



THE SCHOOL OF
ARTISAN FOOD

RECRUITMENT PACK FOR

Chair of Trustees

THE SCHOOL OF ARTISAN FOOD

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1139632



WELCOME

DEAR PROSPECTIVE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES,

This is a moment of real opportunity for The School of Artisan Food. After five years as Chair, I am stepping down at a point where The School is strong, stable and ambitious for what comes next. We have come through the challenges of the COVID pandemic with resilience and a strengthened global reputation whilst remaining true to a clear and compelling mission: to deliver inclusive food education that transforms lives and communities.

What makes The School special is not just what it does, but why it does it. It is an organisation rooted in values; that believes deeply in the power of food education to create opportunity, build confidence and connect people. That sense of purpose is matched by the quality of the team, the commitment of the Board and the energy of the wider community we serve.

The appointment of a new Chair is therefore not simply a transition, it is an opportunity to shape the next phase of The School's development, build on strong foundations, and extend our reach and impact in meaningful and sustainable ways. This is not a passive governance role; it is an engaged and influential position, working closely with the executive team to guide strategy, support delivery, and ensure The School continues to evolve while staying true to its values.

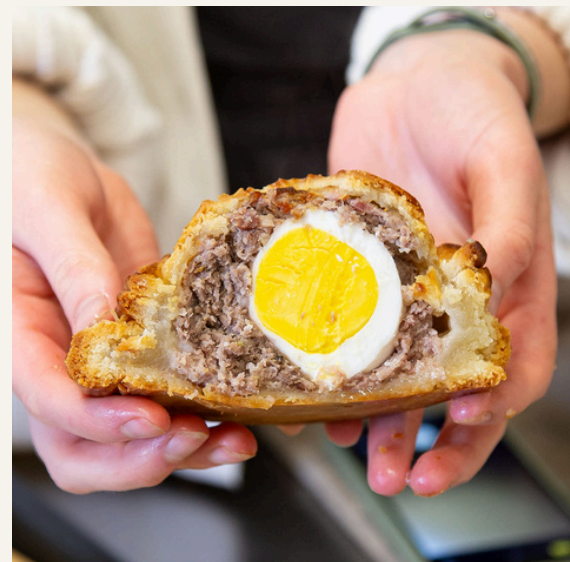
It has been a privilege to serve as Chair and to witness the impact of The School first-hand. I step down with confidence in its future and with genuine excitement about what the next Chair can help it become.

For the right individual, this is a rare chance to lead an organisation with real purpose, at a time when that purpose has never been more relevant. If you are motivated by impact, bring sound judgement and strategic perspective, and are energised by the opportunity to make a lasting difference, I would strongly encourage you to consider this role.

Warm wishes,

Nick Hatton

CHAIR OF TRUSTEES



FOREWARD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DEAR FUTURE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

The School of Artisan Food exists to equip people with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to engage confidently with food: as makers, professionals, educators or enthusiasts. Our work is deliberately hands-on and grounded in practice, because this is what builds competence, confidence and agency.

We teach artisan food skills that demand attention, judgement and care. Making food in this way is not nostalgic. It is technical and deeply relevant to the challenges facing our food system today. Alongside this we work to ensure food education is treated as a serious, curriculum-embedded discipline. Meaningful food education empowers young people to be taught not just to cook, but to understand how food is produced, marketed and consumed, and how their choices affect health, livelihoods and the environment.

Strong governance, strategic clarity and stewardship of purpose guide us in our mission. Our Board has benefitted from strong, committed and loyal stewardship from outgoing Chair, Nick Hatton, for five years during which time The School has weathered challenges, embraced opportunities and entered a new and exciting phase. We are so grateful to Nick for his support, insight and commitment. He steps down from the post leaving a legacy to be proud of and as a lifelong friend of The School. If you are motivated by education that equips people to think, act and lead with confidence, and by organisations that blend practical excellence with public impact, I would welcome the opportunity to talk with you further about the role of Chair of Trustees.

Warm regards,

Jenny Paxman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



ABOUT US

Over 15 years of artisan excellence

Founded at the heart of The Welbeck Estate, The School of Artisan Food is a unique registered charity dedicated to hands-on food education at every level - from curious enthusiasts to the professionals of tomorrow. The School is internationally celebrated for outstanding food education, from baking and cheesemaking to butchery, charcuterie and sustainable food production.

15+

Years delivering artisan food education

3

Strategic pillars connecting

Food Experiences

Community Impact

Higher Education

150+

Short courses, workshops & Bespoke activities per year



WHY WE EXIST

Vision, Mission, Purpose

We work across education, skills training and policy to ensure food education is meaningful, equitable and relevant.

Our work includes:

- Professional artisan food training and qualifications
- Short courses and professional development
- School-based food education, through our Best Food Forward Programme
- National research and advocacy influencing food education policy

VISION

A world where food education improves people's quality of life, fosters stronger communities, and builds a more sustainable food system.

MISSION

Through immersive, hands-on food experiences, we celebrate the origins of food and the preservation of artisan techniques, supporting individuals and communities to connect, grow and thrive.

PURPOSE

To provide inclusive food learning opportunities that are transformative for people, communities and culture.



WHAT DRIVES US

Our Values

WE

*connect
through food*

WE TREAT PEOPLE WITH

respect

WE LEAD WITH

authenticity

WE INSPIRE

learning

WE DRIVE

*meaningful
impact*

WE BELIEVE IN

quality



Our Three Strategic Pillars

Everything we do flows across three interconnected pillars - each one supporting the others.



FOOD EXPERIENCES

Hands-on, skills-based learning for enthusiasts and professionals. Short courses, day workshops and immersive programmes rooted in making and provenance.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Authentic, transformational experiences for third-sector partners. Our Best Food Forward programme delivers food education impact across diverse communities.



HIGHER EDUCATION

We welcome students from all over the world seeking formal qualifications in artisan food as professionals and entrepreneurs of the future



Over the next three years we will

1 *Engage with Communities to Expand Our Charitable Impact*

Since 2022, we have focused on engaging and supporting diverse communities through food education. Our flagship Best Food Forward programme supports secondary schools to improve food education, and we will continue to extend its reach.

2 *Advocate for Food Education Transformation*

Through our [Food Education Mapping Project \(FEMP\)](#) and [Hungry for Change](#), we have built a respected evidence base demonstrating the urgent need for stronger, more consistent food education. We will continue to champion national action so that every child can 'Learn it, See it, Live it'.

3 *Elevate and Evolve The School of Artisan Food Learning Experience*

Our short courses and professional development offer are highly regarded. We will innovate, grow into new markets and respond to food systems challenges whilst protecting heritage techniques.

4 *Equip Future Artisan Professionals for Success*

We will strengthen and extend our formal qualifications, ensuring more learners gain the skills, knowledge and commercial understanding required for them to thrive in sustainable artisan food careers.



AN EXCITING TIME FOR THE SCHOOL OF ARTISAN FOOD

This is a pivotal and energising moment to assume leadership of the Board of The School of Artisan Food. We have a solid foundation and clear direction from which the organisation can grow. A new Chair will play a central role in building on this momentum. We are looking for the ideal candidate to help us move forward with confidence, curiosity and good humour, working closely with the Board and executive team to ensure The School continues to thrive and broaden its reach and impact.

WHAT YOU'LL BE PART OF

- A distinctive educational charity with a global reputation
- A community of makers, bakers, growers and educators
- A Board committed to thoughtful stewardship and collaborative working
- A School with the resilience to weather the collective storm of COVID, economic downturn and more, and now firmly on the front foot

WHAT WE OFFER

- The chance to lead a respected and values-driven organisation
- A meaningful role with real impact on the future of artisan food education
- A supportive Board and engaged executive team
- A setting that is as beautiful as it is inspiring



ABOUT YOU

Role Description

To express interest in the role or request an informal conversation, please contact Jenny Paxman, CEO by email: jenny.paxman@schoolofartisanfood.org or tel: 01909 498960.

LOCATION

The School of Artisan Food, Welbeck, Nottinghamshire (Board meetings primarily in person, with regular virtual meetings)

TIME COMMITMENT

Approximately 2-3 days per month including:

- 5-6 Board meetings per year
- Occasional committee or working group meetings
- Regular one-to-one meetings with the CEO
- Annual events and/ or trustee development activities

SALARY

This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses may be claimed.

PURPOSE

The Chair provides inclusive, values-led leadership to the Board of Trustees, ensuring The School of Artisan Food is well governed, financially resilient and focused on delivering its charitable mission.

Working in close partnership with the Chief Executive, the Chair supports effective decision making, constructive challenge and a strong organisational culture rooted in integrity, collaboration and ambition. The Chair plays a pivotal role in stewarding The School through its next phase of growth and extending its impact in artisan food education and policy.



Role Description

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Leadership and Governance

- Provide clear and effective leadership to the Board, fostering a culture of openness, trust and constructive challenge.
- Ensure the Board operates effectively and in line with its legal duties, Charity Commission guidance and The School's governing documents.
- Lead the Board in guiding strategic direction, ensuring The School's mission, values and long term objectives remain central to decision making.
- Ensure appropriate oversight of risk, financial sustainability, safeguarding and organisational performance.

Chairing and Board Effectiveness

- Chair Board meetings, ensuring meetings are purposeful, inclusive and well managed.
- Support trustee development, succession planning and the effective induction of new trustees.
- Ensure regular and robust review of Board performance, including reflection on the Chair's own effectiveness.

Relationship with the Chief Executive

- Establish a strong and supportive working relationship with the CEO, based on trust and clarity of roles.
- Provide guidance and appropriate challenge, respecting the CEO's operational leadership and accountability.
- Lead the performance development review of the CEO.

Representation and External Engagement

- Act as an ambassador for The School of Artisan Food.
 - Support The School's profile and reputation, strengthening confidence among funders, partners and the wider sector.
 - Where appropriate, assist with strategic relationships, advocacy or high level fundraising conversations aligned with The School's mission.
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Role Description

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- A strong commitment to the mission, values and charitable purpose of The School of Artisan Food.
- Senior level leadership experience, with the confidence and credibility to Chair a Board or equivalent group.
- A sound understanding of good governance.
- The ability to support, challenge and inspire in equal measure.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen well and build consensus.
- Sound judgement, integrity and a commitment to acting in the best interests of the charity at all times.

Desirable

- Previous experience as a Chair or trustee within the charity or voluntary sector.
 - Experience of the challenges associated with organisational growth and strategic change, and a track record of maintaining the financial health of an organisation.
 - A genuine interest in food, artisan production and/ or education.
 - Experience of supporting fundraising, partnerships, advocacy or external engagement.
 - Specific expertise in one of the following areas:
 - Legal, including charity law/ governance
 - Digital, data and technology
 - HR and organisational development
 - Impact measurement/ evaluation
 - Fundraising
 - Finance
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