spud

Chair Recruitment Pack





Lead the Next Chapter

SPUD is seeking an exceptional individual to become our next Chair of Trustees and help lead one of the South Coast's most innovative and respected arts, architecture and education charities through an exciting period of growth, opportunity and transformation.

Based at spudWORKS in the heart of the New Forest, SPUD has spent more than fifteen years demonstrating how creativity can strengthen communities, improve wellbeing and shape more sustainable futures. Through arts, architecture, education and place-based practice, we create opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect, learn, create and thrive.

Today, SPUD is a thriving and award-winning organisation with a strong reputation for ambitious and impactful work. We provide studios and workshops for a vibrant community of artists and creative enterprises, support emerging talent through our Graduate Launchpad programme, and deliver a year-round programme of exhibitions, residencies, workshops and events.

While creativity sits at the heart of everything we do, our impact reaches far beyond the arts. Through The Living Room, we support people living with dementia, their families and carers.

Our programmes also engage young people experiencing mental health challenges and neurodivergent children and their families, demonstrating the power of creative practice to respond to social and community challenges.

Our internationally recognised New Forest Artist in Residence programme brings together artists from across the UK and beyond to explore the relationship between people, place and the environmental challenges shaping our future.

A Pivotal Moment

SPUD is entering an important new chapter. Building on a strong foundation of creativity, innovation and community impact, we are preparing for a significant phase of organisational development. This includes ambitions to secure National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status with Arts Council England and the potential development of a transformational capital project that could strengthen our long-term sustainability, expand our reach and increase our impact.

The next Chair will play a vital role in helping shape this future.



Why Become Chair of SPUD?

SPUD is entering an exciting and important period in its development. We have grown considerably in recent years – expanding our programmes, partnerships, reach and organisational capacity – and are ready to build on those foundations with confidence and ambition.

As Chair, you will work closely with our Board of Trustees and Executive Director to provide strategic leadership, champion excellent governance and help guide SPUD through its next chapter.

This is much more than chairing meetings. You will be an advocate, ambassador, sounding board and trusted critical friend – helping us make good decisions, build influential relationships and ensure our ambition is matched by strong governance and long-term resilience.

What's involved?

You will lead an engaged Board, including a number of recently appointed Trustees, helping to develop an effective and collaborative Board culture for SPUD's next stage.

The Board meets five times each year, usually for around two hours, with occasional additional meetings or working groups. Meetings may be in person or online, but we are looking for a Chair who will build a genuine relationship with SPUD, our people and our work and be regularly present at spudWORKS in Sway.

The role is expected to require approximately two days per month, including Board meetings and preparation, regular engagement with the Executive Director and representing SPUD externally. There may be periods when additional involvement is helpful.

The Chair is appointed by the Trustees for an initial three-year term.

Key responsibilities

Working collaboratively with Trustees and the Executive Director, the Chair will:

- Lead the Board and ensure it fulfils its governance responsibilities effectively.
- Help shape and oversee SPUD's strategic direction, sustainability and future development.
- Chair Board meetings and ensure Trustees are informed, engaged and able to contribute fully to decision-making.
- Provide appropriate support, challenge and line management to the Executive Director.
- Work with the Treasurer and Executive Director to maintain strong financial oversight and organisational resilience.

- Act as an ambassador and, where appropriate, spokesperson for SPUD.
- Build relationships with funders, strategic partners, supporters and key stakeholders, using networks and influence to open doors to new opportunities.
- Foster strong relationships between Trustees, staff and the wider SPUD community.
- Ensure equity, diversity, inclusion and safeguarding remain embedded in the organisation's governance and work.
- Encourage a culture of good scrutiny, open discussion, sound judgement and collective responsibility.

Who are we looking for?

We are not looking for one particular career background. You may have experience in charity leadership, business, public service, culture, education, architecture or the built environment, community development, philanthropy or another relevant field.

Previous experience as a Chair would be valuable but is not essential. More important is the ability to operate confidently at a strategic level, lead collaboratively, exercise good judgement and develop a strong working relationship with the Executive Director and Board.

We are particularly interested in someone who can bring:

- Senior-level strategic leadership and sound judgement.
- An understanding of good governance and the responsibilities of charity Trustees.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- The confidence to offer constructive challenge alongside encouragement and support.
- The ability to bring people together and make effective use of the skills around the Board table.
- Strong networks and the ability to build influential relationships with partners, funders and supporters.
- Experience of, or strong connections with, the arts, cultural or creative sectors.
- An understanding of, or interest in, charitable, community and place-based work.
- Impartiality, fairness and discretion.
- A genuine commitment to SPUD's purpose and values.

