

DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT PACK



NATIONAL
MARITIME
MUSEUM
CORNWALL

WELCOME

Thank you for taking the time to consider the opportunity of joining the National Maritime Museum Cornwall (NMMC) as our next Director.

Richard Doughty, our previous Director, retired from this post at the end of June 2026, after leading the Museum for nearly 12 years.

The Museum opened in 2003 and has prospered for nearly 25 years. We are located on the aptly named Discovery Quay in Falmouth, Cornwall and beside the third largest natural deep-water harbour in the world. The building was custom designed and constructed on land which was once covered in boat builders' sheds.

NMMC is an accredited, independent, multi-award-winning museum and charity, showcasing the historical, current and future role of the sea in shaping Cornish, national and international culture. We care for a wide variety of objects, boats, pictures and archival material relating to the maritime heritage of Cornwall and beyond. We also care for the national small boat collection, which currently comprises 152 boats of national and international significance.

The Museum has 15 galleries over five floors, exhibitions which explore the overwhelming influence of the sea on local, national and global history and culture.

We are specialists in maritime heritage, particularly that of small boats, supported by the UK's foremost small craft collection. Our Museum boat workshops, one in the Museum and another at a local off-site location, allow us to conserve historic boats and undertake build projects, supporting the disappearing craft of traditional wooden boatbuilding.

We work hard to mount national-quality thought provoking and culturally relevant exhibitions built on cross-sectoral collaboration, rigorous academic research and a commitment to bring world-class artefacts to Cornwall.

We are proud of our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters, who work together to deliver an engaging and welcoming visitor experience for our visitors.

Like nearly all other museums, we are not without challenges; mainly financial, funding and rising operational costs.

We are now looking for an inspirational, commercial and energetic Director to lead the next phase of development of the Museum, ensuring that it fulfils its cultural and educational objectives and has a long-term sustainable business model.

This recruitment pack provides information about the role, the responsibilities and requirements of the position, and details on how to apply. We hope it will give you a good understanding of this exciting opportunity.

We look forward to hearing from you and learning more about what you could bring to this role.



GOVERNANCE

National Maritime Museum Cornwall Trust is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status (Charity Number 1067884). The Board currently consists of twelve Trustees: <https://nmmc.co.uk/about/trustees/>

BUSINESS PLAN

The latest business plan covering the period 2024-2029 includes the following:

Our Mission is to be a place where people come to enrich their understanding of the sea and Cornwall.

Our Vision is to be a nationally significant museum in Cornwall.

We Aim to be a nationally recognised and locally valued museum, offering an enjoyable and educational visitor experience, celebrating Cornwall's maritime links and traditions, and contributing to its creative economy.

