

**Director Recruitment
at
Explore York Libraries and Archives**



explore

Libraries and Archives

v.2. June 2024

Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited is registered in England and Wales under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, registered no IP032357. Explore is a not-for-profit organisation recognised as charitable by HMRC for tax purposes.

A message from the Chair of the Board of Directors



Dear applicant

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Directors at Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited. As a Board member you will have a unique opportunity to be part of our story helping shape the future for libraries and archives in York.

Explore has a contract with City of York Council to provide the statutory public library and archive service for the city, with 15 libraries including York Explore – our flagship library and home of the City Archive – a mobile library, a home library service and 7 Reading Cafes. The City Archive tells the story of over 850 years of York's history, the most significant continuous civic record outside London. Explore is also a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) delivering the [Let's Create strategy](#), supported by [Arts Council England](#).

Explore is a different kind of public service – an independent organisation owned by our staff and our community with a unique place in the City of York - and with this in mind, we are looking for applicants who not only have the right blend of relevant skills and experience to fulfil the role of Director but who are also genuinely enthused by this unique opportunity. 2024 marks 10 years of Explore, and with a new Chief Executive in place, we are about to embark on a series of strategic and operational developments, which will realise our ambitions and potential over the next 10 years.

We are seeking a Director with expertise in the area of Finance. We are always looking to diversify the Board and we welcome applications from all sectors of the community.

Please take the time to consider this Recruitment Pack. If you welcome a challenge, are inspired by our plans for the future and would like to be a part of the Explore team, I wish you good luck with your application and we look forward to meeting you. I promise you it will be exciting and challenging, and you will learn much more than you ever imagined!

Chris Edwards
Chair of the Board of Directors

If you have any questions about this pack, or need it in an accessible format, then please email Gillian Holmes, Secretary to Explore gillian.holmes@explore.org.uk

An Introduction to Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited

Explore is a different kind of public service – a mutual owned by our staff and our community.

Because we belong to our community, we believe what we do should reflect them and be shaped by them too. We want to be a place where people belong – their place. We create opportunities for communities to meet, to learn, to create, to be – to Explore. We want to be ever more collaborative, taking time to understand what our communities and stakeholders need from us. We want to refresh our values to ensure that they continue to capture the way that we want to work both with each other and within our communities.



Our Strategy

Explore is a local organisation focused on the specific geographical area covered by City of York Council which has adopted a One City for all Council Plan focusing on equalities, affordability, climate, and health. We want to deepen our connection with our 700+ Community Members, enhance our environmental sustainability, navigate economic challenges, and leverage our geographical reach to support York's communities and like-minded organizations. Additionally, as a future-focused organisation, we recognise the transformative potential of AI for our service and we must ensure we understand the impact of new technologies on the services we provide, while maintaining our commitment to access for all and service excellence.

Everything Explore does will deliver against the following:

- Our People
- Our Communities
- Our Sustainability
- Our Future

Our People

Without our people there is no Explore. We want to develop our ways of working and be more inclusive; supporting our people to develop and enabling a flourishing culture of delegation and empowerment.

We will:

- review our values with the aim of enabling a more empowered and delegated staff model
- carry out a job evaluation and reward review in line with Explore's values
- develop strengths-based methods to develop our staff teams
- work towards the ethos of being an Investing in Volunteers employer
- continue to develop our Board, supporting the Directors to build sound governance structures in line with best practice



Our Communities

We want Explore to be shaped by our communities and for them to see themselves reflected in what we do. We will develop and grow our supporter base, strengthening their voices to shape our work.

We will:

- develop our understanding of our audiences and evaluate our impact and reach so we know we are working with all our diverse communities
- work with our Community Members to build understanding of their role within Explore and further develop their contribution
- deliver our NPO Activity Plan and develop a bid for 2026-2030
- develop a model for Explore Libraries using the 2023-24 Service Review



Our Sustainability

We will be sustainable in everything we do. We will develop clear plans with measurable goals which focus specifically on measures within the areas of environmental, financial, buildings and collections.

We will:

- develop our fundraising, and grow relationships with key supporters, working to raise our profile within the City of York
- review how we manage our buildings developing an efficient, effective system which frees our team for valuable work with their communities
- establish baselines around carbon emissions, recycling, reduction in the use of plastics and decreased water consumption and put in place action plans to reduce our carbon footprint
- focus on our archives Collections Management to understand our current backlog and establish methodologies and performance measures which can be used to demonstrate progress

Our Future

Explore will be an innovative and dynamic organisation, seeking ways to best support our people and communities both current and future. We will:

- develop a masterplan for York Explore and the Mint Yard area around it
- develop our thinking around digital and AI and how they can best support Explore in its future ambitions
- work with partners to develop our support for the city's health and wellbeing strategy
- collaborate with York Learning to deliver against both our strategic ambitions and create synergies between our two organisations

Service Delivery

In addition to the above:

Explore Libraries will deliver against the four universal library offers as defined by [Libraries Connected](#)

1. Sharing the Joy of Reading
2. Supporting information literacy and digital inclusion
3. Inspiring people of all ages to learn, imagine, create and share ideas.
4. Supporting individual and community wellbeing.





Explore Archives will continue its work around the core principles as set out by The National Archives through its Archives Accreditation scheme:

1. Organisational Health: Governance, Forward Planning, Resources
2. Collections: Development, Information, Care and Collections
3. Stakeholders and Experience: Access, Access Plans and Planning, Access information, procedures and activities.

