



Chair Of Trustees Recruitment pack

Shubbak | A window on contemporary Arab culture
www.shubbak.co.uk

Introduction

Shubbak champions contemporary Arab art and culture through an award-winning, biennial festival, national touring and original engagement programme. Its artistic excellence was recognised in 2018 by Arts Council England when it achieved National Portfolio Organisation status.

Since its inception in 2011, Shubbak Festival has become Europe's largest festival of contemporary Arab arts and culture. It's multi-art form programme of new and unexpected voices and established artists has reached combined audiences of over 240,000 over the course of 5 festivals, and an audience of millions through its extensive media coverage and online platforms. The most recent market research findings show that the festival attracts a more ethnically diverse audience than is generally seen in London arts audiences. Its achievements were acknowledged in 2018 when the Festival was awarded the UNESCO Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture for its work in promoting intercultural dialogue, developing Arab culture and enhancing mutual understanding.

Shubbak's pioneering engagement programme is supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. It comprises a range of activities including community-engaged artist residencies and commissions, public realm programming, Young Shubbak - a professional development programme for young people, and an internship programme.

Shubbak has strong relationships with prestigious national and international cultural institutions and has forged lasting international partnerships with funders across Europe and the Arab world. It regularly presents events at the Barbican, Royal Opera House and Southbank Centre, and its funding partners include the British Council, Creative Europe, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, A.M. Qattan Foundation, Arab Fund For Arts and Culture and Arts Council England.

Vision

To inspire and inform the largest possible audiences through the innovation and creativity of Arab artists, to question perceptions and create new convergences between individuals, communities and cultures.

Mission

To create opportunities for engagement with Arab creativity and cultural innovation nationally and internationally, online and offline by initiating and supporting projects that facilitate a multiplicity of voices, aesthetics and approaches in an artist-led process.

Values

Shubbak celebrates openness, diversity, innovation, risk-taking and collaboration. All our activities are built on the twin pillars of artistic quality and freedom of expression.

Team and Board

Shubbak is a company, limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It is led by a small, diverse and dynamic team which is augmented by freelancers, short-term project workers, volunteers, interns and international placements during its festival period. The artistic director and CEO has led the organisation since 2012.

Shubbak has an expert board with specialist skills in financial management, arts administration, journalism, legal and arts and culture. Its current members are:

Chair | Maysoon Pachachi (independent film director)

Jo Glanville (journalist)

Shadia El Dardiry (lawyer, Bates Wells)

Aaron Cezar (director, Delfina Foundation)

Fady Al Rayess (associate, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development)

Lynn Gaspard (publisher, Saqi Books)

Almir Koldzic (director, Counterpoint Arts)

Sumantro Ghose (artistic director, Noor Riyadh)

Current position

Shubbak has operated prudently and strategically throughout the pandemic. Its staff were furloughed during summer 2020, and its operation was reduced. Shubbak was successful in its application to the Arts Council/DCMS Culture Recovery Fund and maintained constructive dialogue with its core funders and donors.

We are currently preparing for the 2021 festival which is scheduled to take place this summer. Due to the current pandemic and the uncertainty of presenting conditions, we are working on multiple scenarios and developing a programme that includes digital, indoor and outdoor, socially distanced live events.

Post festival, Shubbak will embark on a strategic review of its future vision and operational model as it enters a new funding and planning cycle.

The Role and Opportunity

This is an exciting time to lead Shubbak: 2021 is our 10th anniversary, we will deliver a hybrid festival, and there is a new planning cycle ahead.

We are looking for a dynamic leader with the vision and skills to develop Shubbak as a responsible, innovative and progressive business, which supports and enhances its position at the forefront of artistic programming in a national and international context.

The chair - along with the board - strengthens and creates the context for the executive team to achieve the organisation's goals. The chair will offer Shubbak leadership, ensuring good governance, and the highest standards of organisational, legal and financial management and compliance. The chair supports key staff, leads on trustees' recruitment and any succession planning. The chair will direct our dynamic board of trustees and make informed, ambitious and strategic decisions. The chair is the direct line manager of the Artistic Director/CEO.

Externally, the chair will be Shubbak's champion and advocate, building on our reputation, amplifying our key messages and articulating the value of Shubbak.

The chair will also offer a leadership role for the ongoing and essential fundraising activities for Shubbak and oversee how the executive team and trustees deliver Shubbak's fundraising objectives.

Person Specification

- Experience of holding a senior position or director within a significant organisation and/or experience as chair, vice chair of an arts, cultural or not for profit organisation.
- Able to demonstrate a strong commitment to Shubbak, its strategic objectives and cause, its vision and ethos.
- Exhibit strong interpersonal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role.
- Existing strong networks to people or resources or strong networking capabilities, which can be utilised for the benefit of the charity.
- Supporting Shubbak's fundraising efforts by identifying sources of funders, keeping good relationships with funders and ensuring staff and board continuously work towards maximising resources.
- Possessing an up-to-date understanding of governance and scrutiny of charities and public bodies.
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively and lead discussions about complex issues and constructive debates.
- Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment, especially between the board and executive team.
- Availability to commit time to the role, including travel and attending events out of office hours (essential).

Knowledge and skills

- Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together.
- Broad knowledge and understanding of the role of culture and arts in society, ideally with good knowledge of contemporary Arab culture.
- Understanding, astuteness and diplomacy to operate in the political and cultural context within which Shubbak's work takes place.
- Financial management expertise and a broad understanding of charity finance issues.
- Good understanding of charity governance issues.
- Understanding of UK charity regulations.
- Understanding of the funding environment in arts and culture.
- Line Management of a senior executive team.

We do not expect that the potential chair is equally versed in all aspects of the role. There is specialist expertise on the board to inform and support the chair. Shubbak will also provide access to relevant training, induction, coaching or mentoring for aspects of the role for the right candidate.

Term and Time Commitment

- The Chair will serve a three-year term and be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.
- The position is not paid, but expenses can be covered.
- The chair will lead approx 4 board meetings a year, plus an 'away day'. The chair will sit on sub committees as relevant, and line manage the Artistic Director/CEO.
- Outside festival periods the position will demand approximately 1–1.5 days a month.
- During festival times additional presence will be required at events and functions.

How to Apply

Please apply by submitting your CV and a short covering letter of no more than two pages outlining how your experience and skills make you suitable for the position and align with Shubbak's vision, mission and values.

Interested candidates are invited to contact Eckhard Thiemann, Artistic Director & CEO (eckhard@shubbak.co.uk or 07984 468204), prior to application for a discussion and to raise any questions. Further introductory discussions can also be held with board members.

Deadline for applications: 1st March 2021

Interviews: Week commencing 8th and/or 15th March 2021

Please submit your CV and covering letter to: eckhard@shubbak.co.uk