

ROLE PROFILE CHAIR OF THE BRITISH COUNCIL

Background

The British Council seeks an inspirational Chair to lead the UK's £1 billion-a-year international cultural relations charity. The Chair heads a talented Board of Trustees with bold ambitions for the British Council and represents it at the highest levels in UK and across the world.

The British Council is registered as a charity in England and Scotland, has a Royal Charter and is regulated by charity law. It is also a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB), operating at arm's length from but aligned with Government. Its sponsoring department in Whitehall is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The Foreign Secretary is responsible to Parliament for the activities of the British Council.

The British Council is the UK's international cultural relations body and its purpose is to build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people worldwide. Founded in 1934, it is the second largest charity in the UK, with an income of c £1 billion. With a global remit and capacity focused on core agendas of importance to the UK's long-term international priorities, its work gives people in the UK and across the hundred-plus countries where it works, opportunities to learn and connect worldwide.

The organisation's mission reaches back to its founding purpose of 'building a friendly knowledge and understanding' between peoples. Today, the British Council continues to build international understanding, generate opportunities for individuals and foster the cooperation that contributes to a more stable world. The organisation's activities in the arts, English teaching, education, civil society, science and sport nurture greater trust and relationships between peoples of different countries and cultures.

To achieve its aims, the British Council does not simply rely on government funding. It derives approximately 85% of its income through a range of services which further its charitable purpose. Despite a variety of financial and geopolitical pressures, the British Council is on track to grow its global operations over the next three years and to more than double the number of people with whom it works. To meet these aspirations the British Council is on a journey to become an organisation which delivers with, and through, partners rather than by wholly owned delivery mechanisms.

In 2014, as part of our work on the Triennial Review, we defined seven guiding principles for our operation:

1 A public body

Recognise in all we do, that we are a UK public body and recognise the responsibilities and expectations which flow from that.

2 Charitable purpose

Ensure everything we do fits directly and clearly with our charitable objectives.

3 Mutual benefit

Deliver benefits for both the UK and overseas countries in everything we do.

4 Distinctive strengths

Focus our work on activities which build on and strengthen the distinctive assets that the British Council offers to people, institutions, governments, partners, customers and clients.

5 Creating value

Seek to build value and opportunity for our UK sectors and other UK providers, as well as in areas where we are also a provider.

6 Transparent and open

Ensure we are open and transparent in our operations, finances and systems.

7 Legal and compliant

Meet the fair trading requirements of UK public funding.

Although this appointment does not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, it will be conducted using a process which takes into account the Commissioner's Code of Practice as best practice.

Diversity and Equality

The British Council particularly welcomes disabled and minority ethnic applicants. It guarantees an interview to disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria listed. The British Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity.

More about the British Council:

In addition to the funding we receive from the UK government we raise revenue through delivering a range of projects and contracts in English teaching and examinations, education and society and arts and from partnerships with public and private organisations in order to further our charitable objectives.

Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face through our events, and more than 500 million online and via broadcasts and publications, providing meaningful international opportunities for people and making a positive contribution and lasting difference to the UK's prosperity, influence and stability.

We operate as an 'entrepreneurial public service' which means that we are funded by grant and earned income and use this mixed funding to maximise impact for the UK. This model in part responds to a declining grant-in-aid and the UK's commitment to Official Development Assistance (ODA), but it also promotes enterprise, innovation, customer and market responsiveness and partnership working in pursuit of economic, social and cultural value. Through this, we set aside 20 per cent of available earned surpluses to support arts programmes and key UK 'high impact priority' cultural relations programmes to respond to government priorities. The remaining 80 per cent is used to fund our investment priorities.

All our work, whether funded by grant, delivered by a contract or paid for by customers, supports cultural relations, is for public benefit and is charitable.

The 2015-2017 Corporate Plan provides more detailed information about the British Council today.

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/corporate-plan-2015-17.pdf>

Main opportunities/challenges for this role:

The Royal Charter sets out the following purposes for the British Council:

- To promote cultural relationships and the understanding of different cultures between people and peoples of the United Kingdom and other countries;
- To promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom.
- To develop a wider knowledge of the English language.
- To encourage cultural, scientific, technological and other educational cooperation between the United Kingdom and other countries;
- Or otherwise promote the advancement of education.

