



## **Appointment of Trustees 2024**

### **Briefing Pack**

## Welcome

Thank you very much for your interest in being an OHMI trustee.

When my predecessor set up the charity, just over a decade ago, he was determined to make the world of music more inclusive. He recognised that people with physical impairments were often excluded from music-making, not because of lack of ability but because of a lack of suitable instruments – and he set out to change that. From small beginnings, the Trust has established itself as a global leader in pioneering adapted musical instruments. Things like a one-handed clarinet, which were once deemed impossible, are now a reality – and we're not stopping there.

The Trust faces the challenge of upscaling our work to meet demand. We have an excellent team on the trustee board and in our staff team, but are keen to expand our skills, knowledge, and experience. At this stage, we are looking to recruit up to three additional trustees, in particular people with experience of finance and/or fundraising, who share our commitment to making a difference for disabled musicians.

Please read on - and, if you feel you are excited by the challenges ahead, we would love to hear from you. This could be your opportunity to change the world.



Clare Salters FRSA  
Chair of Trustees

## About OHMI

OHMI's objective is a simple one: we enable children and adults with physical impairments to **play the instruments they want to play, when and where they want to play them** (at school, in the home, for fun, or in a professional ensemble).

Most standard musical instruments require ten highly dexterous fingers to be played properly. Any impairment in an upper limb makes many musical instruments unplayable to a reasonable standard. As a result, thousands are excluded from the joy of music-making because of congenital disabilities, amputation, arthritis, injuries, stroke or because of a lack of full strength or control of their upper limbs.

OHMI seeks to remove these barriers through the creation and provision of adapted musical instruments and enabling equipment.

As an organisation, our continued success comes from the people we work with - instrument makers, teachers, staff, trustees, researchers, funders and, of course, the musicians who play our instruments. We are fortunate to be supported by some eminent patrons - Dame Evelyn Glennie, Alison Balsom, and John Harle - and our distinguished ambassador, Nicholas McCarthy.

You can read more about OHMI in our most recent Annual Report or on our website [www.ohmi.org.uk](http://www.ohmi.org.uk).

## Current challenges

The updated National Plan for Music Education in England provides a welcome confirmation of the importance of ensuring that disabled children are fully included in music education and stresses the value of adapted instruments as a key factor in making this possible. This is a great opportunity for OHMI to help support music services and hubs across the country in supporting their students.

But we face key challenges in achieving this - both financial and logistical. These include:

**Resources** - demand for our instruments far outstrips supply - these are specialist instruments, which cost a lot of money to produce. We need more money to purchase more instruments to meet the waiting list demand for our hire scheme, and to support individual musicians road-testing the instruments for us.

**Financial sustainability** - our income tends to be short-term and unpredictable, so we need to improve its long-term sustainability including by diversifying our income sources beyond Trusts and Foundations.

**Training specialist personnel** - we work with some outstanding instrument designers and technicians, and want to expand the network of people with these skills to increase the scope for producing adapted instruments in the quantities they are needed across the country and beyond.

**Upscaling production** - we also want to look at ways of upscaling production to make it possible for more instruments to be produced, more quickly, enabling us to meet demand. We have begun this work,

looking at the contribution of 3D printing for instrument production, but there is more to do in this area, and this will continue to be an area of growth for us in the years ahead.



A trio of performers using one-handed clarinets and performing at OHMI's Tenth Anniversary celebrations.



Benedict Meissner performing on a one-handed treble recorder at OHMI's Tenth Anniversary Awards.

## Our programmes

### *Instrument development & hire scheme*

Since its inception, OHMI has run an international competition to encourage the design of instruments that can be played without the use of one hand or arm. This competition has resulted in the design of one-handed saxophones, clarinets, flutes, bagpipes, recorders of many sizes and so much more. As well as fully-functioning instruments, the competition has categories for design concepts (ideas that could evolve into fully-functioning instruments) and enabling equipment (e.g. stands to support the weight of an instrument).

Delivering fully-functioning instruments is important. OHMI is not about supporting people only to play at the most basic level of music-making, being forced to give up when their instrument runs out of usefulness. We want to provide instruments that enable people with physical disabilities to participate fully in music-making, from beginner steps up to professional careers.

OHMI runs a hire scheme, enabling players, schools and music hubs to hire specialist instruments and equipment rather than having to purchase them straight off, without knowing whether the player will take to the instrument or prefer something else instead.

*“Extraordinary and pioneering”*

Lord Nash

*“Very inspiring ... bravo, bravo”*

Martin Fröst, international clarinettist

### *Research*

The OHMI Research Partnership (ORP) was established in 2019 to foster links between the Trust and academic institutions. The partnership links OHMI with researchers at Imperial College London, Birmingham City University and Queen Mary University of London.

