



# Akādemi

**CHAIR OF TRUSTEES  
RECRUITMENT PACK**

## Chair of the Board of Trustees

Following six successful years as Chair of Akademi's Board of Trustees, including overseeing the transition from a long-standing director to a new leadership team, Paul Parashar will be standing down at the end of 2021. We therefore wish to recruit a new chair to join the board in autumn 2021 and, following a period of shared leadership of the transition, to succeed Paul in the new year.

### About Akademi

Akademi is a dynamic and future facing organisation, dedicated to redefining the parameters of South Asian dance as an art form. Founded in 1979 by Tara Rajkumar OAM, led by Mira Kaushik OBE from 1988-2019 and since 2020 by Artistic Director Subathra Subramaniam and Executive Director Kirsten Burrows (as joint CEOs), we connect South Asian dance with the wider contemporary arts sector. Akademi is a registered Charity and company limited by guarantee and part of the Arts Council England National Portfolio.

Our mission is to inspire audiences and change lives by creating and nurturing excellence in classical, contemporary, popular and participatory South Asian dance. Our vision is that South Asian dance is thriving at the centre of British cultural life.

We engage with social, political and cultural agendas to achieve real impact. Rooted in our local community but active across the UK, we have a global perspective with worldwide connections.

Our areas of work include performances, learning and participation work, artist development programmes and bespoke curation for events. Our pioneering work contributes significantly to Britain's international reputation for innovation in South Asian dance. For over three decades, Akademi has delivered successful participatory projects in education and community settings. Our participatory programmes are evidence-driven and built upon the distinctive qualities of South Asian dance forms, with strategic focus on growth in three specialist areas: older adults, hospitals, and children and young people with Special Educational Needs. We want everyone, no matter their age or background, to have the opportunity to experience, learn about or participate in South Asian dance, and in doing so gain an understanding of different communities and cultures.

2021 continues a year of organisational development as Akademi reflects on past successes and maps a way forward. We will continue to build a vital, modern and relevant cultural organisation that is transparent in how we collaborate and work with our sector, freelance arts professionals and our communities.

This is a pivotal and exciting time to join Akademi's Board as we define and design our new business plan and build for a sustainable future. We will build from our long legacy of successful delivery across all strands of Akademi's work to develop and expand, mindful of the impact on our communities post Covid and the funding landscape accordingly.

Akademi is governed by a non-executive Board of Directors which has ultimate responsibility for governance, development and strategic direction. Trustees are required to be dedicated and committed to being passionate advocates of Akademi and ensuring best practice is followed in all aspects of Akademi's work. You will be joining a committed and vibrant board – list of current members can be found here; <https://akademi.co.uk/about/board-and-patrons>.

## **The role of the Chair of the Board of Trustees**

A natural advocate with a collaborative approach and outstanding communication skills, the Chair of the Board supports the strategic direction of the organisation, leads the trustees and line manages the Artistic and Executive directors who are joint Chief Executives.

The Chair ensures that Akademi is able to deliver its ambitious programme and to create memorable experiences for audiences and participants throughout the UK. They ensure that Akademi remains focused on its charitable aims, is well governed and maintains its prominent position as a producer of work by artists practicing in South Asian dance forms and a leader in arts education.

The Chair helps to nurture existing supporter relationships and to position Akademi for new partnerships and profile across a wider demographic. While an in-depth knowledge of dance practice or South Asian arts is not essential to the role, the Chair needs to have a strong interest in culture and education and a commitment to balancing sound business thinking with innovative creative practice.

Akademi serves a diverse community and we encourage applications from a broad range of backgrounds and life experiences. We particularly encourage applications from disabled people and Black or other minority ethnic groups, who are currently under-represented on our board.

In compliance with charity law the role is not remunerated, although reasonable expenses may be claimed. The time commitment is, on average, two days per month.