The Royal Charter invests the powers of the British Council in a Board of Trustees. The Chair of the British Council (this appointment) also chairs the Board of Trustees.

In developing the content of its work, the British Council seeks to respond to global challenges with programmes to meet these charitable objects.

Our priorities for 2015 and beyond respond to the global context and the impact we wish to bring to the countries we work in and to the UK, responding in particular to the recommendations and action plan from the Triennial Review.

1. By 2017 we will have further grown our reach and impact, which:

- Is shared with UK partners for the benefit of the UK and the countries where we work.
- Makes a real and lasting difference to the countries and societies where we work worldwide.
- Provides major and meaningful contribution to the educational, society, artistic and cultural sectors of the UK.
- Brings the power of cultural relations to a digital world: to promote greater connection, engagement, opportunity, understanding and trust with more people than ever before.
- Through creating trust and opportunity, contributes to the UK's soft power.

2. Embody, represent and work with the best of the UK globally, by:

- Strengthening our partnerships with the governments, cultural institutions, education providers, social enterprises and social organisations, corporates, trusts and foundations of the UK for a greater impact than we could achieve alone.
- A more joined up approach with UK government departments and key UK stakeholders to ensure we work together and complement each other to bring greater benefit.
- Helping the UK rise to the global demand and need for UK-backed English teaching, arts, culture, qualifications, learning opportunities, knowledge and ideas.

3. Be efficient, effective and transparent, through:

- Continuing our focus on efficiency and productivity, focusing on our economics and cost base and implementing new models of operating across the British Council's international network.
- Continuing to invest in technology and our business processes to release the full potential of all our staff and develop our capability for the future.
- Being open and transparent and demonstrating our value to the whole of the UK with clear reporting structures and governance.

Main Accountabilities:

The Chair:

- Provides leadership to the Board of Trustees, contributing to strategic growth and organisational development.
- Leads the Board in holding the Executive to account for the delivery of agreed strategy and targets.
- Takes the lead on maintaining and further developing the British Council's relationship with key stakeholders in the UK, including government departments and Ministers.
- Represents the British Council's interests in relation to key stakeholders in the UK.
- Undertakes significant travel overseas and in the UK, representing the organisation, opening doors and providing encouragement and inspiration to staff and managers in their efforts to achieve the British Council's objectives.
- Regularly reviews the effectiveness of the Board and its composition, ensuring that appropriate processes are in place to recruit and appoint new Board members.

It is likely that this is the primary (though not only) role of the Chair.

The Chair will be expected to subscribe and adhere to the seven principles of public life (the "Nolan Principles") – see here and Annex 1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>. S/he must demonstrate the qualities and values required of all holders of public appointments as well as cultural sensitivity in complex societies.

The Chair of the British Council is the ambassador for one of the world's leading cultural relations organisations. S/he will lead the UK's second largest charity through an exciting period of growth and continuing transformation.

Candidates for the role must demonstrate the ability to grasp, own and oversee the British Council's response to significant challenges over the next few years. These include managing the outcomes and implications of the next Comprehensive Spending Review settlement, major changes in its business and funding models and the inherent risks, the need for considerable re-skilling and culture change particularly related to commercial and professional services capacity, and ever growing public scrutiny. Candidates must subscribe to the British Council's public service ethos and be committed to delivering commercial sustainability in a way that is consistent with its charitable objectives.

Candidates must also demonstrate an impressive record of achievement at the most senior level in large and complex organisations, or in roles of comparable significance. They must have the international experience and awareness necessary to operate confidently in less stable and more politically sensitive parts of the world.

The Chair must have a passion for the British Council's mission, and an enthusiasm for and understanding of the diversity of contemporary British life, culture and society. S/he must have energy and dynamism and resilience.

Strong strategic, leadership, organisation transformation and influencing skills are essential, as is proven ability to hold the executive to account.

