



Chair of Trustees

Appointment Brief
January 2025





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Welcome

We are Variety, the Children's Charity. In the UK, there are more than 1.3 million disabled children and nearly four million children living in poverty. Variety exists to improve their lives. We believe every child has a right to live their best life and reach their full potential, whoever they are. We fund and deliver life-changing programmes that enhance their quality of life and give children and young people across the UK a better future.

Variety is a dynamic and forward-thinking organisation, we're seeking a passionate Chair to help lead Variety into its next chapter and build on our charity's proud legacy.

This extraordinary Charity, with 75 years of history in the UK and global prominence, has granted close to £1.6 billion globally to positively impact the lives of children in need. From its humble beginnings inspired by the adoption of an abandoned baby, Catherine Variety Sheridan, to its current status as one of the most trusted children's charities globally, Variety has consistently raised funds and provided support to make a real and immediate difference in the lives of young beneficiaries.

Over the past 75 years we have supported over one million children by funding almost 6,000 Sunshine Coaches, almost the same number of wheelchairs, and giving thousands of grants to individual children, schools, youth clubs and other organisations for specialist equipment. Variety is also involved with a number of capital projects which transform the facilities of hospitals and SEN schools. In addition, each year tens of thousands of children take part in day trips, special events and educational activities as part of our Variety Great Days Out programme and every single day we are improving more young lives. We do it with practical, tangible help. Help that makes a real and immediate difference.

As the Charity prepares to create an exciting three year strategy to drive ambitious growth, we are now looking for a new Chair of Trustees who will be passionate and truly dedicated to our cause and will support the Board and CEO to build on the amazing history and work of our fantastic Charity.

2025 represents Variety's 75th anniversary, one made all the more special by the announcement that His Majesty, King Charles III has chosen Variety for Royal Patronage. Going forward, this offers an amazing opportunity to bring Variety's work to the attention of even more communities across the UK. With a new, dynamic CEO recently in post and a highly experienced Director of Finance and Operations who started in December 2024 we have huge plans to double Variety's income over the next three years.

We are seeking an exceptional individual who can provide strategic oversight, and guidance during this transformative period for Variety. The ideal Chair will bring significant leadership experience combined with a high-level network commensurate with Variety's national mission. They will work closely with our new CEO and to achieve our ambitious growth plans. Our new Chair will be a skilled ambassador for Variety, leveraging their extensive networks, ideally within the entertainment and media sectors to enhance our profile and impact. They will play a central role in our high-profile events, including the prestigious Variety Club Showbusiness Awards and Variety Disability Awards, while also building and maintaining strong relationships with major donors, corporate partners, and other key stakeholders.

The successful candidate will bring excellent communication skills, and the ability to Chair our talented Board of Trustees effectively. Most importantly, they will share our passionate commitment to improving the lives of disabled and disadvantaged children across the UK. This is an extraordinary opportunity to shape the future of our renowned charity as we enter our next chapter with the honor of Royal Patronage from His Majesty King Charles III. The role requires a commitment of 2-3 days per month and offers the chance to make a lasting impact on the lives of thousands of children while being part of Variety's remarkable legacy.

About Us

At Variety, the Children's Charity, we believe every child has a right to live their best life and reach their full potential, whoever they are. We fund and deliver life-changing programs that give children and young people across the UK a better future.

Our work

In the UK, there are more than 4.3 million children living in poverty, with 600,000 children both disabled and disadvantaged. Variety provides practical support that makes an immediate difference to children and young people under the age of 19.

What does Variety do?

We provide:

- Grants for specialist [disability equipment and wheelchairs](#) that aren't available through government services
- Adapted, accessible transport for SEND schools and other non-profit organisations with our famous [Sunshine Coaches](#)
- Memorable day trips and outings through our [Great Days Out](#) programme.

Our work helps give children and young people greater wellbeing, independence, social inclusion, mobility and self-esteem, and allows them to live their best lives – no matter who they are.

On average, a family with a disabled child has to pay an extra £581 per month to have the same standard of living as one without. We aim to address the relationship between disability and poverty.

Our Purpose?

Our Vision

Enabling every child to live their best life and reach their full potential, whoever they are.

Our Mission

We fund and deliver life-changing programmes that give children and young people across the UK a better future.

Our Values

Putting our beneficiaries first, innovation, creativity, inclusivity, courtesy, patience, respect, transparency, and valuing our heritage.



How We Help



5,745

Sunshine Coaches have been funded across the UK since Variety began.



