

# Florence Nightingale Museum

Chair Recruitment 2025  
Information Pack



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## MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

*"The Florence Nightingale Museum is a place treasured by so many. Visitors from around the world have referred to it as the spiritual home of Nursing and feel a deep connection to the collection and the stories we tell. In the last few years, we have been able to extend the narrative to focus more on Nightingale's statistical achievements as a pioneer of evidence-based healthcare and also launch a series of exhibitions exploring different aspects of her legacy. As well as the public and interest groups, we are visited by thousands of school children each year, for many of which this is their first ever museum experience, giving us the unique privilege of being able to potentially spark a life-long love of history.*

*The last few years have been focussed on survival and maintaining operations, but as we begin to edge closer to pre-pandemic visitor levels, it is time to shift our focus to growth and consider where our future may be. It is an exciting time to be leading such a unique and beloved institution."*



*Laura Sharpe  
General Manager of the Florence Nightingale Museum*

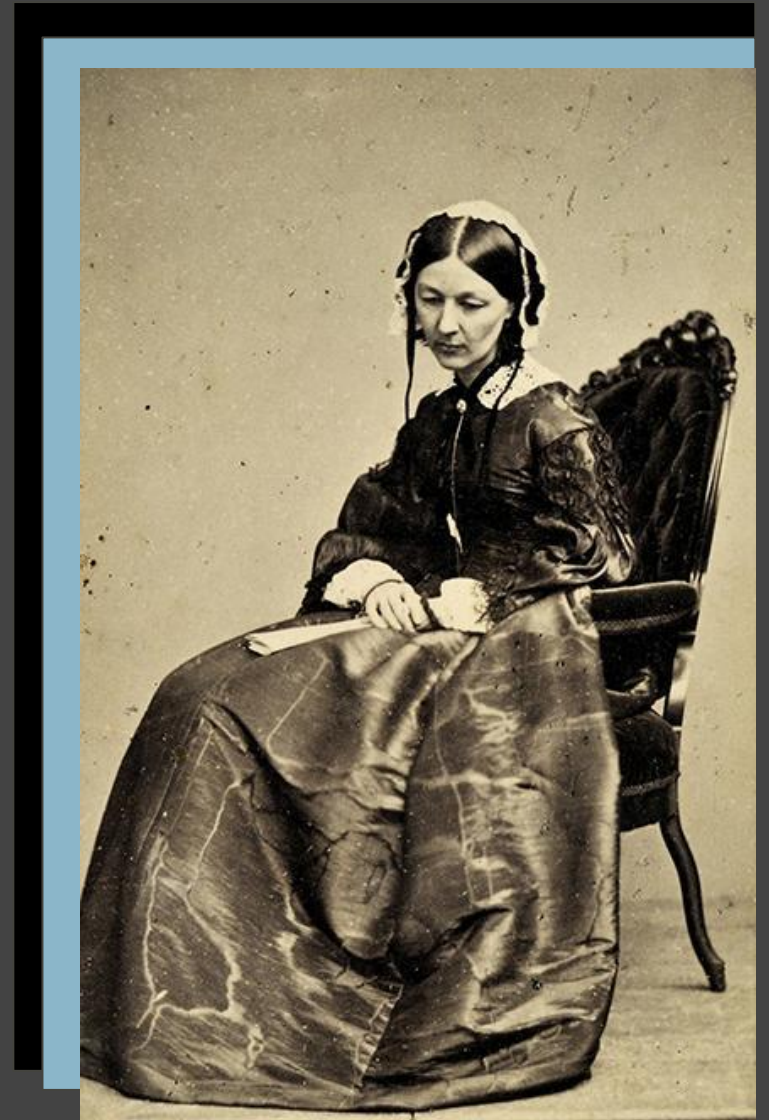
# INTRODUCTION

## The Florence Nightingale Museum celebrates the life and work of the best-known figure in nursing history.

Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing and one of the most iconic figures of the Victorian era, remains an enduring source of inspiration for healthcare professionals worldwide. Her transformative contributions to nursing, hospital hygiene, public health, and statistics continue to shape modern medical practices.

In 2025, the museum remains a dynamic hub of learning and inspiration, showcasing her pioneering achievements and highlighting how her legacy continues to impact the modern world. With a renewed focus on impactful storytelling and inclusivity, the museum is more committed than ever to shining a light on the life and legacy of "The Lady with the Lamp."

We are seeking a dynamic and visionary Chair to lead our organisation into an exciting new chapter. As Chair, you will guide the Board of Trustees in shaping the museum's strategic direction, fostering innovation, and ensuring its sustainability as a leading institution in the cultural and healthcare landscape.