We would particularly welcome someone with connections across Hampshire, the New Forest and the wider South of England, or who is keen to build them. The ability to engage credibly with organisations such as Arts Council England, local authorities, charitable funders, cultural organisations and the New Forest National Park Authority would be valuable.

This is not intended to be a wholly remote role. We want our Chair to get to know SPUD – visiting spudWORKS, meeting staff, artists, participants and partners, and attending key events and meetings. Being an active and visible presence within the organisation is an important part of the role.





Why now?

The next Chair joins SPUD at a significant point in its development: working with an evolving Board, supporting an experienced Executive Director and helping shape ambitious opportunities including potential National Portfolio Organisation status, the growth of our artist residency programme and SPUD's longer-term organisational and capital development.

Our current Chair has helped guide SPUD through an important period of growth and organisational development but, due to a change in personal circumstances is unable to complete her three-year term.

We would like the new Chair to take up the role from January 2027, with an appropriate handover period beforehand.

Over the coming years, we want to deepen our impact in the New Forest while increasing our contribution to cultural and creative practice across the wider region. This will include developing our work with artists and communities, strengthening strategic partnerships, increasing financial resilience and positioning SPUD strongly for future Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) investment.

The next Chair will therefore have the opportunity not simply to oversee an established organisation, but to help shape what SPUD becomes.

Why SPUD?

SPUD has built a distinctive reputation for bringing together arts, architecture, education, environment and community. From our home at spudWORKS in the New Forest, we work with young people, communities, artists and creative professionals, increasingly extending our reach through partnerships and programmes across the wider region.

As Chair, you will have the opportunity to:

- Lead the Board of an ambitious and distinctive charity at a pivotal point in its development.
- Work alongside an experienced Executive Director, committed staff team and evolving Board.
- Help strengthen SPUD's regional profile, partnerships and influence.
- Champion the role of creativity in addressing social, environmental and community challenges.
- Contribute to ambitions including NPO status, residency development and future capital opportunities.
- Help secure SPUD's long-term resilience and sustainability.
- Make a lasting contribution to creativity, communities and place-based practice in the New Forest and beyond.

For someone who believes in the ability of creativity to make a tangible difference to people and places, this is an opportunity to play a significant role in shaping an organisation with strong foundations and considerable potential.

If that ambition excites you, we would be delighted to hear from you.

About spud

Our purpose is: “supporting the wellbeing and ambition of communities through creativity and collaboration in arts, architecture and education.”

SPUD is a charity focused on arts, architecture, and education, committed to creating experiences that foster confidence, support career development, and strengthen communities.

Our approach is collaborative, meaningful, and ambitious. We champion the voices of individuals and underrepresented groups, ensuring they are heard within our communities and partnerships.

Driven by a focus on success, SPUD takes a professional approach to deliver impactful projects.

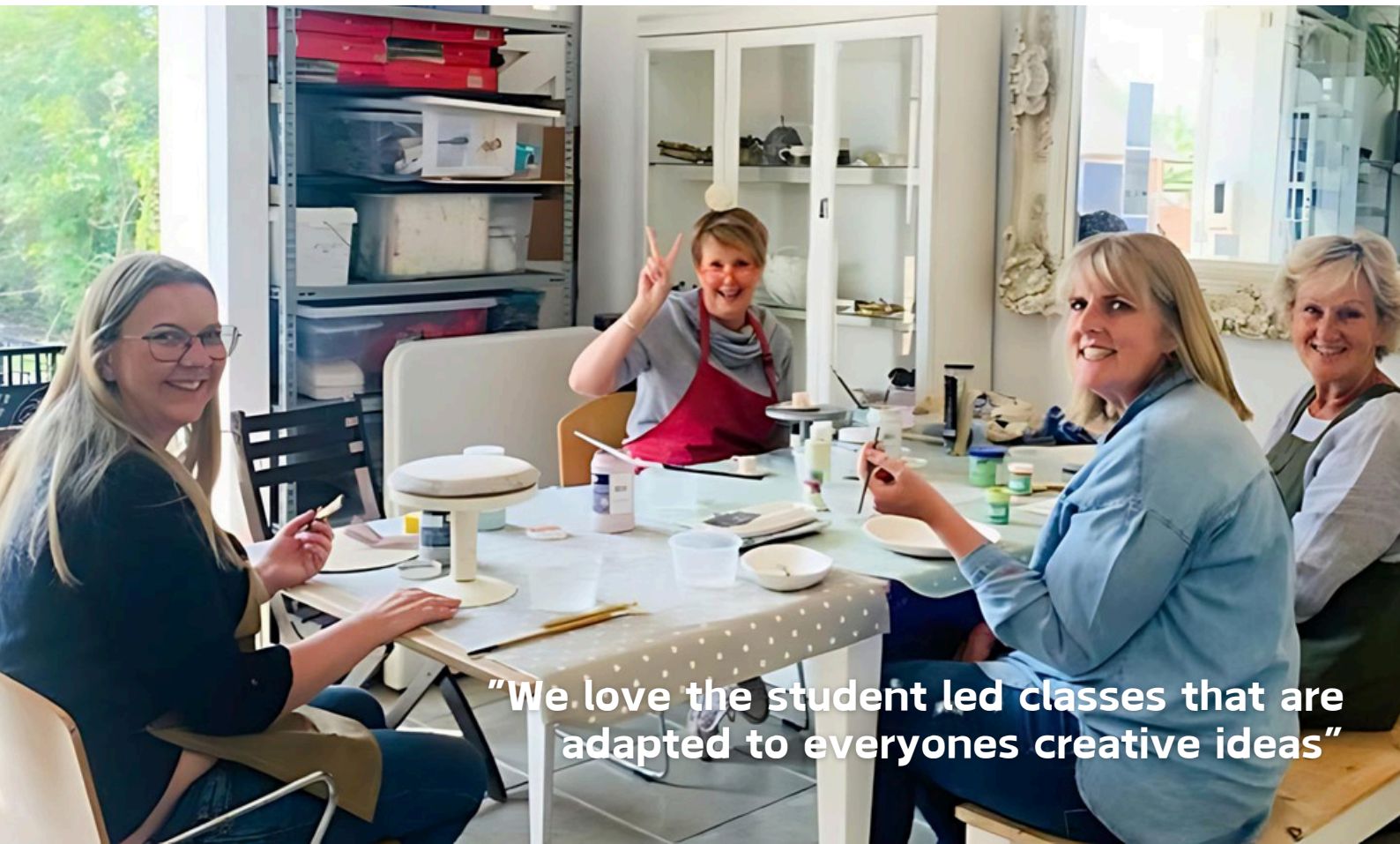
We empower people to create, connect, and share, recognising that even small actions can spark lasting joy and positive change.

