

COVENTRY
BIENNIAL
2021

COVENTRY BIENNIAL LTD

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RE: COVENTRY BIENNIAL CHAIR RECRUITMENT PACK

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming the Chair of Coventry Biennial Ltd, a Company Limited by Guarantee that is committed to social, political and critical art.

We are looking for a skilled, committed and energetic Chair who can support our work throughout our city's time as UK City of Culture 2021 and beyond.

The whole board will play a vital role in delivering the vision of the company, while shaping and influencing the organisations direction.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of these roles, or of Coventry Biennial's future plans please contact:

Our Artistic Director Ryan Hughes on ryan@coventrybiennial.com
Our current Board on board@coventrybiennial.com

In this pack you will find information about Coventry Biennial Ltd, its plans and a role description for the Chair.

ABOUT US

Coventry Biennial is the UK's social biennial.

We support and present socially, politically and critically engaged artistic practices in Coventry and Warwickshire to local, national and international audiences.

Founded in 2017 as an artist-led and strategic response to the city publishing its 10 year cultural strategy and bidding to become UK City of Culture, we are an activist organisation which responds to the city's complex history, geography, built environment and relationships but we retain an outward looking perspective, ensuring that our programme has wider appeal, significance and impact.

We are committed to inclusivity, accessibility, diversity, comfort and making things together. Coventry Biennial is about walking and eating together, it's about a commitment to society, it's about a personable and non-institutional approach to existing in the world.

We are well aware of the issues that face contemporary art Biennials, but consider ourselves among what writer Jens Hoffmann has identified as

"a number of biennials [that] have thankfully begun to realise that deeper artistic and and curatorial commitment as well as a sense of urgency are required. These biennials have started to articulate more specific missions, which usually emerge from from the histories and current realities of their locales"

Coventry Biennial supports artists and community groups to respond to the world(s) around them and encourages collaboration, partnerships and other kinds of informal support between artists, organisations and citizens.

Our exhibitions occupy museums, galleries and artist studios across the city and nearby county of Warwickshire but also utilise other, perhaps unexpected locations. In 2017 we took over a disused newspaper factory, in 2019 one of our major exhibitions was presented in an old rehabilitation clinic. We have presented exhibitions in places of worship, in medieval and modernist buildings and in libraries and shopping centres. Alongside these exhibitions we have produced participatory experiences, activities and events in residential tower blocks, in universities, in drop-in centres and in community centres.

The first Coventry Biennial took place from 6th – 22nd October 2017 in venues across the city, the centre-piece being the wonderfully sprawling CET Building, now about to re-open as the Telegraph Hotel.

The second Biennial took place from the 4th October – 24th November 2019 and the third festival will take place in 2021 when Coventry will be in its year long celebration as UK City of Culture!

We believe that art can change lives.

COVENTRY BIENNIAL FORWARD PLANS

Short Term

The third Coventry Biennial will take place from Friday 8 October 2021 until January 2022 across Coventry and Warwickshire, with a private view scheduled to take place at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum on Thursday the 7th October 2021.

Titled 'HYPER-POSSIBLE', in reference to the radical nature of Coventry's history, it also signifies a positive way forward following a deeply difficult 2020. The Biennial will be a key visual arts element of the Coventry UK City of Culture 2021.

The exhibitions, events and activities which make up the third Biennial will focus on three important movements in art history which have centered in Coventry and Warwickshire:

- **Art & Language**
- **The BLK Art Group**
- **Cybernetic Culture Research Unit**

Artists will use these three moments as starting points for new commissions, developing artworks that respond to current global concerns and trends within contemporary artistic practice, including the impact of technology on society, belief, participatory approaches to sharing knowledge, protest, activism and dissent, our relationships to the places that we live in and the impacts of climate change.

Over the coming months artists, along with local galleries, museums, curators and communities, will contribute to creating the HYPER-POSSIBLE. Details of the commissions, artists and the full programme will be announced in the lead-up to the start of the Coventry UK City of Culture in May 2021.