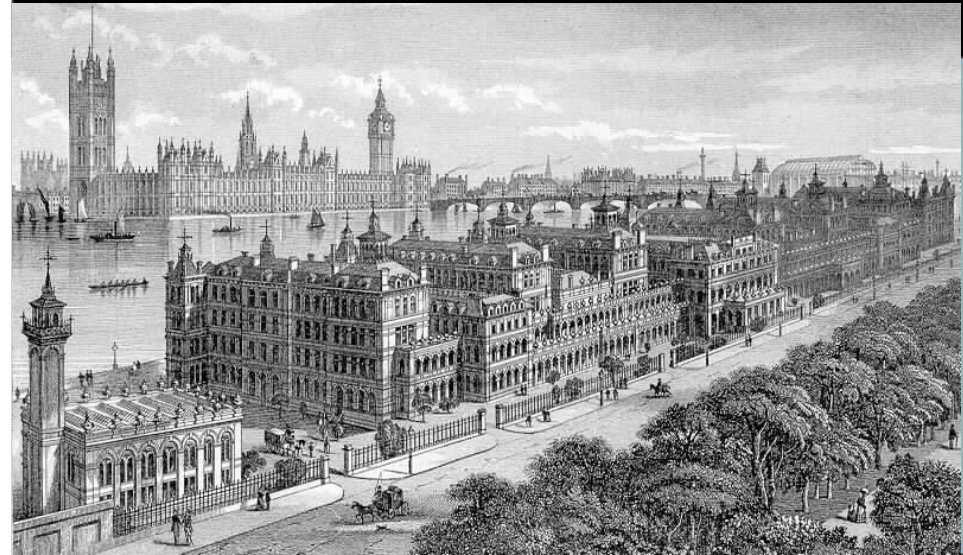


*Florence Nightingale aged 36 just after Crimea  
Credit: Florence Nightingale Museum*

## ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Visitors are able to travel through three areas to relive Florence's childhood, understand her experiences in the Crimean War and discover how she pioneered modern nursing practice, public health, and statistics. Her story is brought to life through unique collections, interactive displays and a dynamic events programme.

Located currently within St Thomas' Hospital, just off Westminster Bridge, the museum was opened in 1989 and now forms a key part of London's medical heritage. The collection consists of personal material associated with Florence Nightingale, items relating to the Crimean War, and nursing artefacts. The museum archives include approximately 800 letters from Florence Nightingale and an important rare book collection of 284 titles.



*Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, Credit: Florence Nightingale Museum*



The Museum is open to the public six days a week.

The Museum tells the real story of Florence Nightingale, "the Lady with the Lamp", from her Victorian childhood to her experiences in the Crimean War, through to her years as an ardent campaigner for health reform. Nightingale is recognised as the founder of modern nursing in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. The museum explains her global legacy and also celebrates nursing and healthcare today.

The Museum is designed around three areas that tell her story. **Early Life** tells the story of Nightingale's privileged childhood and her struggle against stifling social conventions. **Crimean War** shows how Nightingale and her team coped with the crisis in the military hospitals where the legend of the Lady with the Lamp was born. **Later Life** shows the other side of Nightingale, the reformer who campaigned tirelessly for health reform at home and abroad, and the statistician who pioneered data visualisations to bring data and evidence to life.

Above: The Turkish 'fanoos' lamp carried by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean war.  
Credit: Ash Knotek/ The Florence Nightingale Museum

# THE TRUST

The Trust was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

The Trust's Memorandum of Association gives the object as the advancement of the education of nurses or those engaged in nursing. In the furtherance of this objective, the governing document gives the trust powers which include the following:

- To establish and maintain a Museum for the **preservation and wider display** of the Nightingale collection
- To receive **donations** of suitable items for the collection, or to **purchase** suitable items
- To facilitate **research** into the history and work of Florence Nightingale, particularly in relation to the first training school for **nurses** at St Thomas' Hospital and consequential developments in the nursing profession

# STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Museum is an independent, charitable body which is completely self-funded. The Board is comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and other Trustees who retain decision making power, working closely with the General Manager as the full-time operational executive officer.

The Chair meets the General Manager to facilitate decision making at least monthly, but frequently more often. The Treasurer meets the General Manager not less than quarterly.



Above: Board Members, including outgoing Chair Dame Christine Beasley

## STAFF

There is currently a staff team of seven led by the General Manager. These museum professionals cover all aspects of day to day running of the museum including collections management and finance and are supported by the board.

The Museum also has successful volunteer programme, with over 20 regular volunteers, all with a variety of backgrounds and areas of expertise. The museum recognises the opportunities for community engagement that this provides.



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

- Support the shaping of the museum's **mission, vision and strategic objectives**;
- Engage in **strategic planning**;
- Formulate needed **policies**;
- Ensure adequate **financial resources** are secured and deployed effectively;
- Ensure sound **risk assessment**;
- Support the museum **General Manager**;
- Monitor the museum's **performance** against agreed indicators;
- Be aware of the responsibilities of a Trustee as described in the **Charity Commission** guidance;
- Assist the other Trustees and Director in enhancing the **public image** of the museum;
- Attend a minimum of **quarterly meetings** of the Trustee Board, the AGM, ad hoc meetings and "Away Days" as required.

