

MARY WARD

CHANGING LIVES TOGETHER



Chair Recruitment

Candidate Information Pack

August 2024

Welcome

As the current Chair of The Mary Ward Settlement, I thank you for your interest in our organisation. Having joined the board some years ago I have seen the growth and development of the charity and am proud of what we have achieved. Always recognised for its welcoming and embracing learning environment and innovative courses, alongside respected legal advice and community services, we now work out of two hubs, Southwark and Newham, reaching even more Londoners. It is a truly exciting time to join the organisation.

Our new building in Stratford enables us to follow a strategy to ensure our services are interconnected and expands the work we inherited with the merger of another 100 year old charity, Blackfriars Settlement. We are forging new connections across London fostering innovative partnerships with arts organisations, other charities, and the corporate world. While working closely with other colleges delivering adult education and with legal advice services across London, we are creating a strong identity and following new paths to fulfil the vision of our founders. Mary Ward was an acclaimed novelist and social activist in the late 19th and early 20th century. She believed that people should have equal opportunities in education and access to justice and that a sharing inclusive community was key to achieving this. The Settlement continues to respect her objectives.

I know that every CEO says wonderful things about the organisation when they write a foreword to a critical role and I thought hard about whether to include this paragraph at all in fear of it being another one of 'those' forewords! I kept pondering about how I would describe or encapsulate the feeling that our members or students get when they walk into one of our buildings, use a service, access a course or sit and just 'be' with us in a community space. One of our partners summed it up beautifully for me; he said, 'when I walk into the Settlement, I feel as though I am walking into a hug'. This doesn't mean we are not strategic, innovative, entrepreneurial, driven, sharp, agile and forward thinking, but it suggests the ethos and environment we aim to continually cultivate. One of warmth, responsiveness, thoughtfulness, inclusivity in its widest sense and honouring our founders' vision that everyone should be and is, welcome.

As CEO of the Mary Ward Settlement for 18 months, I genuinely feel privileged to lead such an important organisation and this is coupled with excitement for the new chapter we are embarking on that values our history, holds firmly to our ethos but takes a bold new step towards increasing our reach across London, expanding provision and having a bigger and more robust presence at the tables we really need to be sitting at both politically and in our local communities.

We are a vibrant and diverse organisation with lots of ideas, the passion to drive them, and the commitment to our learners and members to listen to how they want these to be shaped and delivered. This is therefore a very critical moment in time and we are thrilled that we have peaked your interest and really encourage you to explore further.

With warmest regards

Frances & Therese

Frances Bates , Chair & Therese Reinheimer-Jones, CEO



About Us

With our history in the beginning of the Settlement Movement, Mary Ward Settlement has been connecting with the communities of East and South London for over 100 years, offering inclusive education opportunities, legal advice, and community support services. Mary Ward Settlement is made up of three charities: Mary Ward Education Centre, Mary Ward Legal, and Blackfriars Settlement. All share a board of trustees and a mission of offering accessible and engaging services to all of our community, be that for those who wish to pursue lifelong learning, or those who require legal advice to work through issues affecting their lives.

At the Mary Ward Centre we are passionate about the idea that we can keep on learning throughout our lives and specialise in courses for adults from 19 to 90. We have been doing this for over 100 years and are one of London's Specialist Institutes for Adult Learning. Courses run in the daytime, evening or weekend, meaning learners can fit their learning around the rest of their lives.

The Mary Ward Legal Centre provides free, independent advice to people who live or work in London to help them access their legal rights and entitlements. We provide specialist advice in housing, welfare benefits and debt. We also provide free legal advice as part of our pro bono service in the areas of employment, housing, small claims, consumer, and family.

The Blackfriars Settlement joined Mary Ward Settlement in 2018, complementing our services with shared history and commitment to lifelong learning and bringing community together. The Blackfriars Settlement has extended our reach and grown the impact that we have in London.



excellence across our services. We have an executive leadership team of four supporting both locations of operation. We have a dynamic group of part-time tutors who deliver our courses. The charity turnover is over £6m per annum.

The Mary Ward Settlement serves people from all communities, all backgrounds, all walks of life and all faiths. We are working hard to ensure that our board of trustees reflects that diversity.

To find out more about the Settlement Movement and our history please click here:

<https://www.marywardcentre.ac.uk/discover/settlement-history/>

<https://blackfriars-settlement.org.uk/about/>



We contribute positively to the communities we serve

Learning

We offer learning that enriches people's lives, increases opportunities, and diminishes disadvantage

Justice

We are committed to social justice and offering pathways to secure legal rights

Respect

We value and support staff, teams, and volunteers, and develop their talents

Equality

We foster equality, seek to eliminate discrimination, and improve inclusion

Integrity

We are honest, fair, accountable, and financially responsible

Sustainability

We actively seek sustainable practices

Excellence

We strive for excellence as individuals, teams, and as an institution



Role Description

Key Information

- Location:** Mary Ward Centre Stratford, London, and MWS Blackfriars in Southward, London. Meetings attended in-person and online.
- Duration:** Four year term, renewable once
- Remuneration:** Unremunerated, all reasonable expenses associated with the duties of the role will be paid

Time Commitment:

- Chair four Board meetings each year, currently taking place in the evening.
- Provide support to sub-committees of the board as required
- Chair the remunerations sub-committee.
- 1-2 strategy meetings each year
- Supporting the Warden / CEO at meetings on occasion.
- Attend MWS community events.
- Approximately 2 days per month representational commitment.

