

Trustee Recruitment Pack

July 2025





A message from our Chair of Trustees, Sir Stephen Hillier

Thank you for your interest in joining the Royal Air Force Museum Board of Trustees. The Board leads a committed team of employees, volunteers, stakeholders and partners who have an ambitious, shared vision for the Museum's next ten years.

Our aim is to welcome **every** visitor warmly for a great day out, deepening our immersive storytelling across our spaces and programmes. We are committed to engaging more people and, equally important, a more diverse range of people by ensuring that our governance, our teams, our collection and our content are better reflective of the changing population.

Our priorities include progressing the Master Plans for our two public sites in the Midlands and north London. Our RAF Museum Midlands transformation is due to open in 2027 (see page nine below), and a new indoor play area and research centre are the next priorities for our London site.

Meanwhile, we continue to build and sustain firm foundations in collections care and management, our estate, and our IT and digital infrastructure. Our team is vital to this, and our leadership and development programmes will help ensure our committed people are the best we can be to deliver our vision and purpose with and for our visitors.

Our Board is crucial to our success. If you are keen to contribute to a charity committed to our purpose that expects high performance achieved through hard work, kindness and a dose of fun, we'd very much like to hear from you.

All best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S Hillier".

Sir Stephen Hillier
Chair of Trustees
Royal Air Force Museum

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RAF MUSEUM BOARD

Our Board and its responsibilities

The Museum's governing document, our Royal Charter, recognises two types of Trustees with identical accountability and decision-making responsibilities. Nominated Trustees are appointed by the Secretary of State through the Public Appointments process and Co-opted Trustees are appointed by the Board. The only difference is that the Chair will be appointed from

the group of Nominated Trustees, though all Trustees have an equal vote.

The Museum is currently appointing to three Nominated Trustee vacancies. See our current Board at [Our Board of Trustees of the RAF Museum](#)

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Trustees are expected to uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life defined by the Committee on Standards in Public Life: [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK](#). Trustees must be positive ambassadors for the Museum and always act in good faith in its best interests. They are responsible for:

- Determining the general policy of the Museum
- Appointing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with the approval of the Secretary of State
- Monitoring the CEO's management of the Museum as its senior officer and Accounting Officer for the Museum

- The care and management of Museum collections, buildings and financial assets
- Approving the Museum's Strategic framework
- Monitoring the process of Risk Management
- Ensuring the Museum publishes an annual report and accounts, audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General
- Compliance with the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies and with the rules relating to the use of public funds and to conflicts of interest.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

The RAF Museum is looking to appoint three Nominated Trustees. We are committed to building an inclusive workplace with a leadership and workforce reflects the communities we serve. Women and disabled people are currently under-represented on the Board, so we particularly encourage people from these groups to apply.

As well as the main Board commitment, Trustees are asked to support one or more of the following, which inform the work of the Board:

- Audit Risk and Resources Committee
- Major Projects and Programmes Committee
- People and Governance Committee
- The RAF Museum Enterprise Board (RAFMEEL), the Museum's trading company and fully owned subsidiary.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential for all applicants:

- An interest and affinity with the vision, purpose and values of the Museum
- The ability to grasp a wide range of museum and cultural sector issues
- Ability to contribute to the strategic direction of the organisation
- Excellent listening, influencing and communication skills
- The ability to offer both support and constructive challenge to colleagues, whether non-executive or executive
- An interest in the Royal Air Force
- A commitment to the principle of public service.

Essential for one of the three vacant trustee roles:

- In depth financial expertise and experience.

Desirable:

- Experience operating in a non-executive or Trustee capacity at Board level in the charity and / or public sector.
- Experience in IT / digital transformation
- An understanding and / or experience of working in fundraising
- Experience of working in / with Museums.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

Length of appointment

Trustees will be appointed for a term of three years with the potential for a further three year term.

Time Commitment

The overall time commitment is an estimated 10-12 days per annum. Attendance in person is encouraged, but online attendance is available.

The commitment is as follows:

- The main Board meets four times a year, with an annual Board strategy meeting over two days, usually in January
- Board sub-committees and the Trading Board meet between two and four times per annum
- Time is required to read Board papers in advance of meetings.

In addition, Trustees are encouraged to represent the Board at events across the year.

MUSEUM BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Royal Air Force (RAF) Museum is a National Museum, a Government Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and a registered charity. Our purpose is to share the story of the Royal Air Force, past, present and future – using the stories of its people and our collections to engage, inspire, entertain and encourage learning.

Conceived as a legacy of the RAF's fiftieth anniversary, the Royal Air Force Museum opened its London site in 1972. Our Midlands site began as the Aerospace Museum at RAF Cosford in the spring of 1974 and joined the family in 1979.

