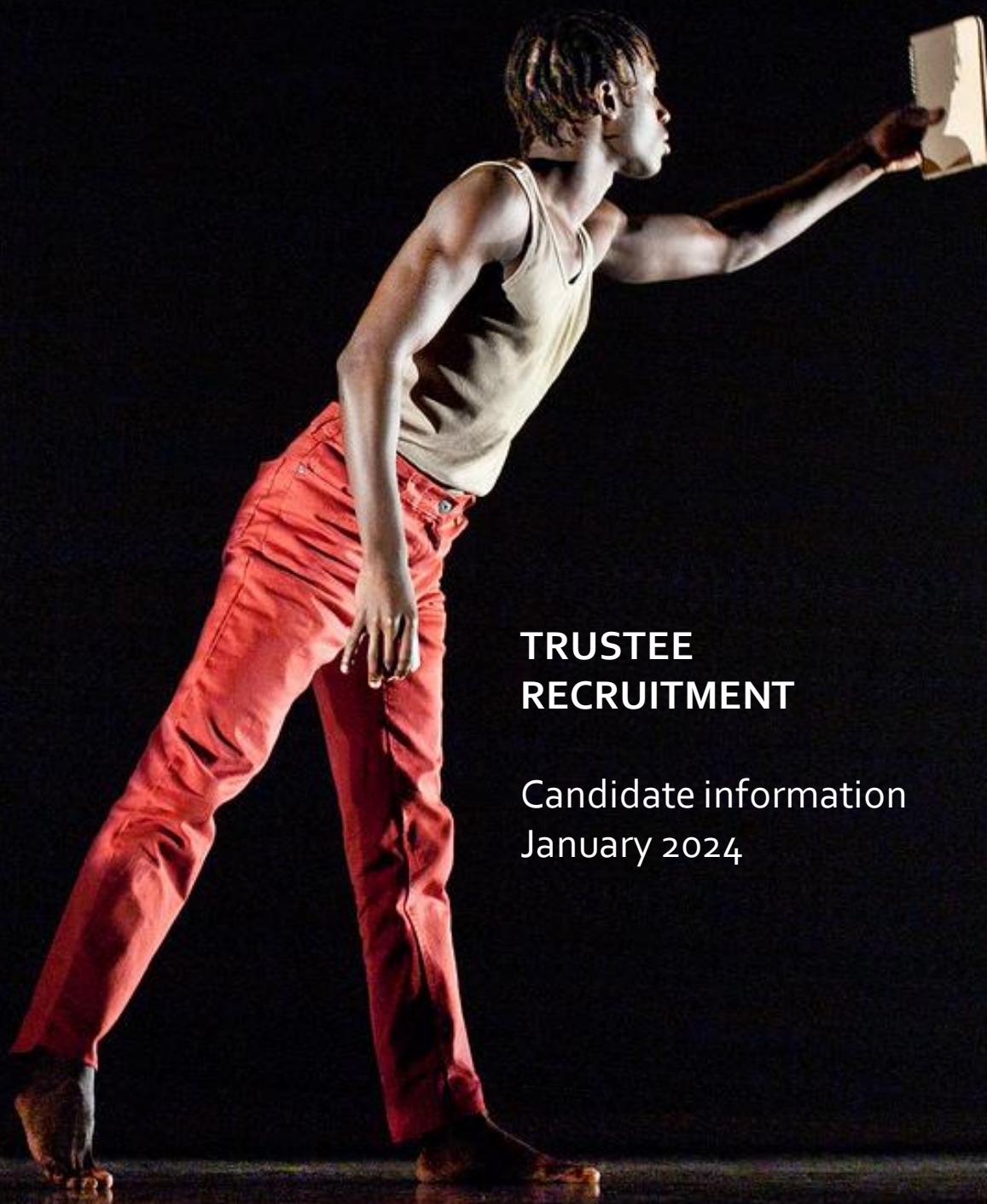


**Bernie Grant  
Arts  
Centre**  
Developing  
culturally diverse  
artists



## TRUSTEE RECRUITMENT

Candidate information  
January 2024



## Welcome

As trustees of the Bernie Grant Arts Centre (BGAC), we are privileged to be present at countless moments of wonder: celebrating and developing Black artists and narratives, connecting with Tottenham and beyond, and enabling genuine engagement and connection through the arts. It's a truly enriching experience, and a fitting continuation of Bernie Grant's social and political vision.