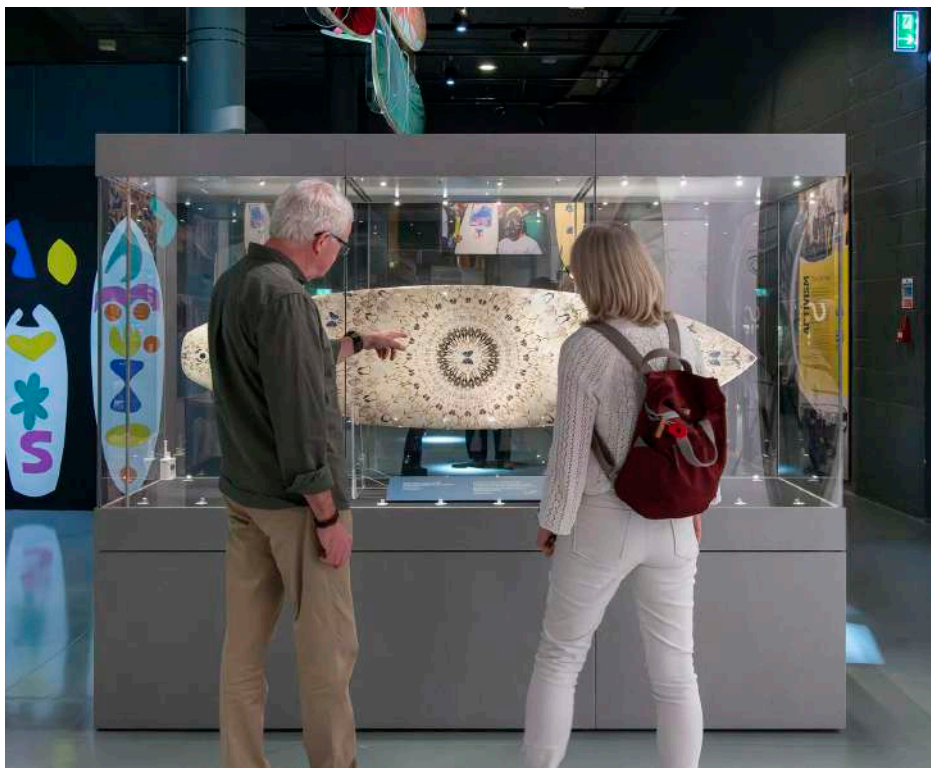
Our Objectives

- To ensure financial sustainability over the next three years (2025-2028).
- To enhance standards for museum accreditation and demonstrate best practice.
- To enhance the quality and safety of the Museum's infrastructure, collections, and assets.
- To be an environmentally sustainable organisation.
- To maintain and develop an excellent workforce, and workplace.
- To improve the quality of the visitor experience.
- To enhance our long-term reputation as a socially relevant and culturally ambitious Museum.
- To enhance our local/national engagement with support for the Museum.
- To promote and manage exhibitions/events successfully and safely.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

Our current major temporary exhibition, *SURF!*, which celebrates 100 years of wave riding in Cornwall, runs until January 2027.

This will be replaced by *Smugglers: Cornwall's Outlaw Coast*, opening in March 2027. Focusing on Cornwall from the mid-18th into the 19th century, the exhibition will explore how the illicit trade in heavily taxed goods, including gin, rum, brandy, tea, and tobacco, connected coastal communities to international trading networks. Developed with a community advisory group and supported by a series of outreach events in local pubs, the exhibition will bring together historical research, personal stories, immersive settings, and hands-on interpretation. It will also explore the realities behind the romantic myths and their continuing influence on Cornwall's identity.



FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Our award-winning learning programme is the largest and most varied of its kind in Cornwall. We offer school groups an unforgettable experience in the Museum's inspirational spaces. The Learning Team have recently been awarded their fourth successive Sandford Award for Excellence in Heritage Education, a nationally recognised award and a 'kite mark' for high-quality education provision.

FAMILY LEARNING AND CROSS ARTS

The Museum delivers 118 days of free family learning activities every year. From fun and educational live theatre shows to craft workshops and Museum trails. We have a developing programme of cross arts events and activities that enhance our exhibitions and engage with Cornwall's thriving cultural scene.

COMMERCIAL

The shop covers some 150m² and our budgeted turnover for 2026/27 is estimated to be £275,000. It is open to both Museum visitors and the general public and contains an eclectic mixture of gifts and nautical paraphernalia.

The Waterside Café has around 90 covers and our budgeted turnover for 2026/27 is estimated to be £155,000. We serve a selection of quality tea, coffee and cakes plus a simple menu of hot and cold snacks.

Both commercial operations are dependent on visitor numbers, which are highly seasonal. Visitor numbers also vary greatly depending on weather, so staffing needs to be flexible which can be a challenge.

We have a number of Museum spaces which can be hired for corporate and private events, which accommodate between 10 to 200+ guests.

THE BARTLETT MARITIME RESEARCH CENTRE AND LIBRARY

The Museum is also home to this wonderful resource of books, archives and records on maritime matters. It houses a team of volunteers who answer enquiries for members of the public and who work on a range of research projects.



