



Crafts Council
44a Pentonville Road
London N1 9BY

T +44 (0)20 7806 2500
media@craftscouncil.org.uk

CRAFTS COUNCIL APPOINT FOUR NEW TRUSTEES TO BOARD

The Crafts Council, the national charity for craft, welcome four exceptional new trustees to the board.

Anant Sharma, Ian Jindal, Melanie Eddy and Yasmin Jones-Henry have all joined the board since March 2023, bringing the number of trustees to 11. The board has been co-chaired by Andy Marshall and Helen Hyde since October 2022.

Anant Sharma has spent the last 14 years leading Matter of Form — a Brand & Experience Design Consultancy partnering with timeless luxury brands, from Accor and Zaha Hadid Architects to Belmond, Diageo and Aman. A futurist, innovation enthusiast and keen advocate of developing meritocratic cultures that promote ideas and learning, Anant is also a dedicated teacher and student of behavioural design; exploring what drives us to do the things we do.

It's a fascination he brings to all ventures; including co-ownership of design thinking school Experience Haus, lecturing as an adjunct professor in branding, CX and innovation at EHL, the world's leading hospitality university, public speaking engagements from Walpole to Inhorgenta and Matter Of Form's own podcast What The Luxe — designed to elbow traditional notions of luxury, instead reframing timelessness as the relentless pursuit of craft.

Ian Jindal is a consultant, researcher and advisor in eCommerce and multichannel retail performance.

He founded InternetRetailing.net and RetailX.net to serve Europe's multichannel retailers with research, insight and analysis, including the Top500 performance rankings. Ian's advisory clients have included Fiorucci, Selfridges, House of Fraser, Marks & Spencer, John Lewis, Waitrose, De Bijenkorf, Kering and Walgreens Boots Alliance. Ian was Group eCommerce Director at Littlewoods Shop Direct, and Head of Online Operations at the BBC. Ian founded the European eCommerce Forum and authored the UK's first MSc in Internet Retailing. Ian was General Director of The Photographers' Gallery and Treasurer of Engage.org.

Melanie Eddy joins as a maker trustee. Melanie is a renowned sculptural jeweller, with pieces held in public and private collections, such as at the Victoria & Albert Museum, The Goldsmiths' Company Collection, and the Spencer Museum of Art. Melanie is a Director of The Association for Contemporary Jewellery, a Trustee for The Silversmiths & Jewellers Charity and serves in an advisory capacity for a number of industry organisations both in the UK and abroad, working extensively for Turquoise Mountain's Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture in Kabul, Afghanistan, and then through India, Pakistan Afghanistan and Thailand.

She is currently involved in several initiatives looking at supporting diversity within the jewellery trade and is one of the founders of The Jewellery Futures Fund, an initiative looking to effect change through a programme of scholarships, programme grants, paid internships, and wider industry engagement. Melanie is an Associate Lecturer on the MA Design: Ceramics Furniture and Jewellery programme at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design and at the University for the Creative Arts and a visiting lecturer at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation.

Yasmin Jones-Henry is an FT writer and co-founder and curator of The Lab E20, a new flagship for experiential retail, cultural exhibition and creative workspace, with a focus on positive fashion and sustainable living. She works in the space where fashion meets finance and culture meets commerce. Through her work as a writer with specialisms in sustainability (ESG), design and investment, she has established a career championing the role culture and creative enterprise can play as a catalyst to inclusive regeneration. As cultural placemaking strategist Yasmin is a thought leader and an advocate for rethinking retail, scaling circular economy design principles and working to diversify the talent pipelines across the fashion industry and the built environment.

Quotes

‘In a time where so much has become rapidly disposable, the preservation and promotion of craft — a skill requiring long-term learning and continuous refinement— are critical to safeguarding our creative future, across both digital and analogue. I’m delighted to join the board of trustees, to help guide the organisation in how to hire, communicate and structure for the future. And provide a pair of ears for its brilliant leadership team’. **Anant Sharma, trustee**

"Craft's multidisciplinary combination of applied expertise, innovation and creation enriches the maker, audience and consumer. I'm excited to contribute to the Crafts Council's work to broaden engagement, participation and access, especially as the "maker mindset" gains in importance in business, education and leisure." **Ian Jindal, trustee**

‘The Crafts Council is uniquely positioned to have an incredible impact nationally on how people engage with contemporary craft whether maker or no, professional or otherwise. If I can bring my experiences and understanding to bear to help to ensure it effectively serves ALL the people here who want to do that and perhaps even reach out to new audiences then I see that would be an effective use of the opportunity I have as part of the governance team here at the Crafts Council’. **Melanie Eddy, trustee**

‘It's a great privilege to join the Board of the Crafts Council. As the daughter of artisans, and as a creative myself, now, more than ever I appreciate just how vital it is to ensure craft and creative enterprise are given centre stage when it comes to reshaping our economy. As a writer and a place-shaping strategist, I will continue to advocate, champion, and build cross-sector partnerships to amplify this worldview.’ **Yasmin Jones-Henry, trustee**

The skillset of these trustees provides an invaluable addition to the Crafts Council's leadership and governance, and their commitment to supporting the craft sector is welcome. As co-chairs, Andy and I are looking forward to engaging them fully in the work of this great organisation.' **Helen Hyde, co-chair**

'These trustees bring dynamism, energy and passion for championing crafts' increasingly vital role in all our lives. Their knowledge spans sustainability, innovation, education, retail & e-commerce, placemaking, brand experience and making around the globe. I am delighted to welcome them to the Board and ensure that their expertise has a positive impact on both the Crafts Council and the wider sector.' **Natalie Melton, acting executive director**

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Images

For high-res portrait images of trustees please contact Laura Hollingworth on l_hollingworth@craftscouncil.org.uk

Notes to editors

The 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 by supporting craft businesses and providing leadership to the craft sector
- building a sustainable and inclusive craft sector

Our current Trustees are, Andy Marshall, Ed Matthews-Gentle, Prof Geoffrey Crossick, Helen Hyde, Lady Kitt, Majeda Clarke, Yinka Ilori MBE.

Later in the year, we will welcome additional trustees; an alumni member of the Equity Advisory Council, a young trustee recruited from our Young Craft Citizens advisory group, and additional trustees recruited from an open recruitment process.