Our recent successful bid for prestigious "National Portfolio Organisation" status by Arts Council England was the culmination of many months of work by our CEO, her team, the board and our wider community. But it was emphatically not a concluding moment: rather, it's an exciting point of departure for BGAC's next phase, and an encouraging indicator of how much more we can achieve.

We're looking for new Trustees to join the Board. As a trustee you'll understand what we do from the inside, and will be able to demonstrate that you share our commitment to raising the profile of Black artists through presenting and co-creating high quality work and delivering artist development, creative learning and engagement opportunities.

In short, we want to meet people with an impressive professional record, who are as passionate as we are about the Centre's purpose and mission, and who bring a profound personal insight into the place of art, culture and community as fundamental to human prosperity.

*Geoffrey Williams, Chair on behalf of*

*Trustees, Bernie Grant Arts Centre*

*"Bernie Grant Arts Centre is not only an important local legacy representing local demands for equality of access to the arts and for the celebration of cultural diversity, but a unique national achievement born in Haringey. In the context of Black Lives Matter, this is more important than ever."*

**– Rt Hon David Lammy MP**

## About Bernie Grant Arts Centre

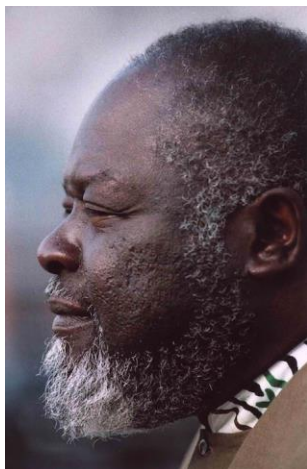
Bernie Grant Arts Centre (BGAC) is a cultural hub for Black creativity. Born out of a commitment to centring blackness, BGAC provides a space for the creatively engaged from the Global Black Diaspora to create and showcase their work in the heart of Tottenham. BGAC is a combined arts centre for creativity, learning, aiming to provide a platform for expression, exploration, and celebration.



At the core is a deep-rooted connection to the local community and a commitment to being part of the Global Black Diaspora. BGAC offers transformative experiences, from workshops and performances to festivals and discussions, where the Black experience takes centre stage, engaging with the multiplicities of race, identity, and heritage. BGAC is a vibrant venue, featuring a 274-seat auditorium, studio and rehearsal spaces, a café, bar, courtyard and a creative Enterprise Centre, offering a diverse range of opportunities, including workshops, classes, and events for those looking to create.







## History and location

Bernie Grant was one of the UK's first Black MPs, whose vision for a fairer Britain and a fairer world inspired the creation of the BGAC. Bernie first proposed the idea of creating a flagship venue to promote Global Black Diaspora arts and arts-related training and enterprise in 1994. The expression of his vision was to support the social, economic and physical regeneration of Tottenham in a way that would be accessible to all, would provide facilities for emerging creative businesses, and would generate pride, affection and participation from the local community.

Opened in 2007, BGAC showcases the best of local, national and international artistic talent. Our stunning campus, which sensitively incorporates local heritage buildings, comprises a 274-seat theatre, 3 rehearsal spaces, a lounge cinema, 20 creative workspaces, a cafe and bar, and an outdoor square. The centre's design allows flexibility to accommodate a range of artistic forms from theatre and dance company performances to gallery display space. As one of a tiny number of dedicated multi-artform spaces for Black/Global Majority-led practice, we are a local landmark on Tottenham High Street and the only not-for-profit cultural venue in Tottenham.





## How we work

We channel the benefits of culture to all. Our focus on Black-led work and our location-embedded community programming supports meaningful and authentic engagement within our communities, connecting with those who may not see cultural venues as being for them. Participation is for all, but prioritises Black/Global Majority peoples, with a focus on those with intersectional experience. We work with a network of cross-sector organisations (including local schools, colleges, alternative provision, food banks and community gardens, as well as other frontline groups) to support our work with often vulnerable groups. We activate culture locally through sector collaboration and the support we offer to Black-led creatives in our workspaces.

Tottenham is in the top 20% most deprived areas in England: more than half the area is in the top 10%, and 41% of local children live in poverty against a UK average of 21%. We are therefore operating in a critical context of need, and our work to remove barriers to arts participation in our underserved area is urgent. For children in particular, cultural opportunities can make meaningful change – augmenting the school curriculum, raising aspirations & inspiring creative career pathways.





"...both a gift  
and a necessity  
to the  
community, to  
Tottenham, to  
Haringey, to  
London, and the  
nation".  
– **Lemn Sissay  
MBE**

## Future plans

We bear the name of someone who was instrumental in initiating a period of radical change in the experience of Black people in Britain. We understand the profound significance of our stewardship of Bernie's vision, and we are determined that he would be both proud of what we have achieved, and excited by our ambition for the future.

