



**TRUSTEE  
RECRUITMENT  
PACK**

**We're seeking a  
Chair of the Board +  
Treasurer + Property  
Expert...**

**JOIN US!**

# **We're reimagining what an artist-led organisation can be and do, and we want you to be part of it!**

Chisenhale Dance Space (CDS) has been making space for artists to lead, experiment and create for over 40 years. We have an incredible legacy and have had a key role in the development of dance in the UK, having been a home for some of the most radical artists across the country, often long before their work is recognised by the wider sector.

We're using this legacy to power a new future and in 2023, we're reinventing ourselves. We've just launched our newly imagined future facing, more inclusive vision of an Artist Community – the core reason for our existence. It's a new model that empowers the people we believe can influence change and shape the diversity, creativity, and future of the cultural sector - independent artists. We want to use this shift to keep decentralising power, make radical change in the dance and performance sector and seek alternative, more sustainable ways of working that support more artists than we have before, prioritising those who have been historically excluded.

It's an exciting time of change and possibility and we're looking for new trustees who can join in this journey of exploration, lean into uncertainty, and help shape a new way of working together.

Our board meets every three months, sometimes online, sometimes in person in East London. Trustees are our biggest advocates and critical friends of the organisation. These are voluntary roles with travel and access costs covered.

CDS is one of the three independent charities that occupy Chisenhale Art Place in a former veneer factory on Chisenhale Road, alongside our partner organisations, Chisenhale Gallery and Chisenhale Studios. Our ex-warehouse on a back-street by Victoria Park was home of the influential 'New Dance' movement in the 80s and 90s, with our artists expanding both the form and active politics of movement, changing the face of UK dance. These experimental, urgent approaches have continued throughout our history and continue to be reflected in the Artist Community and our programmes. Our space and location in the community of Bow has always formed a key element of CDS' identity and programme.

After a challenging few years, we're navigating a time of transformation post-pandemic, as we reckon with our inherited structures and assess how to keep evolving to better serve our communities and influence change in our sector.

We are a space hire organisation, and this forms a core part of our income. We have two main dance studios that we hire out and pride ourselves as one of the most affordable studios in London. We're a creative home for artists who need one and work to minimise gatekeeping and to share resources equitably.

We are developing a new business model, trying new things and working flexibly in light of ongoing challenges including increasingly competitive funding and pressures of regeneration in London.

CDS is managed by a small, dedicated staff team and board. We are working to embed the principles that lead our work into how we do governance. We are looking for three new trustees to help us with this: a chair of the board, a treasurer, and a property expert. With the recent launch of our Artist Community, we've made clear our commitment to supporting marginalised artists and workers to lead, at CDS and in the sector, a commitment which extends to these roles.

You do not need to have done this before, CDS is a place for firsts, with many of our existing board, staff and artists taking up their leadership roles for the first time. We just need you to be passionate about the power of collectivity and interested in driving heart-led organisational change. So, if you've got this far, you might just be the person we are looking for... join us!

# About becoming a Trustee

## Current Team and Trustees

CDS is a registered charity, currently operating with a small but efficient and experienced core team, supported by freelance staff, an [artist committee](#), project staff and volunteers. The current list of staff can be viewed [here](#).

Chisenhale Dance Space's board is composed of individuals, who are legally and ethically responsible for the charity. They are appointed for 3-year terms, which are renewable for up to 3 terms. The current list of trustees can be viewed [here](#).

The role of the Board of Trustees is to support the strategic vision and leadership of the charity and ensure Chisenhale Dance Space remains true to its values, relevant to our artistic and local communities, well managed and financially sustainable.

We also want to make sure our board is made up of a diverse range of intersectional identities and people who particularly share the backgrounds of the artists who have been historically under-represented in our community, including Global Majority heritage, and disabled/neurodivergent artists.

“After a bruising few years for everyone in the sector we've identified new ways in which CDS can thrive and become the truly inclusive environment artists need now. As a new trustee and artist who has benefited from CDS in recent years, I'm excited to see how this new way of working can influence the wider sector.”

***Bakani Pick-Up, Trustee and Artist Community***

## Why become a Trustee?

There are many reasons that people may want to be a Trustee. Here are a few that drive us:

- To 'give back' and use our skills in new contexts
- For personal and professional development, to develop our personal leadership and management skills.
- To help contribute to the change that we want to see in the world, the local community, or the arts sector.
- Get involved with a dynamic, eclectic, and heritage-filled artistic community in London, and link our networks with it as relevant.
- To collaborate and work with a motivated and diverse board and staff.
- To open up and access new professional networks.