## Role profile: Chair of the Board of Trustees

Nature of role	Voluntary
Duration	3 years renewable for a further 2 by negotiation
Time commitment	<p>Minimum of 4 board meetings per year</p> <p>Up to 4 sub-committee/working group meetings per year</p> <p>At least 1 board away day and/or training event each year</p> <p>Attendance at Akademi events</p> <p>Background reading and preparation as required</p> <p>Regular individual meetings with the joint Chief Executives</p>
Location	Meetings are currently held online but expect to be able to return to Akademi's offices pending government guidelines
<b>Responsibilities of role</b>	
Leadership	Inspire and lead the board of trustees in the development of strategies and objectives which are aligned with the charity's mission and purpose
	Liaise with the finance sub-committee and executive team to ensure the financial stability of the organisation
	Work with the human resources sub-committee and executive team to ensure the support, wellbeing and professional development of the staff team
	Chair board meetings, encouraging open dialogue, respectful challenge and transparent decision making in line with Akademi's values
	Support and enable the joint Chief Executives in their work, carrying out regular performance reviews and annual appraisals
Governance	Ensure that Akademi complies with its governing document
	Ensure compliance with charity law requirements and other laws that apply to Akademi
	Act in Akademi's best interests
	Ensure that Akademi's resources are deployed responsibly
	Act with reasonable care and skill
	Work with the Executive team on the planning of agendas for board meetings and ensure that trustees are provided with accurate and relevant information that will allow them to fulfil their responsibilities

	Build a diverse and effective board with skills and commitment necessary for the sustained success of Akademi and its work
	Ensure Akademi is accountable to statutory bodies and stakeholders
External relations	Promote Akademi's work at key cultural events
	Introduce new people and networks to the Akademi team to support successful growth
	Support the joint Chief Executives in building relationships with strategic partners
<b>Person Specification</b>	
<b>Skills and experience</b>	
	A leadership role level in a professional environment
	Experience of a trusteeship in an arts, community charity or not for profit organisation
	Strategic planning, business development and the influencing skills needed to bring staff and stakeholders along with plans
	A strong communicator, a team player, a collaborator
	Ability to analyse risks and opportunities and take a balanced approach to both
<b>Qualities</b>	
	Active listening, empathy, agile decision-making
	Authoritative but generous and inclusive
	A commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
	A commitment to Akademi's work both as a cultural producer and advocate for social change

## How to express interest in this opportunity

- Please send us your CV and a cover letter - on no more than 2 sides of A4 - outlining your interest in Akademi, why you would like to take on a charitable trustee leadership role at this time and how you meet the person specification.
- Please also download, complete and send the confidential equal opportunities monitoring form (<http://akademi.co.uk/vacancies/>). Please note the equal opportunities form will be separated before your application is reviewed by the board recruitment team.

Akademi is committed to being an equal opportunities employer and recognises the importance and advantages of diverse workplaces and communities. Any candidate who self-identifies as D/deaf, disabled or neurodivergent, as a person of colour, and/or as genderqueer, and who meets the essential person specification, is guaranteed an interview. If you feel that this applies to you, please indicate in your application email.

Should you need this information in another format, or require reasonable adjustment, please let us know.

- Please send your application and equal opportunities form to [info@akademi.co.uk](mailto:info@akademi.co.uk) with the subject heading Chair of the Board. Everyone expressing interest will be informed of the outcome of their application.
- **Closing date for applications:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021 - 5pm
- **Interviews will be held:** w/c 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Further information about Akademi can be found at [www.akademi.co.uk](http://www.akademi.co.uk)

For further information, or if you have any questions, please contact Akademi's Administrative Manager Keisha Bhamra on [keisha@akademi.co.uk](mailto:keisha@akademi.co.uk) who will arrange for an informal chat about the role with the Chair or Executive Team.

## Managing your data

Information in the form of personal data will be used to process the application for recruitment purposes. Unsuccessful applications will be destroyed after one year. The personal data on successful applicants will be needed to administer the employment and further information on how this will be used will be available during the induction period.