A high media and public profile and;
- Experience of the role and potential of museums in providing an education service.

6. Supporting information

6.1 Time commitment

Trustees need to commit around eight days a year to the Royal Armouries, in addition to reading and commenting on written material and attending other meetings and events on occasion.

6.2. Location of most meetings

Meetings will take place at the three museum sites, at Leeds, Fort Nelson (near Fareham, Hampshire) and the Tower of London. Meetings may also take place at DCMS offices in Westminster. Whilst the preference is for meetings to be attended in person, given the adaption of remote meetings in the midst of Covid-19, it is expected there will be some scope for attendance online where required.

6.3. Remuneration

The position is not remunerated, but reasonable expenses are paid.

6.4. Duration of appointment

The appointment will be for four years. There is the potential of reappointment for up to another four years.

6.5 Start date

It is expected that the new Trustee will take up the appointment in Winter 2020/2021.

6.6 Appointments process and how to apply

The process for this public appointment will adhere to the Code of Practice published by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

7. Applying

To apply, please send the following four documents:

- a CV of not more than two sides of A4;
- a supporting statement of not more than three sides of A4, providing examples and setting out how you meet the criteria;
- the Diversity Monitoring Form concerning your personal information and political activity, and the Declaration of Interests Form.

Completed applications should be emailed to publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk. Please put 'Royal Armouries Trustee' as the subject line of your email.

If you have any questions regarding your application please contact the Campaign Manager, Rhianna Bridgewater, via email at rhianna.bridgewater@dcms.gov.uk. Each application will be assessed against the requirements set out above by the advisory assessment panel.

Disability Confident

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role. By 'minimum criteria,' we mean that you must provide evidence in your application, which demonstrates that you meet the level of competence required under each of the essential criteria.

If you want to apply under this scheme, simply state this in the covering email or letter when submitting your application.

Reasonable adjustments

If you would like a confidential discussion regarding any reasonable adjustments during the process, please also indicate this in the covering email or letter.

8. About DCMS

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) helps to drive growth, enrich lives, and promote Britain abroad.

We protect and promote our cultural and artistic heritage and help businesses and communities to grow by investing in innovation and highlighting Britain as a fantastic place to visit. We help to give the UK a unique advantage on the global stage, striving for economic success. DCMS is a ministerial department, supported by 45 agencies and public bodies.

If you are not completely satisfied

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk.

Regulated by OCPA

This process is regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' (OCPA's) Code of Practice. All applicants are expected to have adhered to the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Eligibility Criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with a creditor
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors;
- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Royal Armouries, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please

provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further please contact the Public Appointments Team.

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and Cabinet Office.