Main Purposes

The Chair of Mary Ward Settlement (MWS) will work in partnership with the Warden / CEO to provide strategic leadership of MWS. The Chair will lead the board's contribution to delivering the mission of MWS by offering inspiring, positive, innovative, and supportive leadership to the board and SLT. The Chair will articulate and develop MWS's values by working inclusively and collaboratively with all trustees, encouraging trustees and the senior leadership team (SLT) to be progressive, imaginative, modern, and effective in their thinking. At all times the Chair will act as an ambassador for MWS, seeking opportunities to grow MWS's reach and attract partnerships and funding to MWS.

Specific responsibilities

- Encourage a working culture that is positive, supportive, honest, and team focused.
- Lead the board's strategic oversight of MWS's work.

- Provide collaborative support to the Warden, including sound guidance or appropriate challenge
- Review the performance and support the development of (a) the board as a body and (b) individual trustees on a regular basis.
- Work with the Clerk to the board to ensure that the board of trustees operates within charity, company and other applicable law, and in line with good governance practice.
- Chair meetings of the board of trustees.
- Work with the Warden and Clerk to set dates and plan agendas for board meeting.
- Work with the Clerk to ensure that the board deals with business in an effective and efficient way, that all trustees have the opportunity to contribute and be heard, and that discussions and decisions are properly recorded.
- Work with the Warden and the Clerk to ensure that decisions made by the board are implemented.
- Act between meetings on issues agreed with the board, reporting such actions to the next meeting of the board.
- Chair the remuneration committee and general meetings of MWS.
- Exercise a casting vote at meetings of the board of trustees when required
- With the Warden, to network diligently and represent MWS at events, meetings and to the media.
- Actively establish connections and relationships to further the work of MWS and attract funding.
- Support the Warden across the range of their responsibilities and offer appropriate line management and review, including annual appraisal of the Warden.
- To line manage and appraise the Clerk.



Person Specification

The Chair will actively believe in the values of MWS, and be keen to serve the communities that engage with MWS. Local knowledge or connection to East and/or South London is helpful. In addition, the following experience and attributes are sought:

- Working knowledge of good governance principles
- Experience as a trustee or non-executive director
- Experience of chairing committees or board of trustees (desirable)
- Strong interpersonal skills grounded in supportive and positive values
- Strong leadership skills including those of diplomacy, influence, and mediating
- Strong communication skills, including the ability to summarise complex information.
- Ability to work with diverse groups with varying levels of knowledge and understanding of MWS.
- Ability to ensure the evolution of a truly inclusive organisation
- Commitment to equality and diversity in every aspect of an organisation's work and in particular its relationships with the people it serves.
- Ambassadorial skills.
- Experience of working in an organisation that is subject to a complex legal, regulatory and financial environment.
- Experience of leadership, and knowledge of, one of the following:
 - Charity sector
 - Adult education
 - Legal advice sector;
- General business senior management experience which includes financial understanding, staff management, operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Fund-raising experience (desirable).



How to apply

[Eastside People](#) is supporting [Mary Ward Settlement](#) in the recruitment for this role. Please [click here](#) to apply with your CV and covering letter.

Please use the cover letter (max 2 pages) as an opportunity to add to the information you have shared in your CV and ensure that you cover the following:

- Why are you interested in a Chair role, and why with Mary Ward Settlement?
- How can you contribute to Mary Ward Settlement as our Chair? Please highlight relevant experience you would like to share with us.

We welcome applications from candidates with a passion for our mission who bring relevant skills and experience. We particularly welcome applications from members of underrepresented groups with respect to age; ethnicity; socio-economic background and disability.

We want you to have every opportunity to demonstrate your skills, ability, and potential. Please contact us if you require any assistance or adjustments so that we can help with making the application process work for you. We would discourage you from deselecting yourself if you are in doubt about meeting all the criteria. Instead, if you have specific questions about the role, please get in touch with Melissa.

If you would like a call to discuss the role in more detail, please email Melissa at melissa@eastsidepeople.org to arrange a convenient time. Having a call of this kind will not influence the success or otherwise of your application.

The closing date for applications is **14 October**. Competency-based interviews will take place with Eastside People throughout the live recruitment period and until **18 October**. Interviews with Mary Ward Settlement will be in two stages from week **commencing 21 October**, and will include an opportunity to meet key stakeholders after first stage interviews.

Eastside People are fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and work with our clients to ensure that we recruit inclusively, seeking to address the underrepresentation of some groups of people in leadership teams.



Eastside People

Eastside People
Canopi
7-14 Dover Street
London
SE1 4YR

0203 821 6174
eastsidepeople.org

Eastside People is the trading name for Eastside Consulting Ltd. Company number: 4958922.