



## **NATALIE MELTON APPOINTED AS PERMANENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Thursday 4 January 2024

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Crafts Council is delighted to confirm that interim Executive Director, Natalie Melton, has been appointed to the role in a permanent capacity.

Natalie joined Crafts Council in January 2019 as Creative Director and was appointed interim Executive Director in July 2022.

Natalie said: “I’m delighted to continue to lead the brilliant team at Crafts Council. I’m starting 2024 with renewed vigour to deliver Crafts Council’s mission - to champion the power of craft and create the conditions for craft to thrive right across society. I’m excited to explore how we can work collectively with the craft community, our partners, collaborators and funders to help makers grow their impact in the world.

“I want to extend my gratitude to Andy Marshall and Helen Hyde for their outstanding support and commitment as Co-Chairs of the Board of Trustees, throughout my tenure as interim executive director.”

Among Natalie’s priorities in 2024 is to focus on the recruitment of a new Chair for our Board of Trustees, replacing the Co-Chair roles, as Crafts Council returns to permanent leadership across our Board and our senior management.

Andy and Helen say: “Confirming Natalie Melton’s appointment as Executive Director lays an important foundation of expertise, consistency and stability as Crafts Council begins a transformational journey. Over the last 15 months, Natalie has been a brilliant leader for the organisation through difficult times - and there are more challenges to come.

“We know Natalie will lead the team deftly, as we formulate and execute our strategy to support the craft ecosystem. This is the right time to secure a permanent Chair to support Natalie and the senior management team for the coming years.”

### **About Natalie Melton**

Natalie became interim executive director in July 2022 following the departure of Crafts Council’s Chair of Trustees and Chief Executive. Andy Marshall and Helen Hyde joined the Board of Trustees as Co-Chairs in September 2022. Natalie’s appointment provided clear leadership as the Board, senior management team and staff body worked through

organisational and financial turbulence. Under her guardianship, eight new Trustees have been appointed, bringing new skills, energy and experience to the Board. With the senior management team, Natalie has delivered a reduced cost base for the charity, overseen consolidation of its property footprint and built capacity to broaden its income base.

During this period, Natalie also worked to secure Arts Council Transform Stage One and Two funding, a significant grant from National Heritage Lottery Fund, and grew our Patrons' group.

As Creative Director, Natalie commissioned *The Market for Craft*, articulating the growth in consumption of craft across the UK. During her tenure, Natalie oversaw the development and opening of Crafts Council Gallery in central London, delivered the relaunch of Crafts Council's magazine *Crafts* as a membership scheme, and maintained our creative programme throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Between 2012-2018 Natalie co-founded and was Managing Director of The New Craftsmen, a platform for craft from across the British Isles. During her tenure as Commercial Director at Arts & Business, Natalie worked on the development of Crafted, a mentoring programme for craft makers and leaders of luxury brands.

Details of the vacancy for a Chair can be found at [craftscouncil.org.uk/sector-support/opportunities/crafts-council-chair-of-trustees-recruitment](https://craftscouncil.org.uk/sector-support/opportunities/crafts-council-chair-of-trustees-recruitment) and the Board encourages expressions of interest from those who are passionate about craft.

-ENDS-

## Notes to Editors

Please e-mail Melanie Stern at [m\\_stern@craftscouncil.org.uk](mailto:m_stern@craftscouncil.org.uk) copying [comms@craftscouncil.org.uk](mailto:comms@craftscouncil.org.uk) for more information, interviews or photographs.

Read about our senior leadership team at [craftscouncil.org.uk/about/team](https://craftscouncil.org.uk/about/team) and about our Board of Trustees at [craftscouncil.org.uk/about/governance](https://craftscouncil.org.uk/about/governance)

*The Market for Craft* report can be found at [craftscouncil.org.uk/insight-and-advocacy/research-library/market-for-craft](https://craftscouncil.org.uk/insight-and-advocacy/research-library/market-for-craft)

## About Crafts Council

Crafts Council is the national charity for craft.

We believe craft skills and knowledge enrich and uplift us as individuals and can change our world for the better. Through our activities, we inspire making, empower learning and nurture craft businesses.

We do this by championing craft and its positive impact on society, increasing levels of craft education and participation, growing the market for craft, and building a sustainable and inclusive craft sector.

Supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

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