Two million

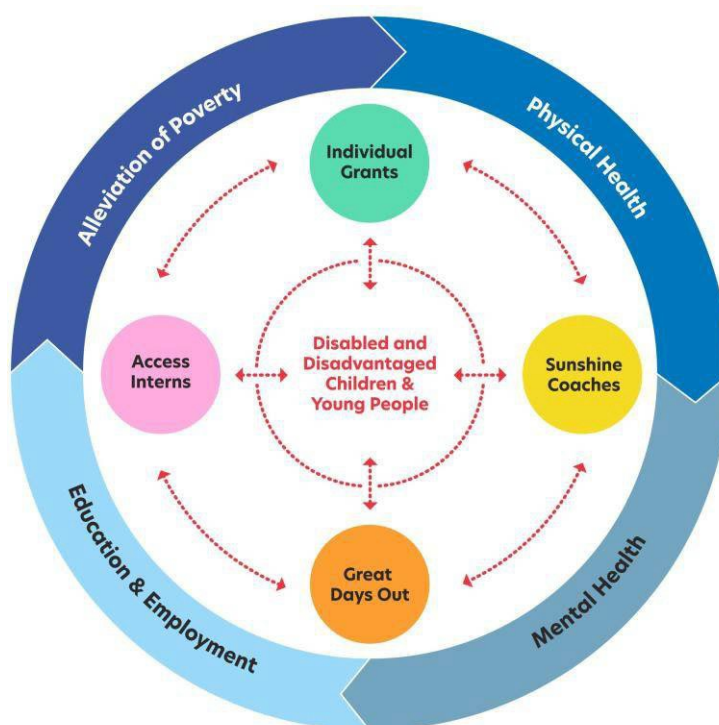
children have been on Great Days Out with Variety.



£750,000

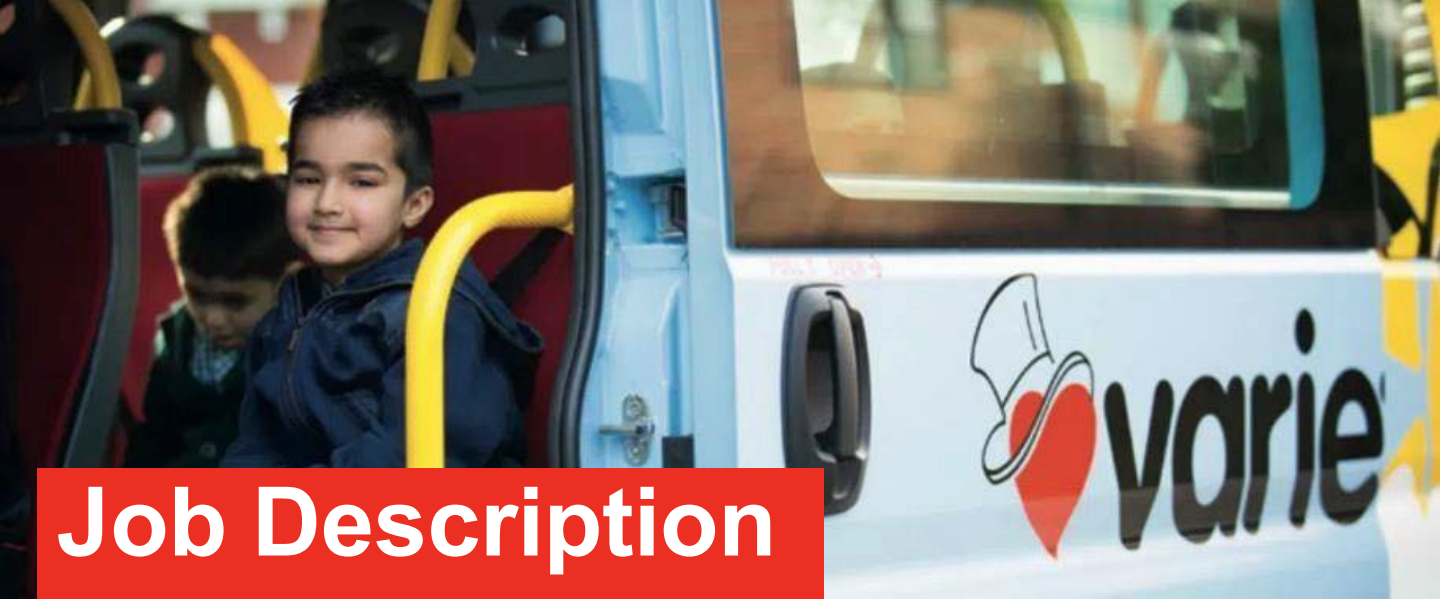
has been spent on wheelchair grants since 2019.

Our Impact Ecosystem



Our Theory of Change

Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes	Long Term Impact
Wheelchair & Equipment Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased Mobility• Better Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved Health• Increased Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empowered & Fulfilled Lives• Improved Health• Reduced Inequality• Improved Social Mobility• More Inclusive Society• Increased Workforce Diversity
Sunshine Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation in educational, recreational & sports opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased Confidence• Better Educational Outcomes	
Great Days Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New Experiences• Social Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger Social Connections• Improved employability	
Access Interns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work Experience• Career Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better Life Skills	
Moderators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good Governance & Strategy• Successful Donor Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful Fundraising• Well Supported Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Good Supply Chain• Strong Stakeholder Relationships



Job Description

Job Title: Chair

Summary

- We are seeking a highly motivated and experienced individual to serve as the Chair of Trustees for Variety, The Children's Charity. This is a voluntary position that plays a crucial role in providing leadership, guidance, and oversight to the organisation.