The Chair will be responsible for providing strong and effective leadership to the Board ensuring the Trustees discharge their legal and public service responsibilities including the identification and management of organisational risks. S/he will work inclusively, constructively and flexibly enabling the Board to fulfil its responsibilities for the effective governance of the charity and protection of the wider reputation of the British Council.

S/he will complement the role of the CEO offering advice, expertise and support without becoming involved in executive management.

The Chair must be credible with senior stakeholders including UK government. S/he will operate at the highest levels on a global stage, both within and outside government. S/he will also have a prominent role within the British Council, forming strong working relationships with staff and contributing to the cohesion of the organisation. The Chair will be critical to delivering the British Council's purpose, and to inspiring young people to engage with the challenges to global stability in the twenty first century.

In addition, candidates for the role will be able to demonstrate that they meet the following requirements set out below.

Role Requirements:

- Please note that the role is unremunerated but reasonable expenses will be paid. An office in the British Council's London building along with administrative support will be provided.
- The appointment is initially for a three-year term with the possibility of extension for a further three years.
- The time requirement is approximately 80 to 100 days per annum spread flexibly and including travel which at times requires a week or more away at a time.
- Candidates must be British citizens.

Job specific:

- Demonstrate ability to chair the Board, evidenced by previous board level experience or the equivalent in a significant organisation
- Experience of operating in a global, international environment.
- Experience of working in the public and private sectors.
- Commercial experience.
- Strong skills in communicating, influencing, inspiring and advocating.
- Passion for the organisation's mission, and interest in one or more areas of its work, and enthusiasm for and understanding of the diversity of contemporary British life and society.
- Demonstrably high standards of personal integrity and the ability to maintain and build on the values of the organisation.
- Proven expertise in building and managing complex stakeholder relationships at the highest level, including with government.
- A track record of leading strategy development, and the ability to oversee its implementation through an executive team.
- A record of handling sensitive and political issues in a positive and constructive manner.

The Selection Process:

All appointments are made following an open competition conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Short listing of candidates will be undertaken by assessing the information provided in your CV and supporting documentation. The short listing will be undertaken by a selection panel against strict criteria.

The Board of Trustees has appointed a selection panel for the exercise which is constituted as follows. It will be chaired by Rosie Varley, Public Appointments Assessor, Office of the Commissioner of Public Appointments, and will include Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, Chancellor of York University, as an independent member, as well as the following Trustees on the British Council Board:

- Deborah Bronnert
- Tom Thomson
- Janet Beer.

See the following for details: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/board-trustees>

The British Council has appointed Russell Reynold Associates (RRA) to assist with this recruitment exercise.

Indicative Timetable:

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| ▪ Closing date for applications | Noon, Friday 8 January 2016 |
| ▪ Long List Review | Thursday 14 January 2016 |
| ▪ Preliminary assessment interviews with RRA | Between long and short list reviews |
| ▪ Short List Review | Thursday 4 February 2016 |
| ▪ Panel Interviews | Tuesday 23 February 2016 |
| ▪ Appointment commences | Friday 1 April 2016 |

Diversity and Equality:

The British Council has a strong commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity, and is committed to appointing a diverse, talented and high-performing individual and welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of their background, gender, race, sexual orientation, religion or age, providing they meet the required criteria. Applications from women and BME candidates in particular are encouraged. Annex 2 includes a Diversity Monitoring Form for completion.

Complaints:

In the event of being dissatisfied with the process complaints should be addressed to the Rt Hon Baroness Prashar, Deputy Chair of the British Council's Board of Trustees in the first instance and only if unresolved at this level to Verita, an organisation which provides an Independent Complaints Review service for the British Council.

Application Instructions

In response to the advertisement, please submit your full application to:

By email (preferred): Responses@RussellReynolds.com

Or, by post: Russell Reynolds Associates
c/o Fiona Birkmire
Reference number 1511-025L
Almack House
28 King Street
London SW1Y 6QW

Closing date for applications is Noon on Friday 8 January 2016.