We work with people and communities, including:

- Young people looking to be involved in their community through a range of creative opportunities.
- People of all ages through participation in creative activities.
- Artists and other creative professionals through collaboration, professional development and business opportunity.

We work in and around the New Forest as well as regionally, nationally, and internationally.

SPUD was incorporated as a Charity (CIO) on 5th February 2015.





Who are we here for?

Inclusive and diverse audiences through participation in creative activities. Being inspirational and creating joy. In particular:

- **Young people** looking to be involved in their community through a range of creative opportunities.
- **Older People** through participation in creative activities, providing support, friendship, confidence and building community.

Underrepresented Groups giving agency to hidden voices in our community and providing bespoke support.

Artists and Creative Professionals through collaboration, mentorship and professional development and business opportunity. Ensuring creatives feel empowered to take a lead on initiatives.

Partner Organisations promoting collaboration and being an instigator of opportunities.

Community and Place through placemaking, the rural and built environment and public consultation.

Our Team because everyone matters including staff and volunteers.

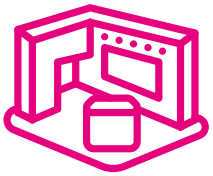
Our Impact in 2025



3950 GALLERY VISITORS



895 WORKSHOPS



15 EXHIBITIONS



5 GRADUATES



4 MAJOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS



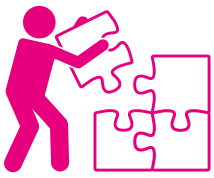
8 COMMUNITY GROUPS



1 AWARD (HANDLEBAR CAFE)



642 EXHIBITION WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



1 BUILD PROJECT (ALLEGRAS AMBITION)



4 WORK EXPERIENCE (1 INTERN)



15 VOLUNTEERS (INCLUDING 10 TRUSTEES)



161 ARTISTS (12 RESIDENCIES)



4880 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



2 CORPORATE SPONSORS



9 MICRO BUSINESSES

Next Steps

Please apply through the SPUD website:

spud.org.uk/trustees-advert

Deadline for applications: 9am on Wednesday 16th December

An informal conversation
We would be very happy to have an informal conversation with prospective candidates before they apply. Please contact Eloise Rose on eloise@spud.org.uk to arrange this.

The selection process
Shortlisted candidates will be invited to meet the recruitment panel to explore their experience, approach to Chair leadership and what they could bring to SPUD's next chapter.

Final candidates will also have the opportunity to visit spudWORKS and meet members of the wider team before the Board makes its appointment.

Interviews: In person in January 2027

Please see below for additional useful information:

- Executive Director's TED Talk: www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfP_tJ-x_HM
- Strategy 2025-2028: www.spud.org.uk/about
- Annual Accounts and Report 2025: www.spud.org.uk/about
- The Charitable Incorporated Organisation governing document: www.spud.org.uk/about

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