

# Trust Chair Candidate Pack



LD&DESIGN

# About LDA Design

LDA Design is here to make a difference. We are an independent consultancy of landscape architects, planners and urban designers with a single mission: to make great places and shape the world around us for the better. Our origins lie in landscape architecture. Landscape, with its ability to connect people and place, is the principal tool by which we achieve our purpose.

Our 160-strong team operates from eight offices in England and Scotland. We combine six key services – landscape architecture, masterplanning, planning, EIA, environmental planning and biodiversity – to unlock the potential of place. We operate a ‘one business’ culture to foster creativity and cross-pollination between the studios, and maximise the strength, agility, and resilience of the business.

We see employee ownership as the ultimate expression of our faith in each other and our ability to achieve as a creative collective. We are proud to be taking the steps to be co-owned by the people who work here.

The original meaning of the word landscape is to create a place where people belong. Defined like this, landscape is highly purposeful. It reveals how places can and should be planned and designed, and how lives can be improved.

The power of landscape to blaze new trails has never been stronger. It can address climate breakdown and the loss of nature, bring together fragmented communities, and maximise the social benefits from development and new infrastructure.

Whether our project is a park, a port, high-speed rail or a new urban district, LDA Design focuses on the needs and hopes of the people affected. Our focus on social purpose is the insight that directs all of our work. We set out to create better connected, healthier and happier places where lives can easily overlap.

We have a strong sense of purpose and we seek out clients who share this purpose and our values. We bring a clear understanding of development processes and how to manage delivery, and treat each commission as an exercise in trust. We aim to find solutions for our clients that are net positive, enhancing nature and supporting better health and wellbeing, and catalysing change towards a more equitable and sustainable future.



# Our values

## People

We nurture a great collaborative team who love to work here and deliver for our clients as trusted partners. We ensure that people are a key driver in our projects, and we are alert to the opportunities to improve social impacts.

## Landscape

We believe passionately in landscape as a fundamental building block: it is what connects people and place. We know that the climate crisis demands immediate action and systemic change. The environment, sustainable development and zero carbon solutions are central to our business.



## Innovation and ideas

We see what needs to change in the world, and we want to be the agents of that change, through creativity, innovation and ideas.

## Spirit

We are ambitious about what we want to achieve. Daily life at LDA Design is spirited and energetic.

## Profit with purpose

We need to be a resilient business. Profit will always be purposeful: it means we can do more.

# A brief history

LDA Design was among the first generation of landscape professionals to establish the power of landscape to unlock potential at scale. We were founded in 1979, completing projects for the New Town development corporations.

Our name Landscape Design Associates showed deliberate intent – to harness the value of everyone in the practice, and give them voice. The practice was never to be about individual egos, but the brilliance of the collective.

The business has grown over four decades through being alert and responsive to new opportunities. This means our focus has shifted: at different times, ecology, landscape evaluation, EIA or development planning have come to the fore. LDA Design was among the first consultancies to apply the ecological principles of landscape design in the UK. In the early noughties, we made a significant contribution to the renaissance in parks and open spaces funded by the Lottery.

LDA Design led the parklands and public realm design for the London 2012 Olympic Park. This was a defining moment for the landscape profession – but also for the business, kick-starting an international programme of work, beginning with Gorky Park in Moscow. We recently won the competition to create one of world's biggest urban forest parks in Chengdu City, China.

Landscape informs our delivery of development plans for higher education in Cambridge and Oxford, and UCL East in Stratford, London. It governs our work for future renewable energy, like the proposed Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon; and our approach to new infrastructure such as HS2. For flood defence schemes, like Littlehampton in Sussex, it means making places lovely as well as safe and resilient.

One of the biggest challenges ahead is how we make urban living healthier, better equipped to mitigate the impacts from global warming, and more equitable. For Waterbeach New Town East in Cambridgeshire, our masterplan prioritises car-free residential streets on a scale not yet seen in the UK. In Russia's Kaliningrad, we are creating a new piece of city with water at its heart; a place where living a healthy, more active lifestyle is made easy.

In Edinburgh, our vision for historic George Street will make it safer and more enjoyable for cyclists and pedestrians. And in London, groundbreaking work with LB Camden and Westminster City Council will transform key parts of the capital. For StrandAldwych this means turning a renowned traffic bottleneck into a welcoming new piece of public realm.

# Strategic Plan

We are a people-first organisation. Our future will be shaped by everyone here through our Employee Ownership Trust, which will reinforce the collaborative culture that is central to us.

Employee ownership means we can all be equally invested in the business. A supportive and stretching environment is required, which reflects our values and rewards our people properly. We are coaching our senior leadership and management to adopt best practice in terms of openness, transparency and accountability. In moving company direction from a Board of ten owners to a Strategic Leadership Team, we are introducing a balance between experience of running the business and fresh thinking. Employees are already represented on leadership teams and are consulted on a wide range of business challenges and issues.

