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Six New Members Appointed to the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate

The University of Cambridge has appointed six new members to the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate, the Museum's governing body. Bringing extensive experience across the arts, environmental and social impact, education, public service, finance and design, the new appointees join the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2026-nominated Fitzwilliam Museum at an exciting moment in its development.

The new Syndics are:

Maria Balshaw

Maria Balshaw is a museum leader, curator and writer. She was Director of Tate Galleries from 2017 to 2026. She helped this world-leading institution engage with sensitive times, realising a vision based on artistic boldness, inclusivity and equity. Her final exhibition at Tate, *Tracey Emin: A Second Life*, is one of the most successful contemporary art shows in Tate's history and Tate's audience in 2026 is the most diverse it has ever been.

Previously, Balshaw was Director of the Whitworth Gallery, University of Manchester; Director of Manchester City Galleries; and Director of Culture for Manchester City Council.

Balshaw holds a BA from the University of Liverpool, a Masters and PhD from the University of Sussex. In 2015, she was awarded a CBE for services to the arts. She is the author of the recent book, *Gathering of Strangers: Why Museums Matter* (Tate, 2024) as well as numerous other publications.

Naveed Chaudhry

Naveed Chaudhry is a Senior Leader in Climate Finance at Oxford Policy Management, an international development consultancy, where he established their private sector climate finance practice, working with governments, DFIs, and foundations across emerging markets. He is also Chair of HOST, a non-profit supporting grassroots climate and social justice movements, and remains involved in various other initiatives across climate, tech, and social impact.

Previously, Chaudhry co-founded Undaunted and The Greenhouse accelerator at Imperial College's Grantham Institute, supporting over 150 climate-focused ventures over four years. He also ran Climate Launchpad UK from 2019 to 2024, part of the world's largest green ideas competition, and the Climate-KIC accelerator, the first of its kind in the UK.

He began his career with a decade in investment banking at Lehman Brothers and Nomura, executing over \$38bn in capital markets transactions, before co-founding the London office for MCM Partners, a Hong Kong-based VC investment and advisory firm.

Chaudhry holds a degree in Geography from the University of Oxford.

Alvin Jiang

Alvin Jiang is Co-founder and Managing Partner of Boyu. Prior to founding Boyu, he worked in the Principal Investment Area of Goldman Sachs in Hong Kong and Investment Banking Division in New York. He currently serves as Chairman of Starbucks China and Vice Chairman of SKP, a globally renowned fashion retail group, and is the Founder of the De Ying Foundation. Mr. Jiang graduated from Harvard University with a bachelor's degree in Economics.

Natalie Parish

Natalie Parish is a founding partner at Isos Partnership – a research and advisory organisation focused on improving public services, particularly across education and children’s services. As a Director at Isos Partnership, she has led national policy-focused research on a wide range of topics including special educational needs, early help, narrowing achievement gaps between children in disadvantaged areas and their peers, and the role of local government in education. In addition to her national research, Parish has worked directly with local government and partners across England to analyse need, develop strategies and reconfigure systems and services to support children and families, in light of changing priorities and funding pressures. Prior to founding Isos Partnership, Parish was a senior manager in the Department for Education and in a high-performing London Borough.

Payal Wadhwa

Payal Wadhwa is a design strategist and civic innovation practitioner with over twenty years of experience across businesses, cultural institutions and governments. She is an alumna of the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, and Central Saint Martins, London.

Her career has spanned the public & private sector, working with clients including the National Museum of India, Tate, Government Digital Service UK, IKEA, HS2, Barclays, British Gas, London Olympics and Booking.com. She brings creative focus, commercial clarity and innovation rigour to complex organisational challenges.

Wadhwa is currently a strategic advisor to the Royal Government of Bhutan and founder of De Beauvoir Jazz Festival, championing live music and community-rooted placemaking in East London. A passionate advocate for cultural access, she is committed to advancing social inclusion and sustainable growth across cultural and civic institutions.

Alma Zevi

Alma Zevi is an art historian, writer, and curator with over fifteen years of professional experience working across international museums, cultural institutions, and the contemporary art world. She is the author of *Not Vital: Sculpture*, a comprehensive monograph dedicated to the life and work of the Swiss sculptor Not Vital. Alma Zevi has curated museum exhibitions throughout Europe, including at the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire (Geneva), Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, and Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Venice). From 2016 to 2023 she had an art gallery, where she organised over thirty exhibitions featuring more than sixty international artists. Her institutional speaking engagements include the Serpentine Galleries, Fondation Beyeler (Basel), Swiss Institute (NYC), Palazzo Grassi (Venice), and the University of Cambridge.

Zevi is a Co-chair of the National Gallery Young Ambassadors, Co-founder of the Warburg Institute Visionary Circle, and a Board Member of the Courtauld Institute of Art Campaign Board and of Pentagram Stiftung. She is also a supporter of the Camden Art Centre Emerging Artist Award at Frieze Art Fair, and a member of the Curatorial Committee for Venice Glass Week. Zevi holds a BA in History of Art from the Courtauld Institute of Art.

Luke Syson, director and Marlay Curator of the Fitzwilliam Museum said,

“I am really delighted to welcome these outstanding new members to the Fitzwilliam Museum Syndicate. Collectively and individually, they bring exceptional experience across museums, culture, education, finance, design, and social impact, bringing an international perspective that will hugely enrich the Museum’s work. At a moment of exciting momentum for the Fitz, their insight and leadership will help us continue to deepen our public engagement, strengthen our global connections, and champion the role museums can play in society today.”

Notes to Editors

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About the Fitzwilliam Museum

Nominated for Art Fund Museum of the Year 2026, the Fitzwilliam Museum is home to one of the world's most remarkable university art collections. We care for works of art and material culture primarily from Europe, North Africa and Asia that connect people across cultures and time. Since 1816 we've been a place for learning and discovery. Today, we use art, objects, spaces and experiences to inspire curiosity, reflection and creativity—opening up the past to transform our futures. As an internationally recognised centre for research and conservation, we work with partners across the world to explore how collections can be better understood, cared for and shared. www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk

The Fitzwilliam Museum's governing body, the Syndicate, was established by Regent House the University's legislative body, it is responsible for governance, strategic direction, advocacy and oversight. The Syndicate advises the senior leadership team on strategy and execution and holds it to account. It ensures the Museum has the resilience and financial sustainability to deliver its long-term ambitions, vision, mission, and business plan. It reports directly to the [University's General Board of the Faculties](#), reflecting its central role in university governance. Syndicate members of the Fitzwilliam Museum are not remunerated posts. All appointments will commence in summer 2026, with the exception of Natalie Parish, whose appointment will begin in January 2028.