All applications must include the following:

- The reference number 1511-025L in the subject line.
- A short covering letter of not more than two A4 sized pages explaining why this appointment interests you and how you meet the requirement as detailed in the candidate profile.
- A current CV with educational and professional qualifications and full employment history giving details, where applicable, of budgets and numbers of people managed, relevant achievements in recent posts, together with reasons for absence within the last two years.
- Names of at least two referees who may be contacted at short list stage, i.e. *before* final interview.
- Confirmation from you that you are happy for Russell Reynolds Associates or its client to undertake any necessary background checks, including career, credit and qualifications, or similar, post short list stage.
- Notification of any dates you are unable to accommodate within the indicative timetable set out in the previous section.
- Your mobile number – and any other useful contact telephone numbers – together with your preferred e-mail address which will be used for all correspondence between us.
- The completed monitoring forms contained in **Annex 2** appended below:
 - Conflicts of Interest
 - Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire, including Interview Access Scheme for Disabled Candidates

Annex 1

The Seven Principles of Public Life

You are required to conduct yourself in accordance with the provisions of the Seven Principles of Public Life. It is essential that you are, and are seen to be, honest and impartial in the exercise of your duties.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations.

Annex 2

Section 1 - Personal Details

Surname:	Forename(s):	Title:
Address for correspondence:		
Postcode:		
Contact Telephone Number (including national or international dialing code):		
Mobile Telephone Number:		
E-mail address:		

Annex 2 Section 2 - Personal Conflicts

As an appointee to a public body you may find that your/your close family's business or personal (financial) interests could become matters of public interest. It is, therefore, in the interests of both you and the British Council to declare in the box below any business or personal interests that may be perceived to be a potential conflict of interest in relation to this appointment.

Any potential conflicts of interest detailed here will not prevent you going forward to interview but may, if appropriate, be explored with you during your interview to establish how you would address the issue(s) should you be successful in your application.

If completing in manuscript and there is insufficient space, please continue on a separate sheet and tick this box.

If completing electronically, please just continue typing.

Annex 2

Section 3 – Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire

Applications are welcome from all suitable individuals irrespective of, for example, age, race, gender or disability. You are asked to complete this questionnaire to help us to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. This information may be reproduced **in summary form only** in British Council publications (including websites) or in response to parliamentary questions/enquiries and other public enquiries. Individuals will not be identified or be able to be identified in any such responses. This questionnaire will be kept separate from the application form, will not be seen by the sift and interview panel(s). The Data Protection Act requires that individuals must be informed, and their consent given, for this information to be made publicly available.

Do you consent to the information being used as described above? YES NO

Which groups do you most identify with? **Please tick ONE box in Section A and ONE box in Section B.**

SECTION A

WHITE

ASIAN

- Bangladeshi
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Any other Asian background
(specify if you wish)

BLACK

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black background
(specify if you wish)

CHINESE

- Any Chinese background
(specify if you wish)

MIXED ETHNIC BACKGROUND

- Asian and White
- Black African and White
- Black Caribbean and White
- Any other Mixed ethnic background
(specify if you wish)

ANY OTHER ETHNIC BACKGROUND

- Any other ethnic background
(specify if you wish)

SECTION B

- British or Mixed British
- English
- Irish
- Scottish
- Welsh
- Or any other
(specify if you wish)

Gender Male Female

Disability

A definition of the Interview Access Scheme for Disabled Candidates is set out in Annex 3. If you consider yourself disabled*, please indicate below if you wish to apply under this scheme:

YES NO

*This form is for monitoring purposes only. If there are any specific arrangements that would enable you to attend an interview and/or carry out appointment duties then please either provide the details on a separate sheet or contact us at the telephone number/e-mail address in the information pack. This will not affect the assessment of your suitability for this post.

Thank you for your co-operation

Annex 3

Interview Access Scheme for Disabled Candidates

We are keen to recruit disabled people who have the necessary skills. To encourage those applicants we operate a scheme under which disabled candidates, who have demonstrated the competencies required for the appointment, will be assured of an offer of an interview.

The Interview Access Scheme (IAS) works as follows:

- Disabled candidates can choose to be considered under the Scheme.
- Their written application will be considered in the same way as other applicants.
- Panel members will not be informed that the candidate has applied under the IAS until after they have done their assessment.
- If the panel considers that, on paper, the IAS applicant has demonstrated the competencies required for the post, then they will be offered an interview.