In the field of instrument design, the partnership explores the use of digital technology and the applicability of different materials for building instruments.

In the field of music education, the partners look at a range of issues, including teaching techniques for adapted instruments, pedagogic approaches in mixed ability classrooms and how to remove barriers to music education for those with physical disabilities.

In addition, the ORP looks at the development of government policy and seeks to influence this to ensure better inclusion of people with physical disabilities in the world of music-making.

*“I hope this research shines a light on what everyone is doing so we can collaborate. Music brings us together. We have shared interests, networks and opportunities. If we speak with one voice, the music business - and world at large - will listen and take note.”*

James Risdon, ABRSM

## Music lessons

Through our *OHMI Music Makers* schemes, we support over 1080 individual and whole class music lessons a year for children and young people aged 5-25 with a range of disabilities, requiring specialist equipment.

We work directly with six music services, to support their First Access whole class instrumental lessons, ensuring that students who need it can access specialist adapted instruments and support equipment, enabling them to participate fully in the lessons. Beyond First Access, we subsidise the cost of music lessons for students learning with adapted instruments. This recognises both the additional lesson time that can be taken while the teacher gets to grips with an adapted instrument, and the value to OHMI of road-testing our instruments against standard curriculum and syllabus materials.

*“Having OHMI on board makes things happen... He’s getting the opportunity to play loud and proud and, importantly, he’s getting the same choices as any other young person his age.”*

Parent of an OHMI Music Maker

*“I really like playing in an orchestra because no-one notices that I play any differently when I’m with others. I see playing the clarinet as another step to becoming what people don’t expect of me.”*

An OHMI Music Maker

## Teacher Training

We offer a range of professional development opportunities for music, education, and health professionals. This training is built on years of experience of working to enable those with physical disabilities to participate in music-making. Collaborating with individuals with physical impairments means dealing on a daily basis with unique situations and supporting children and adults with a range of physical conditions to flourish in their music-making journey.

Throughout the year, there are opportunities for individuals and organisations to participate in and commission workshops, talks and host information stands. These opportunities also provide opportunities for networking with others who are working in the field and keep up to date with the innovative equipment and practices that are available.

Our Professional Development programme supports career-wide development and learning, providing teachers with the opportunity to enrich their professional knowledge, expand their professional expertise and explore new options as they come into the market.

*“I feel massively more well equipped, knowledgeable, and confident to enabling children with physical abilities to play musical instruments. I also feel that I have a really helpful expert organization (OHMI) to seek help and support from.”*

Attendee at the ‘Introduction to Music-Making for Children with Physical Disabilities course

## Role description

Charity trustees hold the charity 'in trust' for current and future beneficiaries. They have several general legal duties:

- ensuring the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit;
- ensuring the charity complies with its governing document and the law;
- acting in the charity's best interests;
- acting with reasonable care and skill; and
- ensuring the charity is accountable.

In practice this means:

- Ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and that its work is focused on achieving these.
- Being responsible for the performance of the charity and for its accountability.
- Taking responsible and informed decisions.
- Making time to read papers for meetings and prepare effectively.
- Being available to staff for advice, support and enquiries on an ad hoc basis.

All of this is done collectively as part of a team. Each individual member of the Board brings different skills and life experiences, and we all benefit from each other's contribution.

## Person specification

We are looking to appoint **up to three new trustees**, who share our commitment to making the world of music more accessible for people with physical disabilities and impairments.

Each prospective trustee should be able to demonstrate a commitment to equality, equity, inclusion, and diversity. An interest in disability and/or music would be particularly welcome.

In addition to these general requirements, we are keen to recruit trustees who have experience of one or more of the following:

- Fundraising
- Finance, Audit and Risk

We do not have a particular 'type' of person in mind for these roles. We want people who are committed to supporting our charity's work, and helping build its future and recognise that skills and experience can be acquired from various places, including people's personal, volunteering and professional lives.

We welcome applications from everyone, but would particularly love to receive applications from people with disabilities and from people from disadvantaged/minority backgrounds or groups that are currently under-represented in leadership positions.

# Being a trustee

## What is a trustee?

A trustee is a volunteer who serves on the governing body of a charity called the 'Board'. Charity trustees are the people who share ultimate responsibility and accountability for running a charity. Together with the rest of the Board, you will provide the oversight we need to ensure the charity uses the money we raise in the best conceivable way to bring music to the lives of the people we work with. It is an incredibly rewarding role and a wonderful way to support an organisation that is trying to change the world one step at a time!

## What does the role involve?

The role involves attending Board meetings and reading the papers beforehand, to help provide assurance that the charity is being properly run, in line with what we were set up to do. All trustees play a part in this. Some of us also bring specialist expertise - for example in relation to technology, music education, strategic planning, safeguarding or administrative skills. You may find it helpful to read the Charity Commission's note [The Essential Trustee](#) to learn more about being a charity trustee.

