



Strategic Board Members Recruitment Pack

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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



University of
Southampton

Turner Sims Strategic Board Members Recruitment Pack

Voluntary Opportunity



A venue that welcomes all for the joy of music!

Turner Sims has big ambitions to build an inclusive world through the joy of live music. We are the University of Southampton's music venue and an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO).

// Turner Sims is a friendly, welcoming and vibrant centre for performance."

Audience survey response

Turner Sims opened at Highfield campus in 1974 and plays an influential role in Southampton and the region's cultural scene. Audiences travel miles to experience music legends and rising stars in our 'brilliant acoustics' and 'varied and imaginative programme' (Audience survey response).

A world of music shared

We believe music is at its most joyful when shared with others. In our venue and beyond, we create space for people to experience live music together.

Students, emerging artists and renowned musicians share our stage. By day, University of Southampton's Music Department nurture young musicians. On weekends and evenings, we welcome you to discover inspiring music – old and new.

From classical, jazz and folk, to our Engagement Programme for families, schools and the wider community, we present remarkable musicians who share our passion for inclusion. Wherever you meet us, we hope you'll find a space where you feel you belong.

To find out more about our work, read our [Impact Report 2024-25](#) and see What's On at turnersims.co.uk



Join our strategic board

We are looking for four new Strategic Board members, from outside of the University, who are passionate about the value of music and performing arts organisations to their local and regional communities. We seek new perspectives, industry expertise and diverse lived experiences to help us achieve our goals.

As a Member of our Strategic Board, you will have oversight and responsibility for Turner Sims on behalf of the University of Southampton. Membership of the Board is on a voluntary basis. Unlike Trustee Board, Members do not carry any legal responsibility for the organisation.

Our story so far

Vision: Communities connected locally and globally through the joy of live music.

Mission: To share live music that connects, moves and inspires people through extraordinary experiences in our venue and beyond.

Our values and behaviours

We are:

- Passionate about the power of music to connect people
- Curious about the music that brings people joy
- Playful in how and where we make music happen
- Ambitious in creating musical adventures for all
- Bold in presenting new music and tackling underrepresentation

Operating from its base on the University of Southampton's Highfield Campus for over 50 years, Turner Sims has established itself as a respected regional concert hall programming international quality classical, jazz, world and folk music. Each year we welcome 1,300 artists, performers and participants, 50,000 audience members, and deliver over 140 concerts and events.

Between 2021 – 2026, we have:

- welcomed....Artists and Audiences
- established a wide-reaching Engagement Programme. In 2025-26, reaching 843 children and young people across 27 schools and settings, 1,901 students and under 18s, with family audiences exceeding 5,000
- proactively engaged with young people, artists and external partners to diversify our programme
- introduced new strands of programming to support local artists' talent development
- established entry-level employment pathways into the Music and Creative Industries for young people
- developed our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan
- diversified our workforce
- secured major Capital investment in our venue, to be fully step-free and accessible by 2028

Our plans for the future:

- Develop a five-year business plan aligned with Arts Council England's new Strategic Framework, in preparation for the next National Portfolio Organisation funding round
- Deliver a two-phase Capital project, scheduled for completion in Spring 2028
- Expand our audiences across Southampton and the wider region by taking Turner Sims on tour during the building closure period

As a new Strategic Board Member, you will play a crucial role in shaping this and advocating for our organisation.





Who we are looking for

We are committed to becoming more representative, to making space for a diverse range of voices and experiences within our strategic board and workforce. We are seeking to make our organisation more inclusive. Ensuring the membership of our board reflects the diversity of our local communities is very important to us and so we are particularly keen to hear from people from a culturally diverse background (including Black, Asian, Dual Heritage and Other ethnic groups), from D/deaf and Disabled people, and younger people.

We want to ensure that our board includes the perspectives of artists and participants, and that it is as balanced as possible in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic background.

We are also seeking cultural and/or music industry knowledge and expertise, to inform our plans and support our progress.

In particular, we wish to expand our board with people with the following skills and lived experience:

- Commercial knowledge of cultural venues /music sector
- Music/cultural venue experience / artistic programming
- Marketing, Data and Audience Insights
- Fundraising and income generation
- Live music promoters in Southampton or the region
- Representatives of Southampton's global majority communities
- Young people between 18 and 35 with an interest in live music and arts and culture
- Those currently underrepresented within the Arts and Cultural sector

We warmly welcome applications from those who are new to board membership including young people, as well as individuals who have a proven track record in governance.

Join our strategic board

Being on a board is a fulfilling experience, where you will use your skills, expertise and lived experience to help shape the future of Turner Sims. But the relationship isn't one-sided – you will benefit from the experience too.

By joining the Turner Sims Strategic Board, you will:

- Gain experience of strategic thinking and leadership
- Understand how your skills and experience can be utilised in different contexts and situations
- Boost your CV
- Develop your networks
- Support the development of Southampton and the region's cultural offer
- Have the opportunity to attend concerts and events
- Have your travel expenses paid





The commitment we are looking for

Turner Sims is part of the University of Southampton's Research and Innovation Services (RIS) Directorate. Turner Sims is largely funded by the University, augmented by Arts Council England NPO funding, box office and secondary income, and donations.

