

The Guild in 2024

The British Guild of Travel Writers, as you will very likely know, is managed by a Board of Directors. That Board comprises a Chair/Joint Chair, Vice Chair, four Directors and up to three co-opted directors.

The positions of Chair/Joint Chair, Vice Chair and the four Directors are elected each year by members. We are now at the start of the nomination period to elect the Board that will take the Guild through 2024. That new Board will take office on 1 February; the official handover taking place during the AGM on 6 February.

Whilst 2023 has delivered a number of challenges, primarily resulting from the need, announced at the 2023 AGM in March, to review the Guild's administrative and financial processes, 2024 sees the Guild in a strong position on both counts, and able to move forward with a programme of events and other activities to support members.

We are therefore inviting members who would be interested in being part of the team who will deliver all of this to consider putting themselves forward to be part of the new Board. An important objective for 2024 is to ensure the Guild embraces the expectations of what is now a broad church of members. To that end, we are looking, not only for enthusiastic and supportive members, but also those who may have recently joined the Guild. We are also keen for the board to reflect a mix of all ages as we ensure a balance in activities and policies that relate to both long-standing members and those who are in the earlier stage of their careers.

But what does being a Board director mean?

The Board of directors is, at its simplest, a group of volunteers who give of their own time to provide the raft of events and other activities for members. Monthly board meetings take place, usually alternating between in-person meetings, usually held in central London, and via Zoom. Reasonable travel expenses are paid. At the end of each year, Directors receive an honorarium, in effect a nominal payment in recognition of the work and commitment shown during that year.

Being a director is therefore mostly about having an enthusiasm to guide and support the Guild and its members. Board members are usually expected to take a responsibility for one of the key areas of Guild activities: membership, sponsorship, communications, events and awards. Each year we also appoint a Board secretary whose role, primarily, is to take minutes at Board meetings.

Whilst the elected Board is there in an official capacity (the Guild is a limited company and governed by its Articles of Association as laid down by the Companies Act), there are also opportunities to play a role as an off-Board Executive.

Current Joint Chair, Stuart Render and Sarah Siese say: "As we come towards the end of the year, a year in which the need to review our administrative and financial processes has brought some significant challenges, we can look back on one of the most successful Annual Gala Award Dinners in the history of the Guild. The figures are being finalised but this year's event, thanks to a full house (and more) or sponsors and partners, and careful cost control, has delivered a significant surplus. The Guild exists to support its members, with a range of activities, including a series of online and in-person events and webinars, our two awards schemes, the annual AGM and Convention, the Annual Gala Awards Dinner, and fam and

press trips. With a strong financial base there is an opportunity for the new Board to develop new opportunities for members, wherever they are in the country. Guild membership reflects a wide range of age and experience, with many members joining over the last year or so. We are particularly keen therefore for the Board to reflect that range of age and experience, and hope that newer members will feel inspired to put themselves forward to play a part over the year to come.”

If you would like to know more about what being a Board Director entails then please contact Dom Tullett at dom.tullett@bgtw.org or stuart.render@bgtw.org