Our selection by Arts Council England as one of its National Portfolio Organisations marks a new chapter for the Bernie Grant Arts Centre, and sets us on a path to realise our exciting plans for the future.

By 2026, BGAC will be a vital resource for Black arts, both nationally and internationally. We will nurture a progression pipeline that invigorates the national sector, and continually challenges the toxic view that underrepresentation of Black artists is down to lack of talent. We will support around 300 artists across every career stage, giving underrepresented artists priceless opportunities to sustain viable careers and fulfil their creative potential.



## About the roles

The principal responsibilities of the Board are to support and oversee the activities of the BGAC. Being a Trustee is a real responsibility but you will be well supported by other trustees and the executive team to make sure you understand things fully and can contribute at your best.

Specific Board priorities include (but aren't limited to) developing our capacity to identify, catalyse and sustain partnerships. We want you to understand the importance of fulfilling our charitable objects: supporting artists, building existing and new audiences, and providing opportunities and employment for people to get a start in the industry. You will contribute to growing our income from the full range of opportunities, including venue hire, trading, grants and foundations. And you will provide Board leadership for new initiatives; for example, social prescribing is an intriguing and potentially very significant new development in our sector, and we want to stay ahead of the curve as this innovative concept develops into the mainstream.

It's extremely important that you understand the entirety of what we do, and who we are. We are the custodians of Bernie Grant's founding vision, and we are cognisant of the duty we bear to it. You will deeply understand the value of our role in creating spaces for Black artists to practice and enabling audiences to experience their work. We are the leading creative space for Black artists outside the mainstream, and we provide a unique, welcoming place for artists and audiences alike to engage and thrive. This is fundamental to BGAC's work.

Candidates must contribute some understanding of the opportunities and challenges of running a significant charitable enterprise including sound governance, CEO support, fundraising, operations and financial management. An insight into how community arts organisations and venues work would be an asset, as would knowledge of the ACE funding strategy, experience of audience-building, participation and outreach.

## About the roles

Some organisations prefer their Trustees to drop in every few months; but you will be deeply involved in our activities, engaging with fellow trustees informally on an ongoing basis, as well as at Board and committee meetings. You will be expected to join full Board meetings, in person where possible, 4 times a year, attend an annual Board away day and join one of the Board subcommittees (currently a Finance, Risk & General Purposes Committee and an External Affairs Committee) which meet in hybrid format ahead of each Board meeting. You will likely also become involved in other work to support the Board or the organisation consistent with need and your skills or interests.

You must exemplify our values and share our vision for the future. Well-connected, and tireless in bringing us to the attention of your network, you'll raise the profile of BGAC and make sure we're front of mind for the people and organisations who can help us achieve our objectives in the coming years.

We are currently looking to recruit new trustees to support the existing skills on the Board and backfill planned departures. There is opportunity for up to five trustees to join. We encourage expressions of interest from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. We expect to appoint new Trustees with some direct or other experience of boards or similar governance bodies but also those sitting on a board for the first time. Successful candidates would be appointed as Trustee of the Charity and Director of the Company, The Bernie Grant Centre Partnership.



## Candidate profile

The strongest candidates will offer skills in a range of areas. We are especially looking to increase the Board's expertise in:

- finance & accounting, with the potential to take over as Treasurer in the future (accounting qualifications a benefit but not required)
- business / commercial / fundraising
- experience of the arts as a practitioner
- media & communications

Required skills (candidates should show how they demonstrate all of these)

- engaging with purpose, integrity and sensitivity in Board and committee meetings, and with Trustees and the Executive as required
- understanding of the need to oversee and govern the organisation
- understand the role and requirements of a Charity Trustee and Director
- a passion for the mission of the BGAC
- understanding the communities that the BGAC serves

Desirable skills (candidates should demonstrate some of these and describe how)

- experience of Board governance and executive accountability
- direct Tottenham community experience
- Charity executive experience
- Arts Council / NPO experience
- Networks into e.g. funding bodies or relevant political arenas

## How to apply

Please indicate your interest by means of a cover letter of no more than one page describing your interest and how you think you could best contribute to the Board, attaching a CV. Selection will be by panel interview with the members of the Board. Applications will be accepted until Sunday, February 25th.

Please send to [boardrecruitment@berniegrantcentre.co.uk](mailto:boardrecruitment@berniegrantcentre.co.uk)

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