

30 March 2023

COMPANY DRINKS SEEKS NEW MEMBERS FOR OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Company Drinks is a highly regarded, well-established **community space and social enterprise based in Barking and Dagenham**. We exist as an expanding network of users, collaborators and partners, who come together to pick, grow, make, learn, unlock and share the resources and knowledge around us.

Like the seasons, Company Drinks changes and adapts, and is shaped by those who are involved. **We collaborate and champion the ideas of those around us**, encourage each other to re-imagine new ways of working, trading and existing together, through conversation, care and good company.

Company Drinks was set up in 2014 as an art commission through a Create Art Award, and registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2015. Company Drinks sees itself as **part of a larger community-focused ecosystem of care**, that strives for an equal, just and non-discriminatory world.

Company Drinks is based at the Former Outdoor Bowls Pavilion in Barking Park, where we have a multifunctional and fully accessible building, including a good size club room, a tea kitchen, a training and production kitchen, office, and storage. Our outdoor space has a large lawn area, a wildflower meadow and community growing area with a focus on well-being and community herbalism.

Company Drinks is **organised in a cooperative manner** by a team of five who work between 1-3 days/week. Our continuous programmes include

- Community Growing, Well-being and Community Herbalism
- Wild and Well Programme for families, carers and young people
- Picking Trips and small batch non-alcoholic drinks production
- The Good Food Collective and Food Research
- Creative Opportunities for young people
- Local Social History and Heritage
- Community Economy and the Arts

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Everything we do is underpinned by our core values, which are

Be inclusive, our space and workshops are accessible to all, and we welcome everyone.

Be transparent, we are open and visible with the inner workings of how we run things.

Be anti – oppression, we are supportive of all marginalised groups, whether this affects race, age, gender or ability.

Give more than we take – we want people to leave us with more than they came to us with, this could be knowledge, food, drink or social interaction.

We are all teachers and learners – and respect everyone’s knowledge.

Being flexible – to change, we want to learn and grow as a community company and are open to changes to help us grow.

Promote positive community collaboration – we want people to work together collaboratively and in supportive environments.

Sharing healthy food and growing knowledge, giving people information and hand-on opportunities for healthier food choices.

Practice an economy that cares about the well-being of our minds, bodies and planet.



Context for Extending the CIC’s Board of Directors

Having started as temporary arts commission in 2014, the Company Drinks team grew and changed over the years according to its programmes and activities, and a board of Directors has been in place since the start of the CIC in 2015. Throughout 2020 -22, Company Drinks has re-organised and structured their organisational set-up and operations. As part of Phase 02 of the organisation’s Anti-Racism Action Plan which was written in September 2020, Company Drinks is reviewing the role and function of the board. A small working group comprising of Kathrin Böhm (Board and Team), Oribi Davies (Board and Team) and Jess Denning (Board) is currently structuring and supporting this change.

2023 marks a very exciting year for Company Drinks, as this spring marks our 10th year of ‘going picking’ together, and we are preparing to strengthen and develop the organisation to enter its second decade. Following the pandemic and a revised and remote programme

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to support and work with our regular user groups and communities, we now operate again from our fully accessible pavilion in Barking Park, and are actively expanding our Well and Wild outdoor programme, and community-led research and initiatives to highlight and address existing food cultures and knowledge in the borough. A group of regular users of the garden and the pavilion have in 2021 become the Company Drinks Keyholder Group, with the aim to share resources, training and development on a regular basis, and to co-decide on future programmes and spending. With the appointment of a new General Manager in 2022 we started a participatory process of adapting our policies, Anti-Racism Action Plan and Anti-Racism Tool Kit and safeguarding procedures as a matter of organisational care and commitment.

Company Drinks is proud of its achievements so far and is here to stay. We manage and use our resources carefully and are acknowledging the different economic underpinnings and contributions that enable us to exist.

The Board plays an important role in our organisational ecosystem of mutual support, and we are excited to welcome new members who like us believe passionately in the importance of unlocking and fairly sharing the resources and knowledge around us. We are looking for new members to the Board, including a new Chairperson to add to the skills and experience of the current Board, who enjoy working as part of a supportive but rigorous team.

We would expect you to be familiar with our organisation, and we are looking particularly, but not exclusively, for individuals who have expertise in the following areas:

- Finance and Bookkeeping
- Fundraising and Developing Relationships with Foundations
- HR and Organisational Policies
- Legal Advice (in regards to our site)
- Community Food Sector
- Developing Multi-Stakeholder Programmes and Dialogue

Company Drinks welcomes all applicants and wants the team to reflect the diversity of the communities we work with. We recognise that Company Drinks and the growing/craft food industry does not currently represent the population of the UK, and more specifically, that of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, and we are committed to addressing this in our recruitment process. We would like to encourage applications from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic, disabled and LGBTQ+ background as they are underrepresented in the team.

We're interested in the whole person and know that we all develop skills both in and outside of work, so even if there are some boxes you don't quite tick we'd love to hear from you anyway.

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Being a Director of a Community Interest Company (CIC)

As a member of the Board of a Community Interest Company, you will use your experience to help the organisation achieve its full potential as local a cultural and community-focused organisation.

This involves:

- Ensuring good governance, policies and management.
- Achieving financial stability, based on our Community Economy Model.
- Using your specific knowledge and experience to provide advice and guidance on issues relevant to your area of special expertise.
- Supporting the strategic vision and long-term planning of this multi-stakeholder organisation.

Legal responsibilities:

- Ensuring CD upholds it's legal obligations.
- Ensuring CD continues to act in the interests of the community.
- Liable for commercial debts up to the value of £1.

The Board meets four times, and meetings take place on-line and at the Company Drinks Pavilion in Barking. Board meetings are usually held on Monday evenings. The director's role is currently unpaid, but Company Drinks holds funds to pay members of the board who can't support the organisation in an unpaid role. The current hourly rate that is paid across all programmes and activities is £16,50 per hour. Reasonable travel expenses can be covered.

As a Board member you will agree to:

- Attend board meetings (minimum 3 a year).
- Be up to date with the business of the company.
- Be well prepared for each board meeting.
- Offer timely feedback and responses within your realm of expertise.
- Advocate for the company where/when appropriate.

How to apply

Deadline for applications: 12th May 2023 at 5pm

Send a max 1 page (approx. 750 words) cover letter or max 5 minutes audio/video:

- Tell us why you are interested in joining Company Drinks' board of Directors.
- Tell us about the experience and skills you would be bringing to the Company Drinks board.
- Please indicate if you are available for board meetings quarterly on Monday afternoons (generally 4pm-5.30pm).

Also attach a short CV (max 2 pages), as above, this can be written or an audio or video file. Please include the **contact details of two people** we can approach for references, if required.

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Please let us know in your application, or by email, if there are any physical / language / wellbeing access considerations we could make ahead of contacting you, or ahead of arranging online interviews. We will do our best to be as accommodating as possible.

Send your application with subject: 'Application Board Member' to walt@companydrinks.info

We will aim to respond to all applicