

SWAP'ra

NEW TRUSTEE REQUIRED



SWAP'ra (Supporting Women and Parents in Opera) is looking to recruit a new trustee to our board to help us deliver our mission in 2021 and beyond. In line with Charity Commission rules, this position is not paid. You don't need to have been a trustee before; we just want you to be passionate about making the opera industry more equitable for women and parents, creating and encouraging opportunities for women (including trans and non-binary people) and overcoming gender bias (conscious or unconscious).

- If you are interested, we want to hear from you. Please send us a CV (2 pages maximum) and a cover letter of no more than one page, or a video/audio response of no longer than 5 minutes, by midday on Monday 7 June.
- There is more information about the role and the organisation below, but if you'd like to discuss anything before making a formal application, please get in touch with Catrin at admin@swap-ra.org, and we can arrange this.

As an organisation that advocates for gender equality, we are strongly committed to inclusion and know that diversity of thought and experience brings richness and depth to our work. This role is open to everyone, regardless of gender identity and social, cultural and/or professional background. We are particularly keen to encourage applications from people whose voices are missing from the dominant discourse in the opera and classical music industries including, but not limited to, D/deaf and/or disabled people and people from black, Asian, and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

A written version of this job description is available in small print, large print, text only, and audio only. If you need it in any other format, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Catrin via admin@swap-ra.org.

If this role isn't right for you but you know someone who might be interested, please share this information with them and your wider networks.

A brief overview:

- Our trustees are Charity Trustees of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (charity registration 1185454)
- You can learn more about the [legal role of a trustee here](#)
- We will provide induction and support for new trustees
- We meet quarterly and do this on-line using Zoom at the moment. We will, when possible, meet face-to-face in central London but will continue to include online attendance for anyone unable to get to the London meetings so you do not need to live in the southeast to apply
- We do want to hear from everyone who is interested and has something to offer. There are however some skills and experience that would be particularly helpful:
 - Finance, charity governance, strategy, policy, organisational change and development, and/or fundraising.
- We expect you to have an interest in opera but it is not essential that you are already involved in the industry.

With a growing programme of projects, SWAP'ra is also looking to expand its core team. All team members work ad hoc hours around other professional and personal commitments. Currently the team works pro bono but we aim to change this over time as the charity grows. If you are interested in actively contributing to the day to day running of the organisation, please indicate this in your application.

WHO WE ARE



SWAP'ra is a group of artists who have come together to build a supportive community to effect positive change for women and parents in opera. The ultimate aim is to foster an environment in which women and parents are enabled to thrive professionally; balancing a career and family/parenting commitments is actively supported by companies; and a female CEO, Music Director, Artistic Director, Conductor, Composer or Librettist is no longer noteworthy.

We aim to be a voice for women (including trans and non-binary people) and parents (of all genders) in opera by:

- Celebrating professional achievements in an industry where women are underrepresented in so many areas;
- Advocating for working conditions that better accommodate family and caring commitments;
- Challenging preconceptions to improve attitudes towards women and parents in the arts;
- Providing a friendly and non-judgmental community that offers peer support together with a forum to explore practical issues;
- Developing a platform for performance and publicity;
- Responding to the impact and implications of Covid 19 both in the short and longer term especially in the context of the ongoing challenges for women and parents in opera.

SWAP'ra operates in three main areas of activity. Our achievements over the last three years include the following:

Advocacy & Research:

- A round table discussion with major opera companies in 2018; a second round table discussion for opera companies in 2020, co-hosted with our Strategic Partner PiPA (Parents and Carers in Performing Arts); and ongoing discussions with the industry about best practice
- Speaking engagements focused on gender equality and family-friendly working practices at venues including Royal Opera House, Welsh National Opera, Southbank Centre, BBC Radio 3, Investec Wealth & Investment Management, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and the Royal College of Music

- Data collection demonstrating the gender breakdown of senior creative roles in the major UK opera houses

Mentoring & Peer Support:

- **SWAP'ra Café** has attracted a loyal following and provides a space (initially live but recently virtual) where parents and carers can ask for and share practical advice while also benefiting from peer support. This has been especially valuable at a time when the careers of so many have been devastated by the ongoing restrictions
- **SWAP'ra Makes Space** is a discipline-specific network for women in traditionally male-dominated areas of the industry. Sessions have so far focused on women in percussion, brass, and stage management.
- **The SWAP'ra Emergency Fund** provided much needed financial support to 11 women severely affected by job losses caused by the Covid restrictions in 2020
- A series of inspirational **Blogs and Interviews** on the website <https://www.swap-ra.org/blog> and <https://www.swap-ra.org/interviews>

A Platform for Performance:

- SWAP'ra launched with a **Gala at Opera Holland Park** in 2018 showcasing the talents, both on and off-stage, of 150 women including directors, instrumentalists, conductors, singers, stage managers, composers, librettists and project managers.
- Forgotten Voices was an online festival celebrating, highlighting, and making accessible the work of the many women composers of the past during the week of International Women's Day 2021. The festival launched with a live streamed concert from the RWCMD.

Various other projects are in development, and 2021 will be a year of significant expansion to SWAP'ra's output. We are looking for a trustee who can offer support and guidance over this period of growth.