**Chisenhale Dance Space Board Members are expected to:**

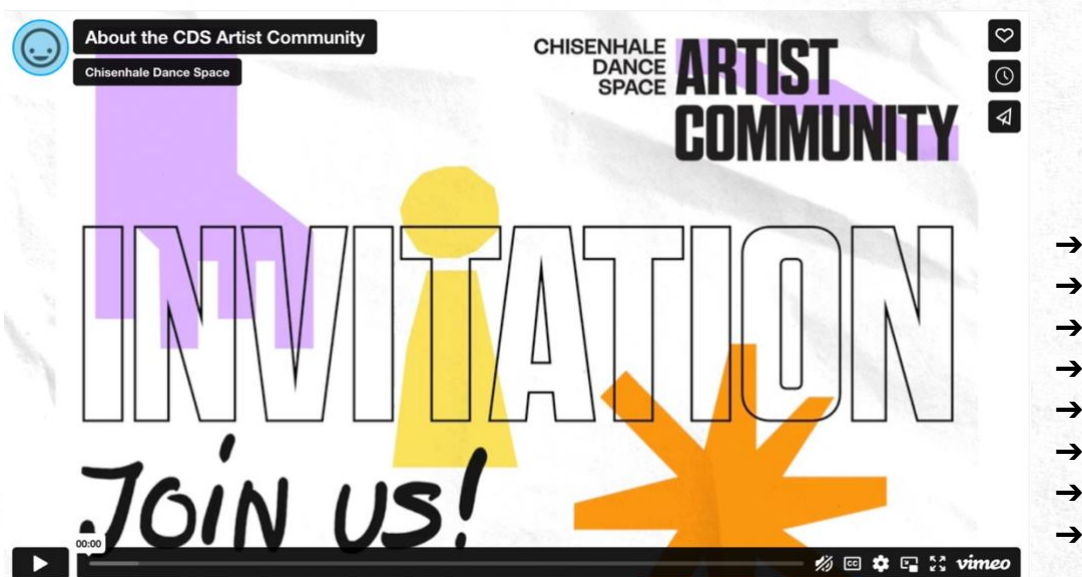
- Attend 4 x weekday evening Quarterly Board Meetings per year.
- Attend 1 x Artist Community AGM and select gatherings.
- Attend 1 x half-day Board Away Day.
- Attend some CDS events and performances.
- To take a pro-active lead on an area of work at the organisation and dedicate some time each month to initiate and support activity in that area – attending working meetings to facilitate and guide the business of the organisation.

We estimate that the time commitment to CDS will amount to a day per month spread out in short meetings and email interactions. This is to meet the needs of the fast-moving changes at the organisation, which offer a great opportunity for the board to actively engage with the work at hand.

“CDS is an ever morphing, one of a kind place - an incubator for artistic visions, and a platform that facilitates forward thinking conversations. Here we hold brave and caring spaces that nourish experimental beings and their practices with honest intentions.”

*Jane Chan, Artist Community*

**In case you missed it... hear more about the CDS Artist Community here**



## Interested? What to do next:

- Read more about each role below, including responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges before applying.
- If you'd like, you can have an informal conversation with us! You can reach out to our Executive Director, Reece McMahon on [reece@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk](mailto:reece@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk) to chat in more detail about the organisation or to be connected with an existing trustee to hear about what it's like to be on the board.
- To apply, email your CV and a 1-page letter of interest – with which role(s) you are interested in and why, to [theboard@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk](mailto:theboard@chisenhaledancespace.co.uk) by **4 September 2023**.  
We welcome recorded voice and video files instead of a written letter if this is a preferable way of applying.
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to observe **the next board meeting on 14 September 2023, 4-6:30pm at Chisenhale Dance Space**
- In September, we will hold formal interviews led by a staff member, existing trustee, and artist with eligible applicants, all online. Decisions will be made by October 2023.
- October and November 2023: appointed trustees go through due diligence checks and procedures. Welcome and induction processes.
- Next Board Meetings will be December 2023 and March 2023.

**Get in touch! We want to hear from you, no matter how unsure you are if this opportunity is right for you, let's chat.**

## About the Role - Chair/Co-Chairs

The Chair is responsible for the health of the board as a democratic, open, safe, inclusive, and productive space to govern. The Chair of the Board has an overview of the organisation's activity and is required to have fortnightly contact with the Executive Director to understand the ongoing shifts and changes of the organisation and support its delivery. While an active hands-on role, it is an amazing opportunity of learning leadership through practice, building strong relationships with individuals across the organisation.

