

# People's History Museum

## Director

Job Pack  
July 2024

# Note from the Chair of Trustees

Welcome and thank you for taking the time to consider the opportunity of joining the People's History Museum (PHM) as our next Director. I hope that this recruitment pack sets out the exciting nature of the position; our special role as the **national museum of democracy**, the values we hold that flow from our collections and stories and the opportunities, and challenges, that we face.

We are a museum of radical stories, of protest, of activism, of ideas worth fighting for. We tell the story of ordinary people achieving the most extraordinary things for their fellow citizens and communities. From Peterloo to climate change, suffrage to trade union rights, anti-racism and sex discrimination campaigns to LGBTQIA+ rights and encouraging active participation in civic discussions, debates and elections.

Our work and our stories, our aims and objectives, have never been more important. We are very proud to have been shortlisted for accolades including Art Fund's Museum of the Year, Museums Change Lives and most recently as one of the Top 10 Most Family-Friendly Museums in Europe and are delighted that for such a comparatively small museum we punch above our weight regionally, nationally and internationally.

We are hugely fortunate in having a passionate, knowledgeable and committed staff team, an active, engaged and generous Board of Trustees, and our departing Director, Katy Ashton, leaves a great legacy of achievements on which to build.

Like nearly all other museums and parts of the cultural and heritage sector, our museum is not without challenges; principally that of the financial and funding environment. We are looking for an inspirational leader who is not daunted by the challenges but excited about the possibilities and opportunities, and who shares our vision and values.

Having read this pack I hope that you feel as enthusiastic as I do about the possibilities of the role. I look forward to receiving your application.

Bernard Donoghue OBE

Chair, Board of Trustees.

# About the role

People's History Museum has a rare and exciting opportunity to lead the museum as our next Director.

The museum is seeking a skilled senior leader to take the organisation into the future, bringing creativity and dynamism at a time of organisational change. Working with the staff team and trustees you will bring our ambition and values to life with a key focus on organisational resilience and strategic audience development.

As well as delivering the 2024/25 business plan, the new Director will lead the organisation in developing its medium and long-term strategic plans for the future of the museum, as it looks to make the changes needed to navigate a challenging economic climate and fundraising landscape. You will need to be agile and responsive to lead the organisation against the challenging backdrop of the cost-of-living crisis and high energy prices.

We are seeking an inspiring and motivational leader with a proven track record of advocacy, networking and stakeholder engagement, as we look to build our profile in the city region and also nationally and internationally. You will be confident in managing and developing strategic relationships, working to raise the profile of PHM's impact for audiences and communities and securing vital resources to safeguard our future.

A passion for our collections that explore the radical stories of people coming together to champion ideas worth fighting for is vital, alongside a strong commitment to social justice. As we develop plans for a redevelopment of our galleries you will champion content that is bold, brave, challenging and shared with care, compassion and hope for a better future. Your vision will ensure the museum remains and grows as a welcoming organisation, committed to standing in solidarity with people who face persecution and discrimination. You will lead the museum in responding effectively to changing audience expectations, whilst remaining committed to honouring our socially engaged practice and the legacy of recent community engagement, co-curation and partnership working.

The Director is supported by a skilled senior leadership team. You will also work closely with our Chair of Trustees, Bernard Donoghue OBE, the wider Board of Trustees and a committed, talented staff team in an exciting and rewarding leadership role at PHM.

# About People's History Museum

People's History Museum is the national museum of democracy, telling the story of its development in Britain: past, present, and future. Explore the radical stories of people coming together to champion ideas worth fighting for, and be empowered by the past to make a change for the future. We are all together in the fight for a fairer world.

PHM is an independent museum, charitable trust, and company limited by guarantee, with a Board of Trustees, a Trading Company Board, and an Audit and Risk Committee.

PHM has an annual turnover of around £1.5 million, employs a dynamic team of expert staff members, freelance staff and volunteers. PHM is currently funded by Arts Council England (ACE) as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and by Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Culture and Social Impact Fund.

The museum's collection covers wide topics and themes around the fight for rights, equality and justice in the UK. The museum is renowned for holding the largest collection of political and trade union banners in the UK, and also holds thousands of political and grassroots posters, badges and placards, alongside three-dimensional social history objects, fine and decorative art, textile and furniture collections. Key themes within the museum collection include: early radicalism and reform; enfranchisement and suffrage; workers' rights, trade unionism and strikes; migrant rights; disabled people's rights and activism; women's rights; LGBTQIA+ rights; peace and anti-nuclear campaigns; and British politics from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

## Our values

People's History Museum is about creating a fairer world for everyone, and we represent those working to achieve this.

