/LEAN
Lewisham Education
Arts Network

Nominations for Lewisham Education Arts Network Board of Trustees 2025

Standing for re-election

Forename	Last name	Organisation
Sheree-Marie	Abraham	Chief Executive & Artistic Director at Sydenham Arts
Jessica	Austin-Burdett	Head of Art and Community at Deptford Green School
Anna	Croall	Team Leader, English Curriculum Policy, Department of Education
Bea	Denton	Academic Advisor and Artist Educator
Helena	Emmanuel	Senior Student Experience Officer at King's College London
Holly	Henry	Heritage, Learning and Volunteer Manager at Grand Junction
Veronica	Jobbins	Dance and Arts Education Consultant
Julia	Mirkin	Funding Manager at City Bridge Trust
Déarbhaile	Nairn	Projects Manager (Children and Young People's Programme) at Trinity Laban
Jason	Page	Operations Manager & Community Engagement Programmer
Veronica	Sarmiento	Learning Officer: Creative Careers at London Transport Museum
James	Thomas	Freelance Music Educator and Hackney Music Service
Emma	Webster	Prendergast Ladywell School

Standing for election (co-opted on to Board 2024)

Name: Sheree-Marie Abraham

A passionate local girl who grew up and still lives in Sydenham, Sheree-Marie Abraham has been the Chief Executive and Artistic Director of Sydenham Arts since October 2023. Sheree has over 20 years of experience in the charitable arts sector. As well as having worked in several large arts organisations such as the Barbican Art Gallery, Royal Academy of Arts, The Photographers' Gallery and Southbank Centre, she also managed the NGO music charity Future Talent and most recently worked at local music education hub, Bromley Youth Music Trust, managing the Anerley Saturday music centre.

Sheree is studying for her MA in Arts Administration and Cultural Policy at Goldsmiths University, which she looks to combine with her professional experience to further her expertise and skills in local community arts and cultural policy, particularly in Lewisham. An avid music lover, Sheree plays flute in classical and community groups, such as South-East London Folk Orchestra, has led a local church choir, and played Steel Pans in Endurance Steel Orchestra. Sheree brings charity and community project management, art and creativity experience, and a love for her South-East London home and community.

Name: Jessica Austin-Burdett

Currently head of art and community at Deptford Green School in South London, Jessica was recently awarded the NSEAD Patrons Award for Empowering Change and delivered a session at the Festival of Education 2014 on the need for Art to have a more central role in the curriculum. She has worked in a variety of secondary schools across London in diverse communities. She is part of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft and Design in Education.

For 26 of her 28 years of teaching, she has held positions of responsibility, including both pastoral and curriculum focused ones, ranging from subject to senior leadership roles and beyond, including working with trainee teachers and ECT mentors.

Jessica's passion for art and for teaching led her to complete an MA in educational research in 2016. She has contributed to a number of educational gatherings, events, seminars and writings, including writing a section of the DiversEd book Diverse Educators: A Manifesto and states that 'I am more passionate about teaching art now than I was when I started, I truly believe it is the best subject to teach!'

Name: Anna Croall

Having worked for nearly ten years at the Department for Education (DfE), Anna brings experience in and understanding of the education sector. During her time at DfE, she has worked in roles spanning early primary education through to post-16, including apprenticeships and vocational study, giving wide-ranging insight into the education 'big picture' and policy agenda. From 2019 to 2023 and again since summer 2024, she has worked in a range of roles relating to arts education at DfE, including at various times managing the team responsible for both DfE's Music Hubs programme, and its Music and Dance Scheme; leading on the development and drafting of the 2023 National Plan for Music Education; and most recently leading on arts strategy to meet the current government's ambitions to widen access. In these roles, she has built strong relationships across the music education sector in particular, and invested significant time and effort in building understanding of the sector's perspective on policy and delivery priorities.

During those years, she built understanding also of the arts funding system, working closely with Arts Council England (ACE) in her DfE roles, and later spending a year at ACE on secondment. Her time at ACE gave her useful insight into the strategic priorities of national funders, and the decision-making process undertaken when awarding funds.

Through her professional experience to date, Anna has built strong strategy development skills, as well as skills in translating strategy into actionable policy, and into operational delivery. With a background in journalism, she has a good communications instinct and ability to translate complex ideas into clear messaging. Finally, Anna is a near lifelong resident of the borough of Lewisham, currently based in Hither Green, with a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities there.

Name: Helena Emmanuel

Helena studied and worked at OCAD (Ontario College of Art & Design University), where she completed a short course MA in Contemporary Art, Design and New Media Art Histories. She has collaborated with local communities to create school to university pathways at OCAD. She also coordinated the MA Contemporary Art Programme at Sotheby's Institute of Art. She has experience at a software company, taking part in organising music events in Canada; and at a digital marketing agency, designing fundraising campaigns for charities.

Having been born and raised in Lewisham, now living in Forest Hill, Helena has spent much of her life in Lewisham art institutions such as; The Horniman's, The Albany, Catford Broadway, and more recently Catford Mews. Helena has noticed the incline in art and culture centres and programming across Lewisham and is keen to be a part of Lewisham's future, with LEAN.