

# INTO OPERA TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT PACK

April 2021

**into  
opera**  
A creative revolution

## INTO OPERA AN INTRODUCTION

Into Opera was established as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registration number 1183225) in 2019. The journey for Into Opera journey had, however, begun two years earlier in 2017 inspired by the vision of founder Genevieve Raghu who is now the charity's Chief Executive and Artistic Director.

Into Opera has become a progressive arts and educational charity. The charity is based in Norfolk but we are increasingly extending our reach nationally. The core purpose of the charity is to get more people 'into' opera. Some people do not have the opportunity, means or inclination to access opera. So, we create unique opera experiences, designed to offer imaginative and empowering first encounters of opera for new audiences and participants. We find ways to tackle and remove the perceived and actual barriers that might prevent potential audiences or participants from accessing opera.

Into Opera produces professional opera productions, commissions new operas and English-language translations, develops bespoke educational projects, commissions research exploring creativity in education and the value of opera in education, and provides creative CPD opportunities for teachers.



In 2018, Into Opera staged the world premiere of *A King's Ransom*, a new children's opera by classical composer Patrick Hawes. In 2019, we launched the Norfolk Into Opera Festival, which is set to become a biannual event in Norfolk. In 2019, we also secured a £200,000 grant to provide a two-year Into Opera creative residency to five primary schools in Norfolk. Commencing in 2021, these residencies aim to help schools to break negative cycles in the lives of young people through cultural intervention. We will support schools to foster greater creativity in the classroom, work with them on imaginative curriculum design and offer children access to high quality cultural experiences which fuel their creativity and ambition. This work is being developed in

collaboration with Durham University and the University of East Anglia and extends and expands upon the Durham Commission findings on Creativity and Education Research. Our two university partners will be working closely with us and exploring whether opera as a multi-disciplinary art form, can offer revolutionary approaches and practice that bring about positive changes to the lives of children through enriched experiences within and beyond the school environment. In 2023, we intend to hold a conference to share the results of our research and to explore the value and impact of the arts, opera and creativity in primary education.

During 2020, Into Opera produced two projects in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. One was a podcast titled *How did you get into opera?* where we spoke to professionals from the opera industry about their journeys into opera, the big choices they had made during their careers and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on their lives, work and creativity. Into Opera felt it was important to document and publicly share the stories of artists across the opera sector at this unprecedented time. We welcomed guests including Annilese Miskimmon (Artistic Director, English National Opera); Tim Claydon (Choreographer) and Leslie Travers (Set and Costume Designer).

Our second project in response to the pandemic involved a close collaboration with six primary schools in Norwich to support the wellbeing and mental health of children through purposeful engagement with music and the arts. Children were supported and encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings in relation to the pandemic and the changes that had taken place in their lives. The result of this was the creation of a song cycle *2020: You Won't Hold Me Back!*, a collection of songs composed by Will Todd. The songs were produced and shared as a film in December 2020, along with a Q&A with artists and teachers involved in the project, which shared insights into the process of developing and delivering a project of this kind, and the importance of doing so, during a national pandemic.

If you would like to find out more about Into Opera and to see some examples of our major projects to date and the impact of that work, please take a look at this short video produced in March 2020: <http://www.into-opera.org.uk/videos>.



More information about Into Opera can also be found on our website:

[www.into-opera.org.uk](http://www.into-opera.org.uk).

The film of 2020: *You Won't Hold Me Back!* and our podcast series *How did you get into opera?* can also be found on our website: [www.into-opera.org.uk/projects](http://www.into-opera.org.uk/projects)

Into Opera operates in England and Wales, and is based in Norfolk.

## OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTS

Into Opera seeks to advance education in, and to promote and increase the enjoyment and appreciation of, opera and the arts (including music, drama, dance, design, film and the written word) for public benefit. In doing so, we aim to improve the accessibility of opera as an art form, nationally and internationally, seeking to get more people 'into' opera as audience members and/or participants.

## JOIN OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

We are always looking to the future, and board members have the opportunity to contribute to what that future may look like for Into Opera. By joining the Board you will have the opportunity to work with colleagues to develop and support the implementation of the charity's strategy.

Anyone interested in supporting the work of Into Opera is encouraged to apply. We particularly welcome applications from women and individuals from black, asian and minority ethnic backgrounds to ensure greater gender balance and diversity on our board.

Current board members bring with them experience in music education, primary education, higher education and initial teacher training, children's literature, organisational and people management, executive leadership, leisure and cultural management, charity governance and finance.



We are currently seeking new Trustees to join our board, to support us strategically and to help pro-actively advocate for the charity's work.

We are particularly (but not exclusively) interested in hearing from individuals with experience in the following areas:

- **Fundraising and Individual Giving:** it is a high priority for us to recruit a trustee who can support the charity's efforts to secure high-value corporate and/or individual donations. In seeking to bring opera to new audiences we always subsidise ticket prices or engagement opportunities to ensure equal access for all – however, producing high quality work comes at a significant financial cost. We need the support from a well-connected trustee with expertise in building relationships with philanthropists, high-net-worth individuals and corporate organisations to help us to identify who might want to support our work, especially in relation to: our ambitious educational work in schools, our research into the impact of creativity and the arts in education, commissioning new operas and the growth of the Norfolk Into Opera Festival.