The museum is a welcoming organisation, committed to standing in solidarity with people who face persecution and discrimination. Examples of this include but are not limited to dismantling racism, championing trans inclusion, standing with sanctuary seekers, and embedding the social model of disability.

The collection and stories are curated to show a wide range of authentic narratives. Content is bold, brave, and challenging, but shared with care, compassion and hope for a better future.

The Director plays a crucial role in ensuring we demonstrate and deliver on these commitments:

- Exploring ideas, creativity, voices and actions of the past to empower change for the future
- Promoting empathy and compassion
- Recognising people have different boundaries, experiences, and challenges in their lives
- Acknowledging the impact of power imbalances in our lives today

# Job Description

**Salary:** SCP 40-45 (£48,484 to £53,977)

**Hours:** Full time (35 hours a week) with flexible working and consideration of part time hours

**Annual leave:** 24 days plus bank holidays

**Contract:** Permanent

**Responsible to:** Chair of Trustees

**Responsible for:** Senior Leadership Team

**Location:** Based at People's History Museum with the opportunity for agile working in line with PHM's hybrid working policy

## Key responsibilities

- **Strategic planning and management:**  
To work with the Trustees to develop the museum's medium and long term strategic plans, including commercial, fundraising, gallery redevelopment, capital projects, and delivering long-term financial resilience and sustainability
- **Governance and risk:**  
To ensure strong financial management of the organisation with future planning, risk and compliance.
- **Leadership:**  
To lead the staff team in delivering the business plan, motivating everyone to achieve shared objectives and navigate challenges
- **Advocacy and profile:**  
To manage and develop PHM's strategic relationships; representing PHM externally with stakeholders including Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Arts Council England and Manchester City Council and to raise the profile of PHM and our social impact across the cultural sector, city region and with key stakeholder groups.

## Experience, knowledge and skills

- Significant experience of a senior leadership role in a museum, heritage organisation, charity or similar organisation
- Understanding of financial management and risk management
- Strong track record of advocacy and profile, with particular focus on the Manchester city region
- Ability to make data driven decisions, assessing risk factors and communicating confidently
- Significant experience of applying to, reporting and managing relationships with major funders and strategic stakeholders including independent and governmental funding bodies, politicians, community leaders and corporate contacts
- Proven track record of leading in the development, embedding and delivery of strategy
- Demonstrable experience of developing and delivering against organisational plans and targets
- Experience and skills in change management
- Strong people management skills, able to inspire and lead change and support staff wellbeing
- Experience of charity governance, including reporting to Trustees and engaging trustees in key pieces of work
- Experience of identifying, managing and mitigating strategic risks
- Strong understanding of the challenges and opportunities for cultural organisations in the current financial and political climate
- Confident decision maker
- Proven and demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- A strong track record of values driven social justice leadership in complex environments

# How to apply

Please send your CV and cover letter to [HR@phm.org.uk](mailto:HR@phm.org.uk)

Please outline in your cover letter how your experience, skills and knowledge meet the job description. Your CV and cover letter will be assessed and scored against the job description using the information provided above.

**Deadline for applications:** Wednesday 31 July by 5pm

## **Interviews:**

First interviews will be held in person at People's History Museum on Wednesday 14 August (with an online option available for any candidates who are not available to be onsite due to leave or other commitments).

Second interviews may be held during the week commencing 19 August.

If you have any questions about the role please contact [HR@phm.org.uk](mailto:HR@phm.org.uk)

## **Equity**

PHM prides itself on being a welcoming and inclusive organisation, profoundly committed to advancing equality and diversity in the broadest sense. We value the benefits that diverse perspectives bring to PHM's work for people of all ages to learn about, be inspired by and get involved in ideas worth fighting for; ideas such as equality, social justice, co-operation, and a fair world for all.

We recognise we currently under-represent members of the Global Majority and disabled people and those with intersecting identities in our workforce; PHM is actively working to address this and encourages applications from these backgrounds. While the successful candidate will be selected purely on merit, in the event of a tie between two candidates with equal experience, we may select a candidate who helps us better represent the communities the museum serves.