Key Responsibilities

Leadership and Governance

- Provide strategic oversight to the Board of Trustees and the organisation as a whole
- Ensure the Board fulfils its responsibilities for the governance of the charity
- Work closely with the Chief Executive to achieve the charity's mission and objectives
- Chair Board meetings effectively, ensuring clear decision-making and implementation of decisions

External Relations

- Act as an ambassador and the public face of the charity in partnership with the Chief Executive
- Build and maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders, including major donors, corporate partners, and government officials
- Represent the charity at external functions, meetings, and events
- Leverage connections within the entertainment and media industry to benefit the charity via events including the annual Showbiz Awards, Chair's Reception and behind the scenes through recruiting celebrity ambassadors and contributing towards raising the profile of Variety's work and the challenges facing disadvantaged and disabled children and young people.

Board Development

- Ensure the Board has the right balance of skills, knowledge, and experience
- Oversee the recruitment and induction of new trustees
- Conduct annual performance reviews of trustees and address any issues that arise

Financial Oversight

- Ensure the financial stability and sustainability of the charity
- Work with the Chair of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee, Finance Director and CEO to monitor the charity's financial health
- Ensure proper financial controls are in place and that the charity operates within its means

Legal and Ethical Compliance

- Ensure the charity complies with its governing document, charity law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Promote and safeguard the reputation and values of the charity

Strategic Planning

- Lead the Board in supporting the development and review of the charity's strategic plan with the CEO
- Ensure the strategy is aligned with the charity's mission and values

Qualifications and Skills

- Significant leadership experience, preferably at board level in a charitable, public sector, or commercial organisation.
- An understanding of charity governance and the role of trustees
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to build and maintain strong relationships with diverse stakeholders
- Strategic thinking and analytical skills
- Financial acumen and experience in overseeing budgets and financial performance
- Passionate about improving the lives of children and young people
- Ability to commit the time necessary to conduct the role well (estimated 2-3 days per month)
- Strong reputation and extensive high-level network within the entertainment and media sectors
- Demonstrated ability to leverage entertainment industry connections for charitable causes



Person Specification

Overview

The Chair of the Board is responsible for providing strategic leadership and governance to the charity, ensuring its effectiveness in achieving its mission. This is a voluntary, non-executive role requiring a commitment to championing the charity's vision, values, and long-term sustainability.

Essential Skills & Experience:

Leadership & Governance:

- Proven experience in a leadership role, preferably as a Chair, Trustee, or Senior Executive within the charity, public, or private sector.
- Strong understanding of governance, legal, and financial responsibilities of a charitable organisation.
- Ability to lead and inspire the Board and senior leadership team, ensuring accountability and effective decision-making.

Strategic & Organisational Insight:

- Experience in developing and implementing strategic plans.
- Ability to think strategically and balance short-term and long-term priorities.
- Understanding of financial oversight, risk management, and sustainability in a charitable context.

Advocacy & Relationship Building:

- Strong networking and relationship management skills to engage stakeholders, donors, partners, and beneficiaries.
- Experience in fundraising, business development, or securing funding for charitable initiatives.
- Ability to act as an ambassador for the charity, enhancing its reputation and influence.

Communication & Collaboration:

- Excellent interpersonal, communication, and negotiation skills.
- Ability to work effectively with a diverse range of people, ensuring inclusivity and collaboration.
- Confident in chairing meetings, facilitating discussions, and managing differing viewpoints.

Commitment & Values Alignment:

- Passion for the charity's mission and a commitment to its values.
- Understanding of, or willingness to learn about, the sector in which the charity operates.
- Ability to dedicate sufficient time and energy to the role, attending meetings, events, and representing the charity as needed.

Desirable Skills & Experience:

- Previous experience as a Trustee or Non-Executive Director.
- Knowledge of charity law and regulatory requirements.
- Experience working with government bodies, corporate partners, or community organisations.
- Familiarity with financial management, investments, or grant-making in the charitable sector.

Terms of Appointment

Job Title: Chair of Trustees

Location: London

Remuneration: This is a voluntary position. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed.

Term of Office The Chair is appointed for a three-year term and may be reappointed for one additional term.

Time commitment: The role typically requires a commitment of 2-3 days per month, including:

- Chairing 4 board meetings per year
- Attending various committee meetings
- Representing the charity at events and meetings with stakeholders
- Monthly meetings with the Chief Executive





Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Variety on this appointment.

You can apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code CBSHA.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Thursday 13th March 2025**.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

DPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your sensitive personal data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any sensitive personal data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Inclusion is one of our key values. It is our ambition to recruit great people from diverse communities. We welcome and encourage applications from suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment/identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity and or marriage/civil partnership status, race, religion or belief.

Please let us know if you have any access requirements which we might need to consider in relation to the selection process.