Explore Enterprises our business arm providing reading cafes, room hire and other services, will focus on growing our income and business development to optimise our income streams.



Find out more about Explore's recent and current work on our media channels.

Website www.exploreyork.org.uk

YouTube [Challenge Your Imagination](#), [Our Dreams Start Here](#) [Colourful History](#)

Read our latest [Annual Review](#)

Follow our Socials: [Facebook](#) [X/Twitter](#) [Instagram](#)

Discover our [Events and Activities](#)

What do we need from you?

From September 2024 we need a Non-executive Director (NED) with Finance expertise – CCAB qualified or qualified by experience.

Person specification

As well as the skills listed above, potential all directors should demonstrate the following personal qualities:

- Independent judgement, ability to think creatively and willing to speak your mind.
- You will be a strategic thinker and always willing to learn. You will commit to continuing to learn and develop whilst a member of the Board.
- You will have broad life experience and understand York and what matters to its communities.
- You will have a commitment to Explore and understand the many ways libraries and archives make a difference every day.
- You are able to work as part of a team to help shape Explore, working collaboratively with the board and leadership team.
- You will take an active part in board meetings - asking questions, scrutinising reports, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance, and challenging and monitoring new initiatives.
- You are able and willing to commit your time and energy to the role.
- You understand and accept the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of a director (see below - these will also be explained at induction)
- You understand and accept the [Nolan principles of public life](#)

The statutory duties of a Director

- i. To act within the company's powers under the company's constitution, organisation law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations and only exercise his powers for the purpose for which they were conferred
- ii. Ensure the organisation will carry out (or 'further') its purpose for public benefit as required by the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in order to be recognised as an exempt charity by HMRC.
- iii. To act in the way s/he considers, in good faith, would be most likely to achieve the community purpose of the company, and in doing so have regard (amongst other matters) to the:
 - interests of employees
 - impact on the community and environment
 - need to foster business relationships with suppliers, customers and others
 - need to act fairly between members
 - need to maintain a reputation for high standards of business and conduct
- iv. To exercise independent judgement
- v. To exercise reasonable care, skill and diligence
- vi. To avoid conflicts of interest
- vii. Not to accept benefits from third parties
- viii. To declare an interest in proposed transactions or arrangements and in existing transactions and arrangements where appropriate.

Explore Board – What does it do?

- The Board routinely meets once a quarter, in person, at an Explore library in York and may also hold two Awaydays for Directors each year. Since the pandemic we have made more use of virtual meetings and where the need for extra Board meetings may arise, over and above those scheduled, we do our best to accommodate availability and can offer Zoom meetings where appropriate.
- Directors read papers in advance and come ready to actively participate and contribute thoughts and ideas. Generally, a half-day is allocated for face-to-face on-site Board meetings.
- We have an expectation that Directors will join Committees and Sub-Groups. We currently have a Finance Committee and a Governance & Nominations Committee, both of which meet quarterly via Zoom. Sub-Groups and Working Groups may be set up from time-to-time to lead on and work with the Executive on a specific issue.
- We expect that Directors will try to support events and activities as and when they take place.

- Directors serve for 3 years on the board. They may be elected for a second 3-year term. No director may serve for more than 6 years in total.

All our Director roles are voluntary positions. Directors are entitled to reclaim expenses incurred in the course of their duties as a Director.

Induction and Training

On appointment regular conversations with the Chair will be arranged and an annual one-to-one meeting. Board members will attend development days and other development opportunities where appropriate. Experience of governance and acting as a Trustee is not essential, as we are committed to providing a full and appropriate induction. This includes the issue and discussion of organisational documentation including the governing document, planning documents, policies relating to directors, Annual Accounts and Committee Terms of Reference.

Our Governance

Explore York Libraries and Archives Mutual Limited is an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status set up in 2014. Explore is registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Act 2014. Explore is a non-profit organisation and is treated as a charity for tax purposes by HMRC.

Registration number: IP032357

Address: Library Square, Museum Street, York YO1 7DS

Tel: 01904 552 828

The governing instrument is the Rules of Explore (copy available on request from Gillian Holmes, Secretary to Explore gillian.holmes@explore.org.uk).

Our objects as stated in our Rules are the legal foundation for who we are.
The objects of the Society shall be to carry on business for the benefit of the community by:

- Advancing **education, culture, arts, heritage and history** for the **public benefit** particularly (without limitation) by providing and maintaining library, archive, learning and related services **for the people of York and the surrounding area**; and
- Providing for the public benefit **facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation** of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large, **in the interests of social welfare** and with the object of **improving the condition of life** of such people.

The full board has 9 members: 3 non-executive directors, 3 community directors, 1 director nominated by City of York council, 1 staff director (elected by Explore staff) and the Chief

Executive Officer. All directors - with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer - serve for an initial term of 3 years and may be re-elected for up to 1 further 3-year term.

How are directors appointed?

Non-executive Directors are selected by the board of Directors for their skills and/or experience and are appointed to the board by co-option in accordance with the Rules of Explore. If you are interested in becoming a Non-executive Director you should submit your application. You will then be invited to a formal interview.

Find out more about joining our Board initially by emailing Gillian Holmes, Secretary to Explore gillian.holmes@explore.org.uk

How to apply

Please send your CV and supporting information demonstrating how well you fit with the Director Person Specification and why you believe you can contribute to our success by email to Gillian Holmes, Secretary to Explore gillian.holmes@explore.org.uk

Starting date for successful applicants: 5 September 2024