

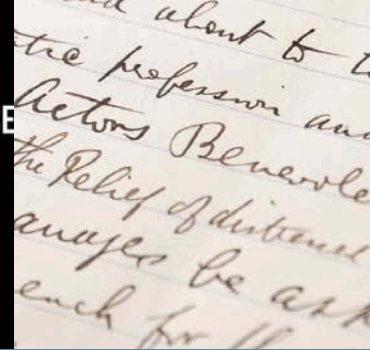
# Actors' Benevolent Fund

## Trustee Candidate Information

Actors' Benevolent Fund

July 2024





# Welcome

This is an exciting time to be joining the Board of Trustees of the Actors' Benevolent Fund. The charity has been on a journey of transformation, with a new Board and strategy in place, and we are looking for two additional trustees to join us on this journey. These are incredibly challenging times for the industry, with an increased cost of living combined with a scarcity of funding for the Arts, resulting in fewer opportunities for actors, actresses and stage managers, and research evidencing mental health problems. There is a growing need to respond to the changes within our society and profession, and we are seeking individuals with the passion to join an inspirational team to make meaningful and sustainable change to our community.

As trustees with experience of being working actors, we have both seen the incredibly powerful impact that this industry has on society: the joy, meaning and inspiration it can bring to change lives. It has changed ours. We both became trustees to give back to this extraordinary group of artists and practitioners. We firmly believe we are stronger when we look after each other and work together.

As a trustee you will be able to help shape the charity's initiatives as we implement our new strategy. The Board and staff team are ambitious for the future of the charity, to help more people and make a greater impact, and we are determined to do just that. There is an immense sense of reward and purpose in providing much needed help to those who are suffering, and there is much value you can add to the journey we are on. Being a trustee is a privilege and your journey as a trustee will be guided by support, allowing you to thrive and make a lasting impact. Together, we can inspire transformative shifts and foster a resilient, interconnected community.

Alex Macqueen and Hannah Whittingham  
Co Chairs of the Board



Alex Macqueen



Hannah Whittingham

“As a freelance actor, I urge people to seek support from the ABF - they are people in your corner, who've got your back!”



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## Our History and Governance

Sir Henry Irving founded the Fund in 1882 with a number of other actors and stage managers. Over 140 years, Presidents have included Sir John Gielgud, Sir Lawrence Olivier and Dame Penelope Keith. We are thrilled that our Royal Patron has recently been confirmed as King Charles III.

The ABF is a membership charity with over 600 members who are from the acting or stage management fraternity. Members select up to 12 trustees from within the membership to govern and take responsibility for the ABF's management and administration. Those trustees can appoint up to four additional non-member trustees on the basis of skills and experience they can bring to the charity.

The Board of Trustees delegates authority to a number of sub committees, including Grants & Services, Finance & Operations, and Marketing & Engagement. We ask trustees to join one of these committees.

We are currently looking for two non-member trustees, each with knowledge and experience in one of the following two areas:

- [Investment management](#)
- [Strategic marketing and / or brand awareness](#)

## The ABF's Purpose and New Strategy

For over 140 years, the Actors' Benevolent Fund has supported actors and stage managers experiencing hardship due to injury, illness or old age. To date this support has consisted of financial grants and benefits advice, as well as a listening ear. This support is delivered by a small staff team at Adam Street just off The Strand in London.

The charity world has changed significantly in recent years. Society rightly expects charities to deliver their purposes effectively for public benefit. The ABF has been going through a process of reform to maximise the help it delivers and to ensure it is the most effective and impactful steward of its resources.

The charity's first ever CEO was appointed last summer, and a new Board of Trustees was elected and appointed early 2024 to take the charity forward into the future with a bold new ambition to increase impact.

**Our Vision: an empowered and vibrant performing arts profession**

**Our Mission: we engage and support actors and stage managers to thrive**

**Our Values: kindness, integrity, inclusivity, creativity**

We have a new strategy for 2024-26 which is focused on re-setting the charity to help more people in more ways to achieve meaningful and sustainable change, with four key goals:

1. Increase reach and impact: reaching out and broadening our range of support to help more people in more ways
2. Empower through a proactive approach: providing people with the skills and support networks to foster a thriving livelihood and confidence
3. Engage our community: providing community and belonging that welcomes all and champions diversity
4. Increase our capability: being fit for purpose and increasing our resources to realise our vision

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## The Role of an ABF Trustee

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the ABF, developing its aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the Articles of Association, legal requirements and regulatory guidelines.

It is collectively responsible for promoting the success of the charity by directing and supervising the charity's affairs. Its role is to provide leadership within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed.