During the course of our last strategic plan, the Museum concentrated its efforts on being outward focused and people centred, exploring the history of the RAF over its hundred-year history through its incredible people and ensuring that our collection is relevant, shared and well cared for.

2018 marked the Centenary of the Royal Air Force and, in June 2018, we opened a major transformation at our London site. Across both sites the Museum had our most successful year since its formation, welcoming 989,600 people, a 39% increase.



We are a values-led organisation guided by clear strategic priorities. These are outlined in our Strategy 2030, which guides the Museum during this complex period of our history, with

climate change and an unstable international environment ever-present. We have much to do, but are enthusiastic and confident about our future.



The Museum's reach has broadened and diversified significantly, and the partnerships and friendships developed over recent years give us a firm and inspiring foundation to build on for this next chapter in the Museum's history.

See [Strategic Plan 2030 \(rafmuseum.org.uk\)](https://rafmuseum.org.uk)

OUR AUDIENCES

The Museum welcomed almost 930,000 visitors in 2023-24, a figure only surpassed in 2018, the year of the RAF Centenary. These were complemented by seven million unique visits to our website.

Our Midlands site: 430,850 visits

Our London site: 496,250 visits

The Museum rebounded strongly from the COVID-19 period, driven by improving visitor experience ratings and our growing awareness as a compelling visitor attraction for people from all walks of life.

However, 2024-25 saw a major fall in visitor numbers to 800,000, impacted by the closure of the Tube station serving our London site and the cost of living issues affecting all our sector. An ambitious plan is approved for 2025-26 to welcome over 900,000 visitors as we embark on the delivery stage of our Midlands Development Programme.

Over the past three years the Museum has focused on growing our family audiences, which now comprise over 70% of visitors. As well as welcoming children with their families, around 65,000 school children also visit the Museum every year as part of an organised school trip.

The Museum is equally committed to our audience of former and serving RAF personnel and maintains a strong following from visitors with an interest in military aviation and history in general. Around 20% of our audiences visit from all over the world to deepen their understanding of the RAF story and within our unique, immersive spaces.

In addition, a programme of outreach activities at both sites continues to develop new local partnerships and engage with a broader and deeper range of communities on our doorstep.

These sessions are complemented by a series of major events which are growing income generators for the Museum. These have included our Spitfire 10K runs, food festivals, outdoor cinemas and sleepovers.

Our recent brand and website refresh is supporting increased online engagement as well as driving more visitors to our two public sites.

Meanwhile, the Museum's active research programme continues with lectures, seminars and conferences designed to further our academic reach. These are supported, among others, through partnerships with the Universities of Exeter, Leicester and Lancaster, Middlesex and Wolverhampton, the Royal Aeronautical Society, the RAF Centre for Air Power Studies and the British Commission for Military History. The Museum also participates in the Collaborative Doctoral Awards (CDA) programme and awards academic prizes at Doctoral, Masters and Undergraduate levels.



OUR ESTATE AND COLLECTION

The RAF Museum's two public sites, at our historic airfield site in Colindale, north London and in the West Midlands next to RAF Cosford, are complemented by storage facilities in Stafford and at RAF Cosford. This total estate comprises more than 40 acres with 55,000 m² of indoor space.

The RAF Museum is one of the UK's National Museums with a Designated collection. Our focus is to harness the incredible people stories that each object represents. Among the 250 aircraft are the iconic Lancaster bomber and the fragile 1909 Bleriot monoplane at our London site, and the oldest surviving Spitfire and legendary Bravo November Chinook helicopter at our Midlands site. 80,000 objects, ranging from lucky mascots to missile guidance computers take up the equivalent of two football pitches of storage. Our archive of over half a million documents is complemented by 340,000 photographs and more than 7,000 works of art.

As part of our Collections Development Strategy, the Museum is reviewing its collection with contemporary collecting to address gaps and a transfer programme to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.

Master Plans for both our London and Midlands sites have articulated the development needs for a more coherent visitor journey, an enhanced visitor experience, and conservation and storage planning for the collection.

Our London site, owned by the Museum, has benefited from the move of the historic First World War Watch Office onto the site in partnership with English Heritage and developer St George. This was the catalyst for the development of our award-winning First World War in the Air Gallery which formed the first phase of the Museum's RAF Centenary Programme.

Iconic at our Midlands site, which is leased from the MOD, is the National Cold War Exhibition, opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne in 2007. This landmark building powerfully shares the Cold War story illustrated by the Museum's fabulous collection including examples of the three V-Force strategic bombers: the Valiant, Victor and Vulcan.

The Museum's current focus is our RAF Museum Midlands Development Programme, which includes moving our collections onsite from our Stafford Store, enabling us to share the reserve collection with visitors for the first time.