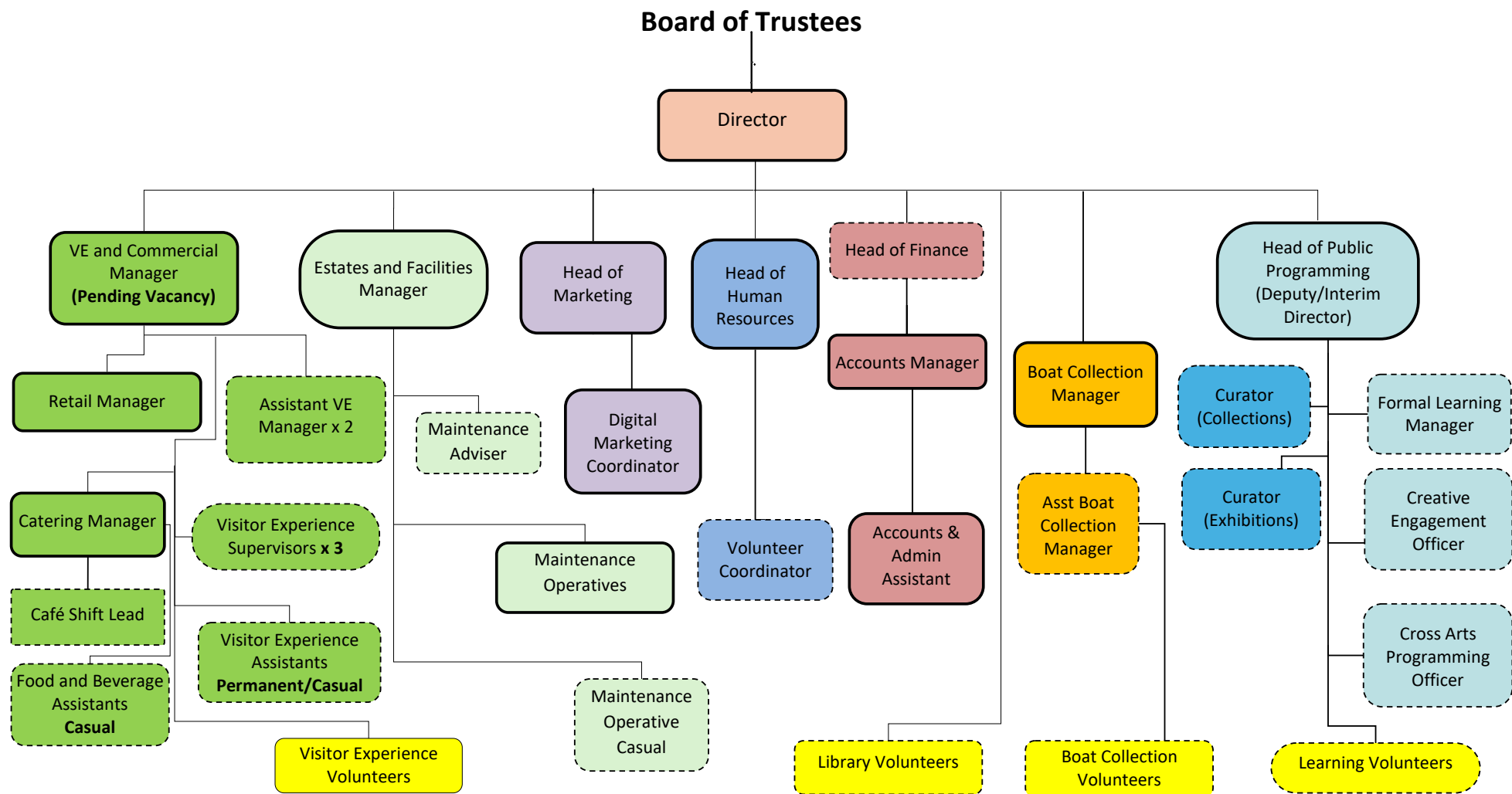
FACTS AND FIGURES

Our targeted budgeted annual visitor numbers are 100,000 and our annual cost base is just over £2m.

We currently employ 49 people inclusive of retail and catering; our organisation chart is contained in this pack.

Last year, our 150 volunteers provided an average of 22,000 hours supporting the staff team. We are extremely grateful for the support of our volunteer team whose time and effort contribute so much to the Museum. In 2024, we were delighted that our volunteer team were nominated for a King's Award for Voluntary Service.







JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title	Director
Reporting to	Chair and Board of Trustees
Responsible for	Senior Leadership Team; staff and volunteers
Hours	35 hours per week, full-time

Job Purpose

The Director provides strategic and inspirational leadership to ensure the Museum fulfils its charitable purpose, delivers an outstanding experience for visitors and maintains a sustainable future.

The Director is responsible for developing the strategic direction of the Museum, in conjunction with, and approval from, the Board of Trustees, while also being responsible for the effective delivery of the strategy, achieved through clear leadership across all areas; collections, exhibitions, learning, visitor experience, commercial activity, fundraising, finance, marketing, estates, people and volunteer management, ensuring that all areas work together effectively.

The postholder is responsible for the overall management, development and performance of the Museum providing regular monitoring and reporting of progress to the Trustees against the identified strategy and agreed targets.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Planning

- Create and deliver, along with the Trustees and staff, a strategic long-term sustainable plan that delivers the Museum's mission and vision.
- Work with the Trustees and staff to develop the Museum's medium and long term strategic plans, which consider the Museum's collection, exhibitions, education programme, commercial activities, fundraising, and marketing initiatives.
- Develop and implement the Museum's business plans and organisational priorities.
- Lead organisational change and development where required.

Policy and Governance

- Ensure the Museum operates in accordance with its charitable objectives, governing documents and relevant legislation.
- Ensure appropriate policies, procedures and systems are in place and regularly reviewed.
- Advise the Trustees on the development and implementation of policy and planning for the Museum.
- Advise the Trustees on the progress against objectives on a regular basis.
- Work closely with the Board of Trustees, providing clear, timely and accurate information to support effective governance and decision-making.

People, Culture and Volunteers

- Provide strong, visible and inclusive leadership across the Museum to employees and volunteers, recognising the significant contribution made by volunteers.
- Develop and establish clear objectives, priorities and performance expectations.
- Ensure the effective recruitment, management, development and

training of Museum staff and volunteers is carried out.

- Ensure appropriate employment, equality, safeguarding and people-management practices are maintained.
- Promote a positive, inclusive and collaborative organisational culture that values staff, volunteers, visitors and communities.

Financial Management and Sustainability

- Overall responsibility for the financial management of the Museum, ensuring that the Museum is financially viable and that its budget is managed responsibly and transparently.
- Working with the Head of Finance and Trustees, develop the annual budget, monitor revenue streams and ensure the Museum's expenses are in line with its revenue.
- Ensure effective financial controls and appropriate use of charitable funds.

Fundraising and External Relationships

- Develop and lead the Museum's fundraising strategy, working with Trustees, staff and external partners to secure funding.
- Develop and maintain relationships with trusts, foundations, statutory funders, sponsors, donors and other supporters.
- Identify funding opportunities for grants, partnerships, private donations, corporate sponsorship and fundraising events.

Public Relations and Museum Representation

- Act as a key spokesperson and advocate for the Museum, representing it at local, regional and national level, promoting the Museum as an important cultural, educational and community asset.
- Promote and maintain effective relationships with all stakeholders, community groups, cultural partners and other relevant organisations, that impact on the Museum and its operation.
- Develop existing and new networks locally and nationally to increase the Museum's profile and income.



Visitor Experience and Commercial Operations

- Ensure that all visitor, education activities and operational services achieve the highest standards consistent with the Museum's role as a leading visitor attraction within Cornwall.
- Oversee and develop the commercial activities of the Museum to enhance and maximise income revenue through existing retail, catering, events and other commercial activities.

Collections, Exhibitions and Public Programme

- Provide strategic oversight of the Museum's collections and their care, interpretation and development.
- Ensure that the Museum collection policies are established, kept up to date and effectively implemented.
- Develop an active and appealing exhibitions programme suited to visitors and the role of the Museum.
- Encourage innovative and accessible approaches to interpretation and engagement.

Risk, Compliance and Safeguarding

- Maintain effective organisational risk management and ensure significant risks are identified, monitored and appropriately managed.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation, regulatory requirements and sector standards.
- Ensure appropriate insurance, business continuity and emergency procedures are maintained.
- Promote a culture in which health and safety, safeguarding and risk management are everyone's responsibility.

