



Trustee Recruitment 2021



Our story so far

Standing proud in the heart of the small rural market town of Ulverston on the edge of the Lake District, The Coro is an historic arts, culture and entertainment venue. It was built as 'The Coronation Hall' by public subscription in 1920 in direct response to the people's desire for a place to go to enjoy theatre, music, dance and entertainment.

Since that time the Coro has grown into a much-loved venue that showcases world-class performance alongside home-grown artists and locally produced festivals, shows, activities and events. It is our vision that people of all ages and backgrounds love Ulverston as a town of variety, worth and creativity and for The Coro to play a full and inspiring role in that. Our mission is to enrich lives through great experiences.

The Coro is a registered charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) that sits under the umbrella organisation of Ulverston Community Enterprises (UCE), a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. The charity's formal registered name is Ulverston Coronation Hall.

Both UCE and Ulverston Coronation Hall were established in 2016 in direct response to the threat of closure as South Lakeland District Council (SLDC), which owned and managed the building was forced in common with other local authorities to review its portfolio of assets. UCE negotiated a 5-year 'pilot' lease during which it would take on management of The Coro to save it from closure and develop it into a new and thriving arts and culture venue for all. Importantly this five-year arrangement was also to show SLDC a new, not-for-profit, community focused organisation, UCE and its subsidiary Ulverston Coronation Hall had the skills and capacity to sustain and develop such a venue for the future.

Since July 2016 we have more than doubled the number of events, grown a significant volunteer programme, seen more than 30% growth in visitors and won two awards. In 2019 we welcomed more than 60,000 people through the doors to enjoy more than 600 events and activities including annual festivals such as PrintFest, Ulverston International Music Festival and Furness Tradition; gigs including the renowned Floyd Effect, Kate Rusby and Ulverston's own Jess Gillam; comedy giants like Al Murray, Jasper Carrot, Alister McGowan and Chris Ramsey; regular community events including coffee mornings and bingo and a whole host of private functions. Throughout this period we improved the finances significantly with a positive trajectory to financial sufficiency by the end of the initial lease. As such, SLDC and UCE have agreed to put in place a long-term lease that will allow us to significantly grow the organisation and the offer further.

2020

As we moved into 2020 we were embarking on a new and exciting era for the Coro in which we planned to invest in people, revitalise the building, refine internal systems, renew the programme, improve our communications and marketing significantly, ramp up our hospitality offer, develop a membership programme and work even more closely with the local community, artists and performers. To this end, in February 2020 we had just put a new senior management team in place to lead on this work with the Director and Board. Then in March 2020, when the pandemic hit and lockdown ensued, we closed the building. Like venues across the country we went into full survival mode as we lost almost all our income overnight and our plans for change and growth were cut short with immediate effect.

Throughout 2020, however, we were able to operate a lean and flexible delivery plan, in those times that allowed, always in line with government guidance. It was our aim to deliver safe and special experiences where and when we could to bring some joy to people at a time when it was needed most.

2020 thus saw us work outside of the building for the first time and deliver a programme of installations in and around Ulverston for people to enjoy outdoors: we started to work with outdoor theatre companies to put on a small series of shows in Ford Park; we ‘converted’ our venue into an exhibition space and staged Luke Jerram’s Museum of the Moon, to which 11,000 people came while we operated a ticketed, COVID secure, reduced capacity system and; in December we staged an indoor winter woodland in the venue and commissioned an outdoor theatre company to perform a family Christmas show over two weeks. Again, this was COVID secure with only small numbers in the building at any one time. We also launched our new visual identity in this time (worked on and funded during 2019 as part of our expansion plans), with an excellent response from public, community and industry.

The Coro has been severely impacted by the pandemic but as we now see light at the end of the tunnel, we are planning for a bright future. Surviving through the various lockdowns has been an enormous challenge but re-opening will arguably be a bigger challenge as we aim to meet our cultural and social objectives in a financially viable way.

We are therefore seeking experienced and motivated people to join The Coro’s Board of Trustees to help embark on this new stage of our journey, meet our objectives and realise our vision while balancing our vision for a quality arts and culture venue, our commitment to the local community and our necessity to be commercially viable.

The role of Trustee

- As with all voluntary sector boards, no board members receive remuneration other than out of pocket expenses (i.e. they are all volunteers)
- The board operates on a basis of ‘collective responsibility’ i.e. the majority opinion will prevail, but all board members are expected to stand by the collective decision of the board.
- The board meets every two months although until recently has met monthly and will do so again if there is a need for more frequent meetings. Meetings usually last between 2 – 3 hours and require preparation and attendance.
- The Agenda for Board meetings is set by the Chair (Ceri Hutton) in consultation with the Director (Beth Kennedy) and other board members. Papers are prepared by those reporting to the Board (usually the Director and Chair with other staff or board members preparing additional discussion and/or information papers as required), and all are circulated at least 3 days before the meetings, which are set in advance.
- Meetings are currently taking place virtually but all Trustees should expect for some, if not all, meetings to take place at The Coro as and when it is safe to do so.
- All board members as well as the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer, are elected annually at UCH’s AGM and undertake a range of tasks between meetings.

The duties of a trustee board member are to:

- Ensure that The Coro comply with their governing documents (Articles of Association), charity law, company law and other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensure that The Coro pursues its objects as defined by the governing documents

- Ensure The Coro applies resources exclusively in the pursuance of the objects
- Contribute actively to the board of trustees by giving strategic direction to The Coro, setting overall policy, defining goals and evaluation performance against agreed targets
- Safeguard the good name and values of The Coro
- Ensure the financial stability of The Coro

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve leading discussions, identifying key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, and evaluating or offering advice on other areas in which the trustee has particular expertise.

Person specification and how to apply

Core competences for each member of the Board:

- A commitment to and enthusiasm for the vision of The Coro
- A willingness and ability to attend meetings and prepare for these
- An ability to think strategically for the longer term
- Independent judgement
- An ability to think creatively
- A willingness to be honest and speak one's mind in a constructive manner
- An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship, including the principle of collective responsibility
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and take decisions for the good of UCE and/or the Coro.
- Integrity, including declaring conflicts of interest if and when these arise.

We are currently actively recruiting for directors/trustees with skills and experience in one or more of the following areas:

1. Financial management and accounting
2. Business development and income generation in a social enterprise context
3. Arts and creative industries, particularly around programming and fundraising issues
4. Digital and tech development
5. Human resources management

We are also particularly interested in candidates who feel passionately about the need for diversity and inclusivity and who could work with us to build in these areas, to represent and amplify the voices of people currently underrepresented in our governance and workforce, our audiences and our delivery.

Please consider sending a cover letter explaining why you'd like to join the board and how your skills and experience in one or more of the areas outlined above could contribute to our work to hello@thecoro.co.uk. If you'd like to speak with us prior to submitting an application, please email either Chair of the Board, Ceri Hutton on ceri.hutton@mac.com or Director, Beth Kennedy on beth.kennedy@ulverstonenterprises.uk to arrange a call. Deadline for applications is Thursday 1st April and interviews are scheduled to take place via video-conference on Tuesday 6th April



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The Coro