Hackney Playbus | Chair of Trustees Recruitment Pack | August 2026

Hackney Playbus has been part of the Hackney community for more than 50 years. Becoming Chair is a chance to support a much-loved local organisation and help shape its future alongside people who care deeply about children, families and the community.

The role gives you the opportunity to use your experience in a meaningful way, contribute to important decisions and see the difference your leadership can make. You will be able to develop your skills in governance, strategy and collaborative leadership, while learning more about the local voluntary and early-years sectors.

You will join a friendly and committed group of trustees, staff, volunteers and Co-Directors, build new relationships across Hackney and work with people who share your values. It is a chance to contribute your knowledge, learn from others and take on a purposeful leadership role that is rooted in the local community.

The Vice Chair will support the Chair, step in when the Chair is unavailable and take on responsibilities agreed by the Chair or Board.

Main Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities of a trustee, the Chair will:

Leadership and Governance

- Provide leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring Hackney Playbus remains focused on its charitable purpose and long-term vision.
- Chair Board meetings in a way that encourages participation, thoughtful discussion and collective decision-making.
- Support the Board to think strategically about the future of the organisation.
- Work with the Co-Directors to set Board agendas and ensure trustees receive the information they need to make informed decisions.
- Ensure Board decisions are implemented and progress is reviewed.
- Promote high standards of governance and ensure the charity fulfils its legal and regulatory responsibilities.

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Working with the Co-Directors

- Build a positive, supportive and constructive relationship with the Co-Directors.
- Provide encouragement, guidance and appropriate challenge while respecting the distinction between governance and operational management.
- Lead the annual appraisal of the Co-Directors on behalf of the Board.
- Support organisational planning and help guide the long-term development of Hackney Playbus.
- Sit on appointment, grievance or disciplinary panels where appropriate, or delegate this responsibility.

Developing the Board

- Work with the Co-Directors to plan the annual cycle of Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting.
- Help create a welcoming, inclusive and collaborative Board where everyone feels able to contribute.
- Encourage continuous learning and development within the Board.
- Support the resolution of conflict constructively and respectfully when it arises.

Championing Hackney Playbus

- Be an ambassador for Hackney Playbus and champion our work across Hackney and beyond.
- Build positive relationships with funders, partners, supporters and local organisations.
- Help identify opportunities that strengthen the charity's long-term sustainability.
- Support fundraising by opening doors, making introductions and promoting the work of Hackney Playbus where appropriate.

Person Specification

In addition to the person specification for trustees, the Chair will ideally bring:

Essential

- A commitment to the vision, mission and values of Hackney Playbus.
- A belief in the importance of play, early childhood development and supporting families to thrive.
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to bring people together, build consensus and inspire confidence.
- Experience of chairing meetings, committees or Boards, or other relevant leadership experience.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills.
- Sound judgement, integrity and emotional intelligence.
- The ability to listen well, ask thoughtful questions and support collaborative decision-making.
- Respect for confidentiality and sensitive information.
- An understanding of the distinction between governance and operational management.
- A commitment to equity, inclusion and ensuring local families remain at the heart of the organisation's work.

Desirable

- Experience of fundraising or income generation, including trusts and foundations, community fundraising, individual giving, corporate partnerships or strategic relationship-building.
- Knowledge of Hackney or a genuine interest in the communities we work alongside.
- An understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing families with young children, particularly those experiencing social isolation, poverty, insecure housing or barriers to accessing services.
- Experience within the voluntary, community, early years or public sectors.

Time Commitment

The Chair is expected to contribute approximately 1–2 days per month, including:

- Attendance at quarterly Board meetings.
- Quarterly one-to-one meetings with the Co-Directors.

- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting.
- Participation in the Fundraising Committee and other Board sub-committees as agreed.
- Preparation for meetings, including reading Board papers and reviewing reports.
- Occasional attendance at community events, partnership meetings and fundraising activities.
- Availability for occasional discussions with the Co-Directors between meetings where required.

Why Become Chair?

Hackney Playbus has been part of the Hackney community for more than 50 years.

This is an opportunity to help shape the future of an organisation that believes in the power of play, relationships and community. Every week we create welcoming spaces where children can learn and thrive, parents and carers can build confidence, and families can feel connected, supported and less alone.

As Chair, you will work alongside a committed Board, dedicated staff, volunteers and experienced Co-Directors to help Hackney Playbus continue evolving to meet the changing needs of local families. You will help strengthen the organisation, support its long-term sustainability and ensure it continues to make a lasting difference for children and families across Hackney.

The Vice Chair will act on behalf of the Chair when the Chair is unavailable and undertake responsibilities delegated by the Chair or Board.

Current Opportunities

Alongside recruiting our next Chair, we are also looking to strengthen our Board of Trustees.

We welcome people from a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences. We are particularly interested in hearing from individuals with expertise in one or more of the following areas:

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- **Fundraising** – trusts and foundations, individual giving, community fundraising and income generation.
- **Corporate Partnerships, Sponsorship and Employee Volunteering** – developing relationships with businesses and growing corporate engagement.
- **Communications and Marketing** – branding, storytelling, public relations, digital communications or media.
- **Advocacy and Influencing** – influencing policy, practice or systems, particularly within early years, children and families, or the voluntary and community sector.

If you share our belief that every child deserves the opportunity to grow, play and thrive, and you would like to use your skills to strengthen families and communities across Hackney, we would love to hear from you.

How to Apply

To apply, please submit:

- **Your CV** outlining your relevant experience.
- **A cover letter** (maximum two pages) explaining:
    - Why are you interested in becoming Chair of Hackney Playbus?
    - The skills, experience and perspectives you would bring to the role.
    - How your values align with our vision of supporting children, families and communities through play.

You will also be asked to confirm:

- **Can you commit approximately 1–2 days per month, including quarterly Board meetings and regular meetings with the Co-Directors?** *(Yes/No)*
- **Do you live, work or have a strong connection to Hackney?** *(Yes/No)*

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an informal conversation with members of the Board and Co-Directors, followed by a visit to Hackney Playbus before a final interview.

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