

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Cultural Leadership Board (CLB) recruitment pack.

Thank you for your interest in joining the WMCA Cultural Leadership Board. This document provides information about the board, as well as the specific areas of expertise and input that we are currently looking for. To apply, please read the board recruitment information pack below and then complete the application form.

WMCA Cultural Leadership Board

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Cultural Leadership Board (CLB) was established in 2019 to provide advice and input to the WMCA from a cultural sector perspective. Further details about WMCA and what we do can be found [here](#).

The Cultural Leadership Board acts as an advisory board to offer sound advice by coming together regularly and offer problem solving expertise to guide and shape WMCA's cultural policy and strategic investment, supporting the health of the creative and cultural economy of the West Midlands area. The members are also advocates for the region. Our role is to be a critical friend and we have a particular interest in making equality, diversity, inclusion, and sustainability at the heart of our work.

The meeting structures will be changing from online meetings to more in-person activities where we meet, network and experience key cultural sites of the region to gain knowledge and understand good practice and business models that operate in our region; however, we also operate in a hybrid environment and therefore members can join in online too. A new feature will include guest speakers who could be specialist thinkers and creative entrepreneurs ranging from local to international speakers, who share their expertise in making radical and positive change, offering aspirational ideas for the region to think big.

Our current membership has a notable interest in equality, diversity, and inclusion and this sits at the nexus of all our discussions. We particularly welcome applications from people who have knowledge and/or experience of exclusion and discrimination. For this round of vacancies, we would also like to encourage applications from freelancers, creative practitioners, people who are early/mid-career/next gen thinkers, working class voices, people with a wealth of experience working in West Midlands, people who identify as D/deaf, disabled, neurodivergent or who identify otherwise and have access needs.

Skinder Hundal, MBE – Chair of the Cultural Leadership Board.

Vision and Mission Statement

The CLB had its first board meeting in February 2020 and has since developed a vision & mission statement to outline its purpose:

Vision statement: 'The WMCA Cultural Leadership Board (CLB) places culture at the heart of sustainable growth in the region, enhancing quality of life for its diverse communities'.

Mission statement: ‘The Advisory Board will look for strategic opportunities to test the transformative role of culture across WMCA’s policy areas, including transport and housing, skills, digital, the environment, wellbeing, and inclusive communities. It is committed to building an innovative and entrepreneurial cultural sector, with leadership that reflects the diversity of our region, and supporting a world-class cultural offer that is accessible to all’.

The CLB also currently has the following working groups under the advisory board, which also include external members:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group
- Cultural Infrastructure Working Group
- Skills Working Group
- Freelancer Working Group

Why is CLB looking for new board members?

The advisory board are looking for new board members due to recent changes of the current membership and following findings from a skills audit as it continuously evaluates its own performance and membership. It was also recognised that further representation from freelancers would add value to the board, particularly given the Covid-19 impact to freelance workers. Applications would therefore be open to both cultural organisations as well as individual creative practitioners.

As part of this process, the CLB has identified the need to increase representation from **certain art forms, geographical areas, and specialist skills**.

The WMCA Cultural Leadership Board is therefore looking to recruit up to **fifteen (15) new board members**, with a specific emphasis on increasing membership from the following **art forms/cultural sector representation**:

- Literature
- Libraries
- Freelancers
- Digital/Media art
- Disability-led/focused arts organisations or creative practitioners

It is also identified skills gaps within the following specialist areas:

- Cultural tourism
- Alternative investment models
- Environmental impact
- Early years education
- Creative health
- Sport and physical activity
- Legal

Applicants are **not** expected to meet all the criteria and the main emphasis will be on the **art form and cultural sector representation** and this can be across one or multiple areas. We would particularly welcome applications from the Coventry & Warwickshire and Black Country LEP areas, as well as Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP area outside Birmingham (see list of LEP areas below).

1. Who can apply and what are board members expected to do?

Applicants should be at least 18 years of age and be able to demonstrate how their expertise and/or potential to contribute meet the specific gaps identified as outlined in the previous section. Applicants should be based in one of the three WMCA, LEP areas. The CLB supports and recognises the importance and benefits of greater diversity, including all protected characteristics and socioeconomic diversity, as well as cognitive and personal strengths. We therefore welcome and encourage applications from a wide range of applicants.

The Board members are expected to:

- Attend quarterly board meetings (normally 2 hours in length)
- Where possible, take part in the activities of the Working Groups
- Occasionally board members are asked to comment or provide input outside board meetings and working groups.

The Board Members will be expected to work together to represent the sector and not in the interests of their own organisations, art forms or localities. The Board Members will however use their specific knowledge to inform these wider conversations, particularly in the wider context of their art form.

This board membership is not a paid position, although Board members can claim reasonable travel expenses for attending meetings according to the WMCA policy. However, where costs create a major barrier for participation (e.g., freelancers), the organisation will have some flexibility to ensure accessibility, but this would be discussed and decided on a case-by-case basis.

2. How can I apply?

To apply, please fill in the application form provided on the CLB website. You can also request the application form to be emailed to you.

The application form needs to be completed and sent by **5pm on Wednesday 6 December 2023** to Gurpreet Bachu at: culture@wmca.org.uk *You do not need to send any other documents.*

Your application form will be assessed by a panel consisting of current CLB members and WMCA representatives. The assessment will be based on the application forms and following a short-listing process we will invite short-listed applicants for interviews. We are aiming to conduct interviews within the first three (3) weeks of January 2024. While we will aim to inform all applicants of the

outcome, if you have not heard back by **Friday 15 December 2023**, please consider that you have not been successful on this occasion.

If you have any questions about the CLB, the application process or have specific access requirements, please contact Gurpreet Bachu at the WMCA by emailing culture@wmca.org.uk

What are the WMCA LEP areas?

Black Country LEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Wolverhampton • Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council • Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council • Walsall Council
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coventry City Council • Warwick District Council • North Warwickshire Borough Council • Stratford-on-Avon District Council • Rugby Borough Council • Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham City Council • Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council • Cannock Chase District Council • Tamworth Borough Council • Redditch Borough Council • East Staffordshire District Council • Lichfield District Council • Wyre Forest District Council • Bromsgrove District Council