



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

BRITISH  
LIBRARY

## **British Library**

**3 x Board Members  
(including 1 x Member for Scotland)**

**Information Pack for Applicants**

## **Vacancy Description**

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport wishes to appoint three new members to the Board of the British Library, one of the world's greatest libraries, at a critical and exciting moment in its history as it responds to the unprecedented effects of Covid-19. One of the appointed members will have a 'specialist knowledge of Scotland', as is required by the Library's founding legislation.

Applications are encouraged from all sections of society to help ensure that the British Library board is representative of the diverse population it serves.

## **The British Library**

As the national library of the United Kingdom, the British Library's mission is to "make our intellectual heritage accessible to everyone, for research, inspiration and enjoyment". Choice of the word 'everyone' is deliberate to include all communities and the Library aims to reflect the diversity of contemporary UK society. The British Library is committed to supporting diversity and inclusion, and the Board is actively seeking to improve its own diversity and will especially welcome the applications of candidates from underrepresented groups and those from different cultural and geographic backgrounds.

In 2023, the British Library will mark its 50th anniversary as the national library of the United Kingdom and, in *Living Knowledge*, the Library has set out an ambitious vision for growth, innovation and development as that landmark date approaches. Major developments underway include projects to digitise and make globally available its most important historic collections; to refresh and transform its service to researchers, online and on-site; to widen its reach and presence for people across the UK, including new partnerships with public libraries; to extend and enhance its Grade 1-listed building in St Pancras, London, as part of a major development partnership; and – over the longer term – to renew and improve its 43-acre campus at Boston Spa in Yorkshire, where the majority of the collection is now held.

The British Library Board is responsible for establishing the overall strategic direction of the organisation under the terms of the British Library Act 1972 and within the policy and resources framework agreed with the Secretary of State.

## **The role of Board Members**

Members of the Board have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the British Library complies with any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds. Other important responsibilities of Board members include:

- overseeing the delivery of planned results by monitoring performance against strategic objectives and targets;
- representing the Library, as its ambassadors, to stakeholders and potential donors; and
- ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times.

## **Person Specification**

All candidates for appointment to the British Library Board should be able to demonstrate in their applications how they meet the following essential criteria:

- A strong commitment to, and appreciation of, the British Library's vision and values, and its public service and entrepreneurial goals;
- An interest in the strategic issues facing the national library in the context of the UK's research infrastructure and knowledge economy over the next decade;
- Sound intellect and judgement and experience of strategic decision making, with the ability to operate effectively at Board level or equivalent;
- Good communication skills, with the ability to act as an ambassador to people of all backgrounds for the Library's traditions and its strategic digital agenda;
- Willingness to participate fully and network in support of the Library's fund-raising activities;
- A commitment to preserving cultural heritage, and improving education and understanding of British and World history and;
- A commitment to diversity, inclusion and providing opportunities for all.

Applicants for the Scotland Member role will also need to demonstrate:

- A demonstrable 'special knowledge of Scotland' and the ability to bring to the Board a broad appreciation of the historic, social and political context of Scotland within the United Kingdom.

Desirable, but not essential, skills include the ability to contribute from a deep knowledge and understanding in one or more of the following fields: medicine, life sciences, physical sciences, data sciences, higher education, commercial law, business or governance. Other desirable criteria include proven commercial ability and budget management experience.

## **The Current British Library Board**

The British Library Board currently comprises 9 members, and is led by the Chair, Dame Carol Black.

## **Location**

Most of the Board members' work is based at the Library's building in St Pancras, London. At least one Board meeting per year is held in the Library's campus in Yorkshire. The successful candidates will be expected to undertake some travel in connection with the role, for which reasonable expenses will be paid.

## **Remuneration**

The role is remunerated at £9130 per annum. No pension is payable for the appointment.

## **Time Requirements**

The appointment is for a term of four years, expected to start in the early summer. The role is for one to two days per month.

## How to Apply

To apply, please send:

- 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 Conflicts of Interests Form.

Completed applications should be emailed to: [publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk)

Please put either 'British Library Member' or 'British Library Scotland Member' in the Subject line.

The appointment is made by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. If you would like to speak to someone about the application and appointment process, please contact Phil Hodges at DCMS, [philip.hodges@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:philip.hodges@dcms.gov.uk).

To talk to someone about the British Library and its Board, please contact Michelle Clewer, Head of Governance at the British Library, [Michelle.Clewer@bl.uk](mailto:Michelle.Clewer@bl.uk).

Further information can be found on the British Library's website at [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

### Diversity and inclusion

DCMS values and cares passionately about the diversity of its public appointments. Boards of public bodies should reflect our diverse society in order to ensure the sector has a leadership that draws fully on the different skills and perspectives our country has to offer.

We encourage applications from all candidates and particularly welcome applications from women, those with a disability, and those from a black or ethnic minority background. We also strongly welcome applications from candidates who live outside London, from any professional background, and of any age group.

We ask all applicants to complete a diversity monitoring form. We hope you will help us by providing this information. Your data is not disclosed to the panel, but allows us to constantly evaluate any potential barriers to becoming a public appointee and whether there are any changes we could make to encourage a more diverse field to apply.

### 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 wish 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.

### **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](mailto:publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk).

### **Supporting information**

This process is regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. 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 British Library, 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 any issue(s) in the statement supporting 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 the Cabinet Office.