THE RAF MUSEUM MIDLANDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Royal Air Force Museum is in the midst of an extensive £28.6M development programme to transform our Midlands site which will open to the public in summer 2027.

Developed hand-in-hand with our communities and wider partners, it comprises:

- An immersive, internationally-relevant exhibition focusing on the critical role of the RAF over the past 40 years, and looking into the future.
- A state-of-the-art learning centre enabling us to deepen and extend both our formal and informal learning programmes
- A new Collections Hub sharing our stored collections with the public for the first time, both onsite and as a springboard out into our communities
- Beautiful outdoor spaces for discovery and contemplation.

With support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, our sponsor body at RAF Air Command, trusts and foundations, companies and individual supporters, we have now less than £2M to raise to achieve our fundraising target.



OUR PEOPLE & FINANCES

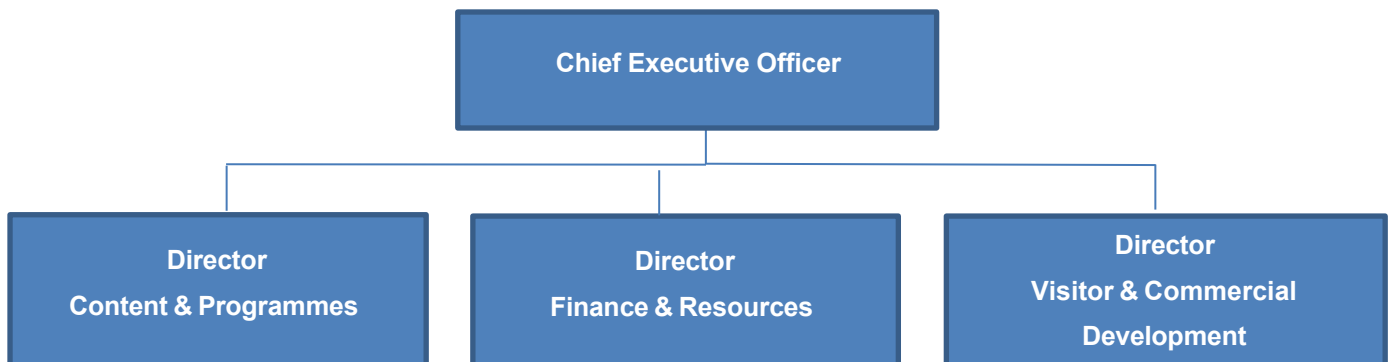
The Museum employs 245 people supported by around 500 volunteers.

The Museum is organised within three Groups led by our CEO and three Directors, with a team of specialist Heads (our Senior Management Group) leading each area within their remit.

In 2023-24, the Museum’s revenue spend totalled £13.5M, comprising £10.8M Grant in Aid via the Ministry of Defence and £2.7M self generated income. The Museum’s trading company, RAFMEL (RAF Museum Enterprises Ltd), had its most successful year to date, generating £1.2M net profit from retail, corporate hire, catering, experiences, talks and events. Other income included funds generated through the charity, notably through our learning service and fundraising activity.

The Museum’s Financial Statements are audited by the National Audit Office and laid before Parliament. A full copy can be downloaded at [RAFM-Annual-Report-and-Financial-Statement-2023-24.pdf](#)

Our last annual review can be found at: [The RAF Museum Annual Review 2023 - 2024 by Paul Hudson - Flipsnack](#)



Responsibility includes:

- Collections and research
- Collections services
- Exhibitions and interpretation
- Access and learning
- Major projects and programmes

Responsibility includes:

- Finance and governance
- HR and volunteering
- Estates and sustainability
- IT
- Development (with CEO)

Responsibility includes:

- Events
- Operations
- Retail and admissions
- Marketing and comms
- Health & safety

Our fabulous volunteers support a range of activities across the Museum, including welcoming visitors, cataloguing archive material, providing guided tours, supporting conservation efforts and raising funds for the Museum.

HOW TO APPLY



Timetable	
Closing date for application	15 September 2025
Shortlisting	Week Commencing 22 September 2025
Selection and interview day (in person)	13 October 2025
<p>Please apply through Governments' public appointment website: Search and apply – Apply for a public appointment – GOV.UK</p> <p>Diversity and Equal Opportunities</p> <p>Recruitment decisions are based on an applicant's relevant experience, qualifications, skills and abilities. We are keen that our governance reflects our population and particularly welcome applications from women, disabled people and those from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>If you have a disability and require any adjustment to either the application or interview process to enable you to participate fully, please contact the Royal Air Force Museum details opposite).</p>	<p>Further questions</p> <p>If you would like to arrange an informal and confidential conversation before submitting your application, please contact: vanessa.white@rafmuseum.org or telephone 07941 843437.</p>