## Is it a paid position?

No. As the role is voluntary, being a trustee is not a paid position. However, we are happy to cover any reasonable expenses you incur in fulfilling your trustee role. Contact [rachel@ohmi.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ohmi.org.uk) if you have queries about what counts as a reasonable expense.

## What experience do I need?

You do not need to have been a trustee before. Our Board is not an exclusive club. It is made up of a supportive group of people who bring a range of lived experience and valuable insights from a variety of different backgrounds. We can provide you with access to lots of training and support.

## How accessible is it?

Most of our work is done online. We occasionally have in-person meetings or events and are happy to make whatever reasonable adjustments we can to make it possible for you to play a full role on the Board.

## How much time will it take?

It will take around 3-5 hours of time a month on average. The Board meets six times a year, usually online. The meetings are usually on weekday mornings, and last around 1-2 hours. Some time is needed to read papers in advance of those meetings. Trustees may also be asked to deal with correspondence between meetings and there may occasionally be additional meetings or events to deal with specific issues.

For successful candidates, the dates of Board meetings for 2024 are:

Monday 15 July	1000-1200
Monday 16 September	1000-1200
Tuesday 18 November	1000-1200

## How to apply

Please send us:

- A note explaining why you are applying to be an OHMI trustee, and how you meet the skills and experience listed in the Person Specification.
- A separate note setting out your name, contact details and your employment and volunteering history.
- The names and contact details of two people who will be able to provide a reference for you. We will not contact these people without your prior knowledge and consent.

The notes should be no longer than two sides of A4 each.

Applications should be sent to: [rachel@ohmi.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ohmi.org.uk)

Closing date for applications: 14 June 2024

Interviews (via MS Teams): TBC but probably during July

If you have any questions that are not covered in our FAQs, please have a look at our website ([www.ohmi.org.uk](http://www.ohmi.org.uk)) or get in touch with Rachel Wolffsohn, our General Manager, at [rachel@ohmi.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ohmi.org.uk).

Thank you again for your interest in the role and in OHMI!

## FAQs

**There are gaps in my employment history due to childcare, ill-health or other reasons. Will this count against me?**

No. We recognise that some people have gaps in their employment histories for reasons that have no bearing at all on their ability to perform the role. We are interested in what you can bring to the Board, not in how you have filled every minute of your life.

**I have experienced discrimination when applying for jobs in other organisations. Is it worth my time applying?**

Yes. We welcome applications from everyone and will do all that we can to support you and meet any individual requirements.

**Will I have to attend the interview in person?**

No. We will be holding interviews using a video platform service called Microsoft Teams. If you would prefer to use a different video call service that may be more accessible or familiar for you, please get in touch to discuss options.

**I am a D/deaf and or disabled and/or neurodivergent person, will you meet my access requirements?**

We are a charity committed to inclusion. We will do everything we can to support D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent people at interviews and in their roles. We will always make any reasonable adjustments we can and try to support you with any additional resources you might need. Please get in touch to let us know what would be helpful.



## Current trustees

### Clare Salters, Chair of Trustees

Clare is a former senior civil servant, currently working freelance both as a music teacher with particular interest in improving access for students for disabilities and as a panel member for the Judicial Appointments Commission.

### Martin Dyke, Co-Founder

Martin is managing director at Tyndallwoods solicitors, where he has worked for nearly 40 years, specialising in commercial property transactions, landlord and tenant work, and business disposal and acquisition. He is vice-chair of governors at Blue Coat School Birmingham.

### Andrew McPherson

Andrew is professor of design engineering and music at Imperial College's Dyson School of Engineering. His activities as a composer and researcher in augmented instruments, new performance interfaces and expressive performance modelling have been a catalyst for his involvement in the Trust.

### Emma Brown

Emma is a flautist, who is just completing a Masters of Music at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. She is the founder of Amputee Musicians UK, a network for musicians living with amputations or limb differences.

### Martin Fautley

Martin is the recently retired professor of research in the school of education and social work at Birmingham City University. He is widely known for his work on researching assessment in the classroom, and has a wealth of experience of music education and pedagogy.

### Matthew Wright

Matthew is a professor in acoustical engineering at the University of Southampton, where he has introduced a specialist module on the acoustics of musical instruments on the curriculum. He is also an active folk musician, playing a one-handed concertina for the Winchester Morris Men.

### Nicola McLaughlin

One of OHMI's longest-standing trustees, Nicola is due to stand down this summer after many years of service with the Trust. An economist by training, she has taken the lead in overseeing OHMI's finances.



*OHMI Trustees and staff*