For more information on trustees' main legal responsibilities please refer to the Charity Commission's guidance 'The essential trustee (CC3)', which sets out the following key duties of trustees':

- Ensure the charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- Act in the charity's best interests
- Manage the charity's resources responsibly
- Act with reasonable care and skill
- Ensure the charity is accountable

## Key ABF Trustee Responsibilities

1. To actively seek to further the strategic objectives of the organisation and to act in its best interests at all times;
2. To contribute to setting policy and strategic direction;
3. To contribute to ensuring that the policies, plans and budgets of the organisation are in keeping with its charitable objects;
4. To contribute to evaluating and reporting the progress of the organisation against its strategic aims, objectives and financial targets;
5. To regularly attend, prepare for and take a full part in Board meetings (held once every other month), and to be a member of one sub committee (meeting three times per year);
6. To provide advice and guidance in subject areas where the Trustee has particular expertise, to the Board and Chief Executive where appropriate;
7. To disclose and manage any potential conflicts of interest;
8. To maintain confidentiality about any sensitive/confidential information received in the course of duties as a Trustee;
9. To maintain good communications and working relationships with the other Trustees, to act in a manner consistent with the organisational values and to support the collective decisions made by the Board;
10. To represent and champion the ABF publicly.

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# What the ABF is Looking For

## Essential:

- Demonstrate a passion and commitment to the charity and our vision for its future strategic direction
- Professional knowledge and experience in one of the following subject areas:
  - Investment management
  - Strategic marketing / brand awareness
- Understanding of and commitment to the role and responsibilities of being a charity trustee
- Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively
- The time to commit to the role: Board meetings are held from 10.30 – 13.00 on the last Thursday every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November), and sub committees meet three times per year

## Desirable:

- Experience of charity governance and being part of a Board
- Experience of acting or stage management



# Testimonials

"The ABF has been a lifesaver at very difficult times; when I was in need, they went above and beyond and helped so much. Being in this industry, we know that sometimes it can be tough but manageable, but since Covid and now the fuel bills and cost of living crisis, it's even harder to balance the books and pay the bills. Thank you again for all your help."

- Anonymous

"The emotional and financial support I received from the ABF, was a godsend! I was unable to work and earn money and I was anxious and panicked about how I was going to support myself. Another actor friend told me about the support she had received from the ABF during her time of need. I applied for a grant and received more than financial support. I received empathy and kindness, which goes a long way to making someone feel better. It certainly helped me and I'm grateful that this service exists. Thank you!"

- Anonymous



"In the summer of 2022, three months after my thirtieth birthday, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. At an incredibly frightening time, when I was unable to work due to intense medical treatment, the ABF gave me financial support that allowed me to afford much-needed private oncology physio and talking therapy - the wait lists for NHS support were far too long, and I needed support immediately. The ABF also provided me with grants that helped hugely towards household bills. For two Christmases now, I have also received the most wonderful Christmas hamper! My treatment and recovery has been a long process - but the ABF has been there every step of the way. More than anything, the ABF gifted me peace of mind, a precious commodity in the storm that is cancer. I would encourage anyone in the industry who is unable to work because of sickness to reach out to them. I'm certainly glad I did."

Katie Schofield (Actor)

"I've spent the last 5 days mostly in bed trying to regulate my children's emotions while they've seen me crippled by illness.

It's been really hard for them and me.

And this morning, this wonderful hamper arrived full of treats, which I'll share with carers and family.

But look at these pictures! Me and the kids have been rolling around, giggling and being silly in all the packaging.

It is really the first fun we have had together all week. YOU did that for us with your kindness and thoughtfulness. There's your impact right there.

- Anonymous





# How to Apply

To apply, please provide us with:

- An up-to-date CV; and
- Either a supporting statement of no more than 2 sides of A4 or, if you prefer, a video of no more than 4 minutes long, detailing why you would like to be considered, your relevant experience and expertise, what you think you can bring to the role and what you hope to gain from the role.

All applications are being handled by our recruitment partner, Trustees Unlimited (part of the Russam group). Please email your application to [applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk](mailto:applications@trustees-unlimited.co.uk) with Actors' Benevolent Fund in the heading.

If you have any difficulty uploading your application or if you would like to have an informal and confidential discussion about the role, alternatively please contact Melissa Baxter or Ian Joseph on:

[melissa.baxter@russam.co.uk](mailto:melissa.baxter@russam.co.uk) | 07789 985 229

[ian.joseph@russam.co.uk](mailto:ian.joseph@russam.co.uk) | 07825 267 500

Closing date for applications: 29th July 2024

Interviews with the Actors' Benevolent Fund: 9th – 14th August 2024, in person at the ABF offices in Adam Street, London.

Actors'  
Benevolent  
Fund