

Trustee Appointments 2025

The Board of Trustees (Council) of the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) is seeking to recruit and appoint three Trustees to take office for a three-year tenure from the close of the AGM on 20 September 2025 to the close of the AGM on 24 September 2028.

The RPS Nominations Committee (NomCom) has been tasked with this recruitment and is seeking Applications from individuals who feel they could contribute to the function of the Board and deliver to that role in a professional, collaborative and respectful manner.

Summary of Role Description

For more detail, please refer to the **Trustee Role Description and Person Specification** (revision 4)

Trustees of the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) are voting members of the Board responsible for ensuring the organisation operates within its Royal Charter, legal obligations, and charitable purpose. They may be elected, appointed, or co-opted, typically serving up to six years. Trustees focus on strategy, governance, and oversight, shaping the Society's direction, safeguarding its values, and ensuring financial and organisational stability. They are not involved in day-to-day operations, which are led by the CEO. The role offers a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the future of photography while gaining valuable board-level experience.

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About the Royal Photographic Society

The **Royal Photographic Society (RPS)** is one of the world's oldest and most respected photographic organisations, founded in **1853** with the objective of advancing the art and science of photography. Incorporated by **Royal Charter** (2004), the RPS operates as an **educational charity**, and its work reaches a broad and diverse international audience of photographers, ranging from emerging enthusiasts and passionate amateurs to established professionals, fine artists, academics, and scientists.

The Society's central mission is **"to bring photography to everyone."** This is achieved by promoting photographic excellence, encouraging public appreciation of photography, and providing opportunities for learning, engagement, and creative development. The RPS is committed to making photography accessible and relevant to all, regardless of background, age, or level of experience.

At the heart of the RPS's purpose is a charitable objective:

"To educate the public by increasing their knowledge and understanding of Photography and in doing so to promote the highest standards of achievement in Photography."

To deliver on this aim, the RPS runs a wide range of events and programmes. These include exhibitions and talks, workshops and masterclasses, internationally recognised qualifications (in areas of Imaging Science and of the Creative Industries) and distinctions (including its internationally-respected Licentiate, Associate and Fellowship), and has sole authority (granted by the Privy Council) to award the designation of Chartered Photographer (the terminal qualification for professional photographers in the UK). Importantly, the RPS delivers and supports initiatives that support emerging talent and underrepresented voices. The Society also works closely with schools, communities, and partner organisations to promote photography as a tool for **education, creativity, cultural engagement, and social change**.

The RPS fosters a strong sense of community among photographers and encourages dialogue across genres and generations. Its work is currently framed around three strategic themes:

Inspire	to stimulate creativity and encourage excellence
Create	to support photographers in developing and sharing their work
Connect	to build networks and partnerships across the photographic sector

In today's visually driven world, the RPS continues to play a vital role in shaping how photography is practiced, understood, and valued - as both an art form and a means of communication. Through its mission, the RPS champions photography not only as a medium of personal expression, but as a powerful tool for storytelling, education, and public engagement.

Trustee Expertise and Skills

The RPS seeks to appoint **three Trustees** who, together with the six remaining Trustees, collectively offer a strong blend of professional expertise and strategic insight across **seven key areas**. While individual Trustees may not possess all these skills, the Board of nine Trustees must be equipped to govern the organisation effectively and support the Executive Team in delivery of the RPS mission. In addition, all Trustees are expected to demonstrate independent judgement, strategic thinking, a collaborative and respectful mindset, and a demonstrable commitment to the values and mission of the RPS.

1. Photography and Visual Arts

Trustees should have knowledge or experience within the photographic sector—whether through professional practice, curatorial work, education, or as informed enthusiasts. An understanding of photographic history, current trends, and the needs of both amateur and professional communities is highly valuable.

2. Finance and Legal Governance

Expertise in financial management, accounting, fundraising, charity finance, or audit is essential, alongside familiarity with governance, legal compliance, and regulatory frameworks relevant to charitable organisations.

3. Strategy and Organisational Leadership

Experience in setting strategic direction, leading teams, organisational planning, or managing change is vital. Skills in human resources, leadership development, and succession planning also contribute to effective Board performance.

4. Digital and Innovation

Trustees with experience in digital strategy, IT systems, online platforms, or digital communications can support the Society's growth and relevance in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

5. Public Engagement and Communications

Skills in marketing, PR, media, audience development, and stakeholder communication are critical to raising the RPS's profile, broadening its reach, and engaging diverse communities in its work.

6. Education and Inclusion

An understanding of education—particularly creative learning—and experience in volunteer coordination, outreach, or equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work help the RPS serve a wider public and reflect contemporary society.

7. Social and Environmental Impact

Knowledge of environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles, social enterprise, or using photography for social change supports the RPS's commitment to responsible practice and societal benefit.

Timetable for Appointment

Provided by RPS Nominations Committee (NomCom)

July 2025	Application Stage (closing date 00:00hrs on Sunday 20 July)
July/Aug 2025	NomCom shortlisting, interviews and recommendations.
Aug 2025	Board meetings and further interviews to agree appointments.
Aug/Sept 2025	Onboarding for appointed Trustees
20 Sept 2025	Announcement of Trustee Appointments at the AGM 2025

NomCom reserves the right to amend these dates to accommodate RPS business needs. In the event of any slippage in dates, applicants will be kept informed.

Initial shortlisting and interviews by NomCom will be followed by further due diligence by the officers of the Board of Trustees and may include a further interview by these officers and the CEO/SLT.

Trustee tenure is for a three-year term. Following a period of twelve months on the Board, Trustees will be eligible to stand for election as President designate at an election called for that purpose. Trustees are expected to dedicate approximately 150 hours per year to Trustee activities which generally includes:

- eight Board meetings a year, and between four and eight Committee meetings a year, either at the RPS offices in Bristol or via a video conference online, plus appropriate preparation
- attendance as required at training events, conferences, and strategic-planning away-days, (usually held in Bristol, Birmingham or London)
- provision of specialist consultation and advice to the executive team

The role is unremunerated although reasonable expenses are reimbursed in line with the RPS Expenses Policy.

Timetable for Appointment

If you are interested in being considered for an Appointed Trustee role with the RPS, and can evidence the requisite skills and experience outlined above, please contact the Chair of the RPS Nominations Committee at nomchair@rps.org for an informal chat about the role or to request an application form.