The Board of Trustees is expected to support the realisation and planning towards the objectives of the Trust, including to:

- Secure a long-term location to allow the Museum to meet its aims, and provide a platform for growth;
- Develop strong external networks that promotes and supports the work of the museum;
- Continue to be a financially sustainable and self-funding organisation;
- Increase unrestricted funds through an audience-specific marketing plan;
- Create an enjoyable, inspiring and enlightening experience for our visitors;
- Provide an active and innovative events and learning programme;
- Increase access to the Museum's unique collections;
- Be a centre for research into the history of nursing and healthcare, past and present;
- Value the development and effective management of staff and volunteers.

## WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

The Florence Nightingale Museum is seeking an engaged strategic leader. While a background in nursing is not essential, an appreciation of the profession and Florence Nightingale's enduring legacy is crucial. Our ideal candidate will be forward-thinking, able to ask, "Where do we need to go, and how are we going to get there?"

The Museums and Charities sector faces continued funding challenges and declining visitor figures, and we're looking for a Chair who can help us tackle these.

Beyond Nightingale's contributions to nursing, the Museum also explores her impact on STEM, society, and gender, and we need a Chair who can help us shape and share this broader narrative.

Experience in governance, fundraising, and advocacy within the cultural sector is highly desirable. Above all, we are looking for someone who can provide clear strategic direction, ensuring the Museum remains a vibrant and sustainable institution that continues to inspire and educate for years to come.

# CHAIR REQUIREMENTS

## Diverse perspectives

Bringing broad experiences, points-of-view and sense of purpose to the Museum through interdisciplinary skills, experience and expertise

## Value-adding contributions

To include institutional connections and contacts; relevant international connections would also be highly desirable

## Commitment & energy

Able to devote time both within and beyond the Boardroom, proactively seeking ways to make an impact on the Museum's mission, vision and emerging strategic objectives

## Strategic thinking & entrepreneurial mindset

With the ability to "think big" while also possessing the pragmatism to turn ideas into a tangible reality through actions and outputs

## Breadth & depth of knowledge

Of any of the following: community engagement, fundraising, legal, capital development planning, business, as well as driving an institution through change, on both a micro and macro scale

An understanding of and empathy with nursing and the wider healthcare and science sectors, both in the UK and internationally, would be highly desirable.

*We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive Board and welcome applications from individuals of all backgrounds and experiences. While the role of Chair requires strong leadership, vision, and strategic acumen, we recognise that ability is more important than any prescribed career path. If you have the skills, passion, and insight to help guide the Museum into the future, we encourage you to apply.*

# WHAT DRIVES US

## We asked our Trustees what inspired them to join the Florence Nightingale Museum. Here's what they had to say...

*My mother was a nurse, and my partner is mental health nurse - so there a direct connection to the profession and its importance to us all. The other key motivator is my work in museums. My mission is to help the Florence Nightingale Museum to develop its experiences for a wider audience, be able to grow its learning activities, and ultimately to secure its impact into the future.*

As a statistician, I am passionate about telling Florence's data story. She was a pioneer in data visualisation and used powerful graphics to communicate complex statistical concepts to lay audiences. The impact of this is still seen today. She was also the first female member of the Royal Statistical Society and was the embodiment of their modern-day strapline: Data, Evidence, Decisions.

*I am committed to preserving Florence Nightingale's legacy as an enduring inspiration for healthcare professionals. Her emphasis on patient-centred care, driven by measurement and data analytics, remains as relevant today as ever. It is a privilege to support the continuation of her impact. The museum serves as a vital institution in health, education, society, and history, with the potential to shape important conversations. It provides a platform for dialogue on the future of nursing and patient care, fostering debate and innovation in these critical fields.*

As a Military nurse I have an infinity with Florence and the challenges she faced on the battlefield. Having undertaken active service in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan myself, I was keen to see the museum evolve to represent modern military nursing and wider healthcare challenges in the contemporary operating environments that defence has faced in recent years and also connect the museum to our modern-day Florence's

# APPLICATION & INTERVIEW

To express your interest in the role of Chair of the Florence Nightingale Museum, please send a (maximum) one-page covering letter along with a CV, with subject reference “FNM Chair” to:

[chair@florence-nightingale.co.uk](mailto:chair@florence-nightingale.co.uk)

In your covering letter, please include responses to the following:

- What is your motivation for applying to become Chair of the Florence Nightingale Museum?
- What value do you feel you would bring to the Florence Nightingale Museum Board as Chair?

Your completed application will be reviewed by the Chair recruitment panel as well as representatives of the Museum.

Closing date for applications is midnight on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Note that interviews are scheduled to take place on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> May.

Those who are successful in the first round of interviews will be invited to meet Trustees virtually w/c 5<sup>th</sup> May.



*Credit: Florence Nightingale Museum*

## Eligibility

You may not act as Chair if you are suspended or disqualified under the terms of The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, unless authorised to do so by a waiver from the Charities Commission.

