



COWPER & NEWTON MUSEUM

## **Cowper & Newton Museum Trustee Recruitment**

The Cowper & Newton Museum are looking for three new trustees to join their Board.

### **About the Cowper & Newton Museum**

Opened in 1900 by Thomas Wright, the Cowper & Newton Museum shares the stories of 18<sup>th</sup> century life, specifically that of William Cowper and John Newton.

From 1768 to 1786, Orchard Side house was home to renowned 18<sup>th</sup> century poet William Cowper. Inside the house, discover Cowper's comic sense of humour, the highs and lows in his life and his love of gardening and animals – especially his pet hares.

Cowper's friend, John Newton, lived in Olney Vicarage. The Museum exhibits Newton's life as a slave ship captain, his experiences which led him to write *Amazing Grace*, his involvement in the abolition of slavery, and spiritual influence on William Wilberforce.

### **Mission**

The Museum exists to conserve, develop, and maximise access to its buildings, collections, and tranquil gardens, thereby promoting the public understanding and enjoyment of William Cowper and John Newton and some of the greatest stories of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Olney is the home of the world-famous hymn *Amazing Grace*.

### **Purpose**

The Cowper & Newton Museum are looking to recruit three individuals to join their Board of Trustees, with particular interest in individuals with experience in one of the following areas (previous experience as a trustee is not necessary):

- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Legal

The trustees have ultimate responsibility for the Museum and are collectively responsible for its governance. All Trustees work to ensure the Museum is sustainable and complies with the law.

The role of a trustee at the Cowper & Newton Museum is both hands-on and extremely rewarding. As a charitable organisation with only two part-time members of staff, the trustees not only manage the strategic planning and budget, but also play a role in day-to-day management.

We know that having different voices on our Board, shaping our vision and supporting our purpose will make us stronger. With this in mind, we welcome applications from anyone under-represented in our organisation and our sector.

## **Role Purpose**

- Provide support and guidance in your specific area of expertise.
- Highlight the opportunities and risks in terms of our strategy.
- Translate the risks and opportunities of your specific area for other trustees, to enable the Board as a whole to engage in an informed way.
- Take the lead in evaluating proposals for your specific area of expertise.

## **Trustee Responsibilities**

As advised by the Charity Commission:

- Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.
- Comply with your charity's governing document and the law.
- Act in your charity's best interests.
- Manage your charity's resources responsibly.
- Act with reasonable care and skill.
- Ensure your charity is accountable.
- For more information on trustee responsibilities as advised by the Charity Commission, please visit the Government website - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do#s8>.

In addition, Trustees contribute to:

- Identify risks and put in mitigation measures.
- Ensure clear vision and strategic direction through the Business Plan.
- Set aims, objectives and plans to implement the strategy.
- Set and agree all policies.
- Receive reports from the paid staff and monitor and review performance against agreed objectives.
- Approve the annual budget, monitor performance against the annual budget and ensure financial sustainability.
- Ensure that the Museum meets and retains the standards set out in the Museum Accreditation Scheme.
- Appoint paid staff.
- Safeguard the good name of the Museum, acting as an enthusiastic and well-informed ambassador.
- Campaign, lobby and generally advocate on behalf of the Museum, so as to enhance its profile.
- Use any specific skills, knowledge, and professional expertise to help trustees reach sound decisions.

## **Person Specification**

It is essential that trustees should have/be:

- A proven interest in the museum sector.
- The ability to think strategically and creatively, demonstrate objectivity, good judgement, and analytical ability.

- A willingness to learn.
- Good communication, team-working and interpersonal skills.
- Tactful, diplomatic, and able to build relationships.
- Fair, impartial, and open to new ideas.

### **Commitment**

- Co-opted Trustees currently appointed for a minimum term of five years.
- The Trustee board meet five times a year, either at the Museum or via Zoom.
- Trustees are expected to act reasonably and prudently in the best interests of the Museum, never in pursuit of personal interests or the interests of another organisation and to meet the legal obligations common to all charity trustees (i.e. comply with charity law, duty of prudence and duty of care).
- Co-opted Trustees are encouraged to take on specific tasks and responsibilities beyond that of governance and attending board meetings.
- Trustees are encouraged to undertake training and to develop relevant skills and knowledge as required.
- Trustees need to commit the necessary time to be effective.
- Trustees must adhere to the [Museum Association Code of Ethics](#) and all the Museum's policies.

### **Recruitment Process**

To register your interest please email Poppy Wood, Museum Development Manager, at [poppywood@cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk](mailto:poppywood@cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk) providing contact details for two referees, a CV and a covering letter outlining why you would like this role and how you meet the person specification.

### **The closing date for applications is 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Suitable applicants will be invited for an interview at the Museum.

Please note:

Prior to being formally appointed, applicants will need to confirm that they are eligible to be a trustee by confirming they are:

- Not disqualified from acting as a charity trustee or company director, not been removed from serving as a charity trustee, or been stopped from acting in a management position within a charity.
- Not been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty (or any such conviction that is legally regarded as spent) and have not been involved in tax fraud.
- Not an undischarged bankrupt or have not made compositions or arrangements with creditors from which they have not been discharged.
- Not on the sex offenders' register.