Our Strategic Board is made up of a combination of external board members and senior University of Southampton staff:

- The Board meets four times a year with meetings generally lasting about 1.5 hours, currently taking place during business hours.
- Meetings take place virtually on Teams and time-sensitive decisions are over email, allowing board members to remain fully involved without the need to travel.
- The Board Members and Turner Sims Executive team meet in-person, one a year for a Board Away Day, incorporating one of the quarterly meetings. This provides an opportunity for Members and the Executive Team to explore issues in-depth and build closer working relationships. Where possible this includes an opportunity to attend an event at Turner Sims.
- Planned 2026-27 meeting dates are:
 - Friday 16 October – Away Day, in-person at Highfield Campus, SO17 1BJ, 10:30 – 16.30
 - Monday 25 January 2027, 14:00 – 15:30
 - Monday 26 April, 14:00 – 15:30
- Board Members are actively encouraged to attend a wide range of events (from family activities and performances to evening concerts) to gain first-hand insight into our work; each member is entitled to complimentary individual tickets
- Occasionally, board members may be asked to attend advocacy and fundraising events or participate in working groups addressing specific topics and challenges.

Board members role description

We are looking for individuals who share our passion for live music and the performing arts and support our ambitions for Turner Sims as a centre of creativity, playing a key role in Southampton and the wider region's cultural ecology.

We need people who can think strategically, work collaboratively and help us to ensure that our programmes and services are relevant and accessible to the diverse audiences and participants that we seek to serve. Below is an outline of the role and its responsibilities:

Responsibilities

- To support the Co-Chairs of the Strategic Board and the Executive team in realising Turner Sims' next five-year business plan
- To pro-actively support and advocate for Turner Sims
- To agree key milestones for the business plan and related funding agreements, and monitor progress against them
- To support Turner Sims to communicate effectively with existing and new diverse audiences and participants, encouraging increased attendance and involvement
- To support the active development of current and audiences, driven by data-insights
- To support the organisation's financial resilience and income generation.
- To review the effective delivery of performance programmes and monitoring progress against agreed targets.
- To monitor Turner Sims' implementation of the University's Strategy for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, regularly assessing progress against key targets
- To support Turner Sims to maximise opportunities for PR, profile raising, and fundraising.
- To support Turner Sims, where appropriate, in negotiations with external bodies for funding and monitoring the conditions associated with agreed allocation of funding.
- To maintain the confidentiality of Turner Sims and UoS matters.
- To act as an advocate and critical friend of Turner Sims.

Voluntary role and support available

This is a voluntary position. As part of our commitment to equity and access, we recognise that not everyone can afford to give their time without financial support.

To help address this, we offer an honorarium to Members who are unsalaried or self-employed to cover the time involved, enabling a broader range of people to participate. All members will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, e.g. travel to in-person meetings.





Want to find more about being a Board Member?

If you've not been on an organisation's Board before, we understand that you may have questions about the role. If you'd like to find out more about what it means to be on a Board, then please join us for one of the informal online session on:

Tuesday 1 September, 12:00 – 12:45 or 18:00 – 18:45 via TEAMS.

These relaxed Briefing Sessions will be hosted by Louise Coysh, Turner Sims Director and Nick Thorne, Co-chair of the Turner Sims Strategic Board and is an opportunity to find out more, with the opportunity to ask questions.

Please register your interest in the session by 5pm on Thursday 27 August by emailing arts@soton.ac.uk

Alternatively contact us via arts@soton.ac.uk to arrange an informal chat.

How to apply

To start the conversation, we are asking you to send us an expression of interest. You can send us a letter of no more than two pages, or if you prefer, you are also welcome to send a video or audio file of no more than 5 minutes (preferred format MP4).

Please tell us:

- Why you would like to join the Strategic Board?
- What you think you would bring to the organisation and how your skills and lived experience could support the Strategic Board and team in achieving its vision?
- A bit about yourself, what you do and your experience.

Closing date for applications: Midday, Wednesday 16 September 2026

Please email your expression of interest with Email Subject 'Strategic Board', to arts@soton.ac.uk by **midday, Wednesday 16 September 2026**.

Please mark your email as confidential and include 'Board application' in the subject line.

Initial interviews

Interviews are planned for **24 & 25 September 2026**

When you send your Expression of Interest, please let us know if you are not free on these dates.

We will contact everyone who expresses an interest to let them know the outcome of their application and, if requested, offer feedback.

Access support

It's important to us that everyone who believes they can contribute to our Strategic Board feels welcome and able to apply. We want to ensure the application process is accessible, and to give you the information you need to decide whether you might be suitable.

If you require the recruitment pack or any further information in a different format, or if you have questions before you apply, please get in touch by email to arts@soton.ac.uk

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity

Nick Thorne and Sue Littlemore

Co-Chairs, Turner Sims Strategic Board

Louise Coysh

Director, Turner Sims

Summer Family Day: Creative Beats © Nosa Malcolm 2024



Find out more about Turner Sims

