

THE ROYAL ARMOURIES – TRUSTEE
Museum Management and Curatorship
Museums in Leeds, The Tower of London and Fort Nelson, Hampshire

ROLE SPECIFICATION

1. Introduction

The Department 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. The appointee will have skills and experience at a very senior level in the management of museums and earlier career experience as a curator, conservator, collections manager or interpretation manager. Expertise specifically in arms and armour is not required.

Although, as with all National Museums, the Royal Armouries is facing difficulties and uncertainties as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our underlying sustainability has recently, pre-Lockdown, been boosted by the transformation of our commercial operations, which we expect to recover over the next eighteen months. Meanwhile, we are continuing to develop an ambitious Master Plan for the organisation's future.

Arms and armour are among the products of human endeavour which have had the greatest impact on the history of the world: thanks to humanity's relentless desire for advantage in attack and defence, they have been pivotal in forming and re-forming its cultural and geopolitical shape. They continue to do so, the consequences of their use are all around us and they will inevitably shape the future.

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 and variously re-assembled over many centuries at the Tower of London. In the

reign of Elizabeth I, selected items were arranged for display to visitors, guided tours provided and admission fees charged, 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, 500,000 archive items and c.65,000 books— apart from the c.2,400 loans to other bodies – is now displayed and housed at the Tower of London, the purpose-built museum in Leeds and at Fort Nelson, near Portsmouth. Since 2005 the museum has also managed the working collection of small arms assembled since the early 17th century by the British armed forces (the former Pattern Room collection), 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 £7,216,000 in Grant in Aid in 2019-20. It currently employs about 180 staff and, on the eve of the Pandemic, was receiving nearly two million visitors per 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 as a whole. Importantly, the Royal Armouries now has the capacity, subject to post-pandemic recovery, of earning a substantial commercial income: in July 2018, with the financial and official 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 Restaurant Associates, a subsidiary of Compass Group PLC. Combined with income from related assets, this gives the Armouries, long term, the prospect of a bright and sustainable future. Building on this, the museum is developing an ambitious and exciting Master Plan, intended to ensure the organisation's sustainability and to transform its public offer, with the complete redisplay of the Leeds museum as the first and principal component.

More information, including the Royal Armouries' Corporate Plan 2019-24 (under review) 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

In summary, Trustees:

- Must have and demonstrate energetic commitment to the Royal Armouries' stated Purpose, Vision, Brand Identity, Aims and Objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and to upholding its Policies;
- Must actively support the Royal Armouries fundraising activities and campaigns;
- Will be active and positive advocates for the Royal Armouries, representing it to stakeholders, including potential funders, and the education, regional and tourism profession, including local partners in Leeds and the surrounding areas;
- Will comply with the intentions of *Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice 2011*² in so far as they are relevant to a NDPB and Charity Commission governance rules etc;
- Will in all respects embody the Seven Principles of Public Life.³

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, particularly for the successful completion of the current Corporate Plan (2019-24, currently under review) and the development of the Master Plan. The required skills and experience are intended to complement and amplify rather than replicate those of the Executive Board.

The present Trustees offer 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 and a COVID-related extension, of Dr Andrew Burnett, former Deputy Director of the British Museum.

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

²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/220645/corporate_governance_good_practice_july2011.pdf

³

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

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 Armouries' Objectives, as relevant to the specific role of a Trustee, which are outlined in the Royal Armouries 2019-24 Corporate Plan.⁴ This is under review at the moment but the Objectives will remain current for the foreseeable future and can be found via the following link:

<https://royalarmouries.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Royal-Armouries-Corporate-Plan-2019-2024.pdf>

Trustees may also be invited to join and/or chair one of the three Trustee sub-committees and/or project-focused panels, and may be asked to give advice or participate in decision-making between meetings, and to attend social, corporate and fundraising events as they arise.

5. Specific skills and experience

While recognising that no one person will offer skill and expertise in all the areas listed below, those of the ideal candidate will include a number of the following:

Essential:

- Experience in the management of a major museum or museums at a very senior level and understanding of the issues and opportunities facing museums both today and in the foreseeable future;
- A commitment to preserving the Armouries' collection, maintaining an acknowledgment of heritage's important role in teaching us about our past and, sometimes the need to contextualise or reinterpret, but never to erase;
- Experience of fundraising for museums and their work or the capacity to do so;
- Experience of Board or committee work, and the tact and discretion necessary for collective and strategic decision making;
- An interest in the work of the Royal Armouries and in its subject and purpose.

Desirable:

⁴ Namely objectives: 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.11, 1.12
2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.10
3.1, 3.8

- Experience of and success in popularising museum collections and activities for non-specialist audiences;
- A high media and public profile;
- Experience of the role and potential of museums in providing an education service;
- Understanding of the government procedures and policies in relation to non-departmental public bodies and museums in particular;
- Experience of developing commercial opportunities whilst maintaining the core objectives of a national museum.

6. Supporting information

6.1 Time commitment

Trustees need to commit around twelve days a year to the Royal Armouries, including 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 or elsewhere. Until further notice these meetings will be via video-conferencing.

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.

6.5 Start date

It is expected that a new Trustee will take up the appointment in September 2021.

7. 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.

To apply, please send:

- a CV covering no more than three sides of A4;

- a supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4, setting out how you meet the requirements set out above;
- the Conflicts of Interest Form;
- the Diversity Monitoring Form via Google Forms (link on advert).

If you have any questions regarding your application please contact the Campaign Manager, Rhianna Bridgewater at rhianna.bridgewater@dcms.gov.uk. Each application will be assessed against the requirements set out above. Please put 'Royal Armouries - Museums Trustee' in the email subject line.

7.1 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 strongly 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 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

7.5 Supporting information

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.

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.

8.1 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.

8.2 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 the Cabinet Office.