Long Term

Following the third Coventry Biennial, we are committed to supporting legacy from the UK City of Culture year for artists and audiences.

We will continue working strategically with partners regionally, nationally and internationally building on strong relationships with the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Mead Gallery, Coventry Artspace and others in the city. Alongside these partners (working together as Coventry Art Forum) we have the vision of making Coventry a “City that Loves Art” by 2029.

We will continue contributing to international research, particularly through our involvement in the EU funded SpaceX project which brings us into close collaboration with 27 academic and cultural partners including Van Abbe Museum, Tate, Casco, University of Northampton and University of Amsterdam.

Coventry Biennial will then return with our fourth public programme across Coventry and Warwickshire in October 2023.

ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR CHAIR

In addition to the general responsibilities of a Trustee, duties of the Chair include the following:

- Providing leadership to the organisation and the board by ensuring that everyone remains focused on the delivery of the organisation’s aims and objectives in order to provide greater public benefit
- Chairing and facilitating board meetings
- Giving direction to board policy-making

- Checking that decisions taken at meetings are implemented
- Representing the organisation at functions and meetings, and acting as a spokesperson as appropriate
- Bringing impartiality and objectivity to decision-making

With the Biennial Team:

- Planning the annual cycle of board meetings and other general meetings where required, for example annual general meeting
- Setting agendas for board and other general meetings
- Developing the board including induction, training, appraisal and succession planning
- Addressing conflict within the board and within the organisation, and liaising with the team to achieve this
- Liaising with the team to keep an overview of the organisation's affairs and to provide support as appropriate
- Leading the process of supporting and appraising the performance of the team
- Sitting on appointment and disciplinary panels

Person specification

In addition to the person specification for a board member, the chair should have the following qualities.

- Leadership skills
- Experience of committee work
- Tact and diplomacy
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences.

In most circumstances, it would also be desirable for the chair to have knowledge of the type of work undertaken by the organisation and a wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.

HOW TO APPLY

The purpose and main duties of the position are set out in the role descriptions. The knowledge, experience, skills and attributes we are looking for in the successful candidates are detailed in the person specification. It is important to read all the information in this pack before completing your application.

In order to apply please send a document of no more than 1x side of A4 or send us a link to a video you have made (that is no longer than 3 minutes) with answers to the following questions:

- Why you want to be part of the Coventry Biennial board
- What skills or experience you would contribute to the board
- What benefit you hope to derive from being on the Coventry Biennial board

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

Please complete the equal opportunities monitoring form by clicking on the online link [here](#)

This information will help us monitor the fairness and effectiveness of our selection processes and identify barriers to selection. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and used for statistical monitoring purposes only, they will not be seen by the individuals making the appointment.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

Initial Deadline: Sunday 28th February 2021, 12pm (noon).

If you have missed the above deadline but you are still interested in joining the Coventry Biennial Board, please contact us as there may be places available.

Please email your application to info@coventrybiennial.com with 'Board of Directors (Chair) Application' in the subject box.

SHORTLISTING

Shortlisting will happen soon after the closing date.

If you are shortlisted, we will contact you by email to invite you to an informal discussion via Zoom, and to let you know who this discussion will be with.

DATA PROTECTION ACT, 1998

Information provided by you as part of your application will be used in the recruitment process. Any data about you will be held securely with access restricted to those involved in dealing with your application and in the recruitment process. Once this process is completed the data relating to unsuccessful applicants will be stored for a maximum of 12 months and then destroyed. Information provided by you on the equal opportunities monitoring form will be used to monitor Coventry Biennial's equal opportunities practices. By submitting your completed application form, you are giving your consent to your data being stored and processed for the purposes of the recruitment process and equal opportunities monitoring.

Address: Coventry Biennial, Floor 4, Eaton House, Eaton Road, Coventry, CV1 2FJ

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