



Wesley House

The Methodist College in Cambridge since 1921

Resourcing Wesleyan leadership and scholarship for the transformation of church and world

Chair of Trustees, Wesley House Cambridge

Introduction

Wesley House Cambridge is looking for our next Chair to lead our Board of Trustee/Directors, joining our Trustees in February 2023 and taking the Chair in July 2023, following the end of The Revd Dr Stuart Jordan's term of office finishing in May 2023.

Wesley House (founded 1921) is a globally significant resource for leadership and scholarship in the Wesleyan tradition. We teach, consult, research, supervise research, and offer professional training in the areas of Global Wesleyan Theology; Leadership and Ministry Development; and Faith in Public Life. We work with partner institutions on five continents and with cohorts of students from all over the world. We are blessed with a diverse student body: 36% from Africa, 28% from the UK, 23% from North America and 13% from Asia, continental Europe and South America.

Wesley House is an independent charity, founded to be a Christian community of study and prayer in the Wesleyan tradition in the university city of Cambridge. We maintain an open, inclusive ethos in which we encourage mutual respect and open dialogue. We uphold academic freedoms.

The college is an official house of residence of the University of Cambridge and a founder member of the [Cambridge Theological Federation](#) which has 12 member institutes comprising Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Reformed members, and the following specialist institutes: Cambridge Centre for Christianity worldwide, The Faraday Institute, The Kirby Laing Centre, The Woolf Institute. Through the CTF we offer research and taught degrees in partnership with the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University. Wesley House is also one of eleven global hubs of the [General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church](#) that support pan-Methodist working on education, leadership and development across the world.

We currently have 6 academic staff (4.65 FTE) and 3 support staff (3 FTE); 30+ research students (PhD; DProf; MPhil) and 20 taught students (MA; DTM; GradDip) enrolled on programmes validated through the Cambridge Theological Federation. In addition we co-teach a DMin programme with [Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington DC](#) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Church Leadership with Kenya Methodist University. Last year we trained 70+ people as pastoral supervisors in the UK and in the USA, and engaged with a larger circle of people around the world in webinars and informal courses.

The college has recently refurbished/built premises on Jesus Lane that house a small intercultural resident community of staff and students (up to 20). We also welcome sabbatical visitors and cohorts of students for short periods of study. In common with other theological institutions we are assessing the impact of Covid 19 on our ways of working and developing a new strategic plan. We increasingly see ourselves as a community of communities with cohorts of students working in Kenya, Zimbabwe, in the USA, online and in Cambridge. 90% of our students are remote/part time/part resident learners. Three of our current core academic staff are working remotely/partly resident.

In the last few years we have attracted grant funding of over £3m. As we celebrate the centenary of the college we are excited about the contribution that the college can make to a world in need of leaders who put love of God and neighbour at the heart of their work. We are a dynamic intercultural staff team with a can-do attitude, looking to help the college combine memory and imagination to serve a fast changing church and world.

Governance

Wesley House is governed by a Board of Trustee / Directors who meet four times a year. There is a maximum of 15 Trustees; 75% of the Trustees are required to be members of the Methodist Church in Britain.

The Trustees have delegated responsibilities to two main committees, the Academic Committee and the Finance & General Purposes Committee which meet termly. In addition there is a Development Committee which meets more frequently and an Executive Committee which comprises the Chair of Trustees, the Chairs of the other Committees, the Secretary to the Trustees (herself a Trustee) and the Principal and Business Director. The Executive Committee meets termly and additionally if required. It is not a requirement of the Chair of Trustees to sit on all subcommittees.

Our governance structures are further described in our annual accounts which you can download from [here](#).

Responsibilities

The Chair of Trustees' responsibilities are broad and cover areas of governance, strategy, and staffing as well as representing the Trustees and the College to various constituencies. The following responsibilities are indicative of the role as it currently stands.

Governance

The Chair of Trustees (CoT) is ultimately responsible, with the Board, for the good governance of the College and the achievement of its charitable objectives. Within that role the CoT is tasked with the following:

- 1 Convening and chairing regular meetings of the Board and of its Executive Committee.
- 2 Drafting and finalising agendas for those meetings and working with the Secretary of the Board to prepare and circulate relevant papers and agree draft Minutes for the Board's approval.
- 3 Encouraging effective relationships within the Board; developing its membership, ways of working and exercise of responsibility; inviting and inducting new members as approved by the Board
- 4 Liaising as necessary with the Principal, Business Director and Chairs of Committees to ensure the College's purposes and the Board's policies are implemented.
- 5 Serving as a member of (but not chairing) any of the College Committees as appropriate.
- 6 Through the work of the Board, its Committees and College Officers ensuring that policies essential to the work and well-being of the College, its staff and students are in place, regularly monitored and implemented.
- 7 Representing the College as required to outside bodies.
- 8 Taking other specific actions as agreed by the Board in pursuit of its goals (signing documents, writing letters, attending meetings etc)

Strategy

While responsibility for the College's strategy is a responsibility shared with the Board, the Executive and the Principal, the CoT helps to provide strategic continuity where necessary between meetings and in the interfaces between others' roles by:

- 9 Ensuring that the Board regularly reviews its longer-term strategy for viability and development; and that the direction it sets and the decisions it takes are followed through
- 10 Working with the Executive to identify and research strategic opportunities and bring recommendations to the Board
- 11 Working with the Principal to review the vision and direction of the College's work, to identify particular challenges or opportunities and, where appropriate, to seek the Board's wisdom and approval for any essential decisions.

Staff

- 12 The CoT has an agreed formal role to offer support and line-management to the Principal and to that end to meet on a regular basis to develop a collaborative working relationship. In line with the connexional supervision policy the CoT also receives the Principal's supervision records.
- 13 The CoT and Principal consult as required about all new academic staff appointments and the CoT is normally involved in all appointment processes, often as chair of the interview panel.
- 14 The CoT may need to serve from time to time in a formal capacity in any staff complaint or discipline procedure; or to be available for consultation regarding any other staff matter.

Other

- 15 The CoT is periodically invited to attend formal or informal gathering of the College community for worship, dinners etc, as occasions arise.

Person Specification

We are looking for someone who can bring the following skills and experience:

- a commitment to the college's ethos, vision and mission;
- a mature understanding of trustee/director responsibilities;
- credibility and network within at least one key constituency of the College (academic/global Methodism/British Methodism);
- experience of board working;
- excellent communication skills in groups, one to one and in writing;
- a collaborative approach to committee work and staff management; and
- a constructive approach to change and change management.

You do not need to live locally but we would ask for a commitment to visit Wesley House at least termly.

Invitation

If you would like an informal discussion before applying, or have any questions, please contact David Peniket, the Trustee who is leading the appointment process by emailing office@wesley.cam.ac.uk.

You are warmly invited to send a letter of application and CV to David Peniket, Trustee, Wesley House, Cambridge, CB5 8BJ or by email to office@wesley.cam.ac.uk.