### Co-Chairs?

For several years, CDS' board has been led by two people sharing the role of Chair. We would welcome joint applications from two people wanting to take on the role together or expressions of interest in co-chairing with another applicant.

### The Chair is responsible for:

- Having an overview and in-depth understanding of the workings, needs and current risks of Chisenhale Dance Space. Stirring board activity so as to meet the needs of the organisation.
- Scheduling, planning, chairing of quarterly board meetings and the AGM
- Managing, supporting and delegating to the board members to enable active participation in board duties
- Ensuring a smooth and relevant communication process between staff and board
- Managing decision-making processes as and when necessary, compliant with the charity's governance structure
- Ensure due diligence and sign off of the annual report
- Coordinating the recruitment and induction of new board members when required ensuring that process is in line with the aspired balance of representation of the board
- Creating and holding safe spaces for board members, staff and stakeholders to work together in respect of Chisenhale Dance Space's Code of Conduct

We welcome applications from anyone interested in the role, and in particular from people who can demonstrate how they might approach the learning experience and put in place support networks to enable their growth.

### We think you might be a good Chair of the Board if some of the following relates to you:

- Experience of being a trustee for a charitable organisation
- Experience of or readiness for a leadership role in the arts
- Experience of managing a team
- Understanding of and committed to equity, diversity and inclusion

- A good understanding of the UK arts, dance or charitable sectors
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills

**Upcoming opportunities and challenges include...**

- Playing a key leadership role in the transformation of the organisation's operational, governance and power structures, exploring innovative models that place communities at the helm
- Collaboratively setting the organisation's agenda and outlining the business plan for the next 3-5 years
- Supporting the development of new partnerships and advocating for the organisation

“Being co-chair of CDS has been the most rewarding lesson in leadership I could ever have wished for. The up-for-trying-things-out culture meant I could really explore how to best support the organisation and learn alongside my peers how to best work to our ethics and principles. I'm looking forward to handing over the reins, and for the new chair(s) to bring a new energy to drive CDS into the future.”

***Clara Giraud, Outgoing Co-Chair of the Board***

## About the Role - Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for the health of the organisation's finances. The Treasurer works closely with the Director to ensure efficient and transparent financial management of all of CDS' operations.

**We think you might be a good Treasurer if some of the following relates to you:**

- Experience of financial control and budgeting
- Experience of accounting for charities
- Experience of fundraising for charities
- Experience in the financial sector

**Upcoming opportunities and challenges include...**

- Reshaping the organisation's finance and fundraising strategy to ensure longer term, sustainable health
- Seeking new forms of income and reviewing expenditure to reflect our commitment to supporting artists
- Explore ways to communicate the organisation's financial information to its community in an accessible way, as part of increased transparency

## About the Role - Property Expert

The Property Expert is responsible for overseeing the lease that Chisenhale Dance Space is bound to for its usage of the studios. They will be involved in the intricate relationships with stakeholders including the Borough of Tower Hamlets Council, our landlords CAPT, and neighbours Chisenhale Gallery. They will work closely with the Director to ensure the long-term plan for the housing of CDS.

**We think you might be a good Property Expert if some of the following relates to you:**

- Experience of property management or development
- Experience of initiating, or managing capital projects
- Understanding of, or holding a professional qualification in property law
- Experience of arts buildings or buildings run by charities.

**Upcoming opportunities and challenges include...**

- Exploring short to midterm solutions to keep our building running as a safe and welcoming environment for artists.
- Working in collaboration with our building partners and the local authority to secure a development of the building and the future of the organisation on our current site. This could become a major capital project, and has huge potential for the local and artistic communities.

“For all of my years living and working in dance in the UK, CDS has steadfastly been at the forefront of radical experimentalism in the form. As such, it has been a true privilege to be involved in CDS as it continues to navigate a path forward these past years.

There have been challenges that we have tried to face that have required us to imagine another way (of operating), and this has been a truly invigorating experience, opening my eyes to the possible alternatives to our existing organisational structures.

I would encourage anyone who believes in a yet to be imagined future to invest the time to be involved in this precious organisation (in its ongoing striving for survival).”

***Steven Brett, Outgoing Co-Chair of the Board***