- **Media and/or Public Relations:** we are looking for a trustee who will help us to tell our story! We are beginning to expand our work beyond Norfolk and will be initiating projects in connection to arts education and creativity which we know could have value nationally. We have built strong links locally in Norfolk and have also had a number of articles commissioned about our work with schools (eg: Teach Primary, Norwich Opportunity Area, Arts Professional) and there are plans for us to develop a blog for the Arts Council's Creativity Exchange. However, we want to do so much more to both promote and share insights and outcomes

from our work, engaging artists, audiences, schools, universities, political bodies changemakers and communities on a larger scale. We are looking for a trustee with great ideas and great contacts!

- **Extensive Professional Experience Working in Opera or Supporting the Opera Sector:** we are looking for someone with knowledge of and passion for opera and the performing arts, with excellent networks and contacts which could help to build Into Opera's reach, profile and expand our connections within the industry. We hope this individual will be as passionate as we are about inspiring a new generation of diverse participants and audiences for opera and looking for ways to strategically help future-proof the industry.
- **Business Development:** we are looking for a trustee (who may come from outside the arts industry) to collaborate with our CEO to help develop a new business plan for Into Opera in the light of Covid-19. We are seeking a trustee who could support us with refreshing our approach to income generation, suggesting strategies adopted by non-arts organisations which may prove beneficial for us to explore, increasing our resilience and to help us plan ahead effectively.

## ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES WE ARE LOOKING FOR IN TRUSTEES

- Clear interest in developing a growing commitment to the charity, its vision and values.
- An ability to think creatively and to bring insight and independent judgement to discussions, which positively support decision making, the development of policies and strategies for the charity.
- Strong interpersonal skills with the ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- A demonstrable commitment to diversity and inclusion.



- A willingness to devote the necessary time to support Into Opera to help build the charity's profile.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Acting as a Trustee is a voluntary, unpaid position. The role also carries some legal responsibilities. You can read more about these on the government's website at [www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved).

Trustees of Into Opera are expected to:

- Act in the best interests of the charity, beneficiaries and potential future beneficiaries. This should be demonstrated by individually contributing to discussions and in decision-making in a way that is responsible, reasonable, honest, demonstrating care and striving for best practice in governance.
- Work together as a board to ensure the legality, efficiency, financial probity, and cost effectiveness of Into Opera's operations. Trustees should ensure the charity complies with all statutory reporting requirements, and that the work of the charity continues to reflect and adhere to the charity's constitution, policies and risk register.
- Take an active interest in the charity's work including the ideas, concepts and social causes inspiring activity, and the values and ambitions of Into Opera projects.
- Work closely with the CEO/Artistic Director and fellow trustees to identify and develop key relationships that will be beneficial to the charity, especially in relation to the generation of revenues or increasing the charity's profile and potential partnerships.
- Set the strategic direction of the charity.
- Act as an ambassador for Into Opera, safeguarding its good name and values, and promoting this to the widest possible audience. Trustees are expected to



use their personal and professional networks to inform and promote the work of the charity and, where possible, to identify ways that the charity might increase its reach, audience and income.

- Use individual skills and experience to support the charity, helping the organisation to grow, develop and achieve its goals.
- Attend and actively participate in trustee meetings, in person or virtually, and ensure adequate preparation has been undertaken prior to these meetings.
- Attend and provide support to the CEO/Artistic Director at as many Into Opera public events as possible (as required and when practical).
- Ensure the effective and efficient administration of the charity and its resources in partnership with the other trustees.
- Maintain confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received as a trustee and in line with the responsibilities all trustees have to the charity.
- Actively contribute to Board recruitment, development and review.
- Join sub-groups, advisory groups, recruitment panels etc. for the charity as required.
- Help to identify and foster new audiences for our work in the short, medium and long term.

## COMMITMENT AND LENGTH OF OFFICE

Each term of appointment for a Trustee is three years. At the end of each term, they may choose to apply to be reappointed by the board for a further three-year term. It is also possible to stand down after this three-year term or to retire within a three-year term if necessary.

Trustees must be willing to devote enough time to attend to the organisation's business (approx. two days per month), including the following:

- Board meetings in person or virtually (the Board currently meets six times each year)
- Other Board events such as an annual away day or training events

- Important Into Opera public events such as launches, key performances and fundraising events
- Other key meetings and events as required

In the light of current circumstances all board meetings will take place online for the foreseeable future. However, the charity is based in Norfolk in the East of England and when in-person board meetings are required these are likely to take place in Norwich or London. Virtual attendance will, however, always be made viable and we welcome applications from candidates anywhere in the world. We are keen to remove geography as a barrier in securing the right trustees for the Charity.



## HOW TO APPLY

If you are interested in being considered for the role of a **Trustee** for **Into Opera**, please send a CV, along with a short letter, outlining your motivation for applying and how you might be able to contribute to the development of the charity. Please also complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form. Applications should be sent to Genevieve Raghu: [genevieve.raghu@into-opera.org.uk](mailto:genevieve.raghu@into-opera.org.uk).

When sending your email to us please use the following subject heading: **Board of Trustees Into Opera**.

If you would like to arrange an informal discussion before submitting an application, please get in touch by email in the first instance so that we can arrange the best way to have this conversation.

If you would prefer to send a video or audio application, due to your access needs, please send this along to [genevieve.raghu@into-opera.org.uk](mailto:genevieve.raghu@into-opera.org.uk).

Please submit your application by **10.00am** on **Monday 17th May**. We are, however, considering applications on a rolling basis so we encourage interested applicants to get in touch at their earliest convenience.