Estates, Facilities, Building and Health and Safety

- Provide strategic oversight of the Museum's buildings, estate and facilities.
- Manage the estate ensuring it is kept in good repair and that the assets are used effectively.
- Oversee significant capital projects, building improvements and maintenance programmes as appropriate.
- Ensure the Museum's buildings and facilities support the long-term sustainability of the organisation and its collections.

THE PERSON SUMMARY

The Board of Trustees wish to appoint an inspirational, commercial and energetic Director to continue to build on the success and acclaim the Museum has achieved during the last twenty-five years: an individual who can lead the Museum into a sustainable future, creating opportunities for further developing our activities.

ESSENTIAL

Experience

- Experience and proven strategic and operational leadership within a museum, heritage environment, or similar visitor experience in a commercial environment, ensuring consistently high standards of visitor experience and operational performance
- Strong commercial and financial acumen, evidenced by achieving revenue targets, managing complex budgets and balancing conflicting priorities
- Evidence of driving up overall performance and successful financial management
- Experience of developing and delivering organisational strategy
- Experience of leading and developing staff and volunteers
- Experience of working effectively with a Board of Trustees, optimising their engagement with the Museum in an appropriate way
- Experience and understanding of fundraising and income generation within a charitable or cultural environment
- Experience of partnership development and stakeholder engagement
- Experience of managing organisational change
- Proven experience ensuring compliance, robust internal controls and effective health and safety management

Knowledge and Understanding

- Strong understanding of the role and responsibilities of museums and other charitable heritage organisations
- Knowledge of museum collections, public engagement and the visitor experience
- Understanding of good governance and accountability
- Understanding of financial management, risk management and compliance
- Awareness of current issues and challenges facing the museum and heritage sector

Skills and Attributes

- High-level communication and external representation, demonstrated through clear, effective communication and the ability to influence, engage and represent the organisation credibly at senior level
- Ability to enhance the reputation of the Museum, effective ambassadorial skills and the ability to act as an advocate for the Museum
- Creative problem solving and proactive initiative to drive new commercial opportunities and improvements
- Confident decision-making under pressure
- Inspirational and collaborative leadership style; good interpersonal and people management skills
- Strong strategic thinking and commercial awareness
- Ability to make sound decisions and manage complex situations
- Commitment to equality, diversity, accessibility and inclusion
- Interest in maritime activities



DESIRABLE

- Educated to degree level ideally with a relevant professional qualification
- Experience of working within an independent museum charity
- Knowledge of Arts Council England accreditation and museum sector standards
- Experience of commercial trading within a charitable organisation
- Experience of successful implementation of capital or major development projects
- Experience of securing significant grant or philanthropic funding
- Experience of working with local, regional or national cultural partners

General

The Director will be expected to undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the seniority and responsibilities of the role and to promote the Museum's charitable objectives at all times.

The postholder will be required to work flexibly, including occasional evenings, weekends and public holidays where necessary to support Museum events, meetings and organisational activities.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

- Circa £75,000 depending on skills and experience
- 25 days holiday plus eight bank holidays
- Pension contribution equal to 8% of your annual salary
- Death in service benefit of 2 x your annual salary
- 25% discount in our shop and Waterside Cafe

APPLICATION AND INTERVIEW PROCESS

To apply, please submit a completed application form, which should be supported by a covering letter of no more than two sides of A4. Your cover letter should outline your motivations for applying, and highlight how your skills, knowledge and experience meet the requirements of our new Director.

To be sent to lindafrust@nmmc.co.uk or post to Linda Frost, Head of Human Resources, National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Discovery Quay, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 3QY

Closing date: Monday, 2 November 2026 at 9.00am

Initial online interviews will be arranged between: Monday, 30 November - Friday, 11 December 2026

Final interviews will take place at the Museum on: Tuesday, 15 December and Wednesday, 16 December 2026

We can make reasonable adjustments to our interview process, according to your needs. If you are shortlisted for interview, we will explain what the interview process will involve in advance and check with you if we need to make any adjustments so that you can interview fairly and comfortably.

Equal Opportunities

National Maritime Museum Cornwall is an Equal Opportunities employer and is committed to creating a culture where individual differences are valued and respected.