We are continuing to grow our business at pace and have accessed new geographical markets and new pools of talent through launching studios in the fast growth centres of Bristol, Cambridge and Manchester.

We plan to continue to carve out new territories for ourselves and the profession. This means empowering our people to achieve both mastery of their chosen discipline and the skills and confidence of 'landscape polymaths'. Coaching programmes are developing the LDA Design consultant, capable of orchestrating the most significant projects and directing the full range of specialists needed to deliver them.

We are also developing our planning offer, with a context-led design approach which helps to differentiate developments whilst addressing risk and enhancing viability.

Our aim is to be the leading creative business shaping the world for the better. The world needs a transformational approach to the planning and design of places and infrastructure. We plan to expand our circles of influence, to bring about change through strong and effective partnerships. We are creating a re-purposed policy/futures group at the heart of the business to champion thought leadership and to speak authoritatively on issues that matter.

# Trust Chair

## The role

To lead and manage the Trustee Board, which is responsible for ensuring LDA Design acts in the best interests of its beneficiaries, safeguarding the long-term prosperity of the business on which the value of the Trust's shareholding depends.

This involves making sure LDA Design's Strategic Leadership Team holds the guiding principles of the consultancy's Charter as central and foremost in all of its decisions and activities, and that LDA Design operates in accordance with the Trust Deed.

## Responsibilities

- To scrutinise LDA Design's decisions, plans and outcomes to ensure that they are in support of the best long-term, financial and non-financial interests of its employees, fully aligned to the Charter and furthering LDA Design's values. Trustees will be consulted by the Company's directors on all major decisions including annual budget, target setting and business planning; and meet regularly with them to review performance.
- To facilitate constructive relationships between the Trust and LDA Design, in particular its Chair and Managing Director, and ensure that the Trustees and Executive act in partnership.
- To ensure that the Trustee Board delegates sufficient authority to the Chair, the Strategic Leadership Team, the Managing Director and other groups, and monitors and appraises how this delegated authority is used.
- To ensure that the Trustee Board arranges appropriate support and supervision of the Chair and Managing Director and formal appraisal of their performance; determines their remuneration; and oversees succession for these roles as terms conclude, or as required. Authorise the appointment of new members to the Strategic Leadership Team.
- To enable the Trustee Board to make effective decisions, considering the relevant facts and obtaining professional advice as required, and ensuring all members of the Trustee Board can contribute fully. Take any decisions delegated to the Chair, and ensure all the decisions taken are implemented.
- To ensure the efficient conduct of the Trustee Board's meetings and business, working with the Trust administrator to plan the annual cycle of meetings and their agendas.

- To ensure that the Trustee Board arranges periodic reviews of its own performance. This includes assuring the calibre, level of commitment and attendance of all Trustees.
- To ensure new Trustees receive sufficient induction and training to enable them to fulfil their roles, and hold an individual review with each Trustee Board member after they have held office for one year.
- To ensure that the Trustee Board has a succession plan that will secure the diverse range of skills, experience and knowledge needed.
- To ensure that the Trust follows the appropriate governance and good practice and that Trustees act consistently and with integrity, in the best interests of the beneficiaries, behaving in an honourable and reasonable way at all times.
- To represent the Trust as required eg to communicate collective decisions of the Trustee Board at internal events.

## **Skills and qualities**

- Experience of operating at a board level, preferably within a consultancy environment;
- Experience and knowledge of the built environment is desirable;
- Experience of employee ownership or an understanding of the Trust model is desirable;
- Experience of chairing meetings, not necessarily at board level;
- Sharing LDA Design's values and an understanding of our desired leadership behaviours. The Chair should reflect these behaviours to be able to hold LDA's leaders to account;
- A facilitative style, keen and able to seek and hear the views of the entire Board, and pursuing lines of enquiry to enable full understanding of issues;
- Excellent communication skills and clarity of thought, assimilating and presenting information concisely, enabling good decision-making;
- Excellent interpersonal skills in facilitating collegiate relationships that are highly productive for the business. Open to new ideas, questions, challenge and feedback;
- Strong organisational skills combined with flexibility of approach;
- Strong commitment to diversity and inclusion;
- Impartiality, fairness, discretion and the ability to respect the confidences of the Trustee Board and LDA Design.

## Details

- We anticipate the time required for this role will be 11-15 days a year, to include four Trust meetings.
- This is a paid and expensed role. Salary band is £12,000-£15,000, commensurate with experience.
- Location is flexible: Trust meetings will be held in one of our eight studios.

## How to apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of LDA Design. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by 12 noon Monday, 17th February 2020:

- A detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- A covering letter (maximum two sides) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the person specification. Please note that the covering letter is an important part of your application and will be assessed as part of your full application.
- Please provide details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you over the period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.
- Diversity monitoring form - your data will be stored separately from your application and will at no time be connected to you or your application.
- Please send your CV and cover letter to: Ros Hollinghurst,  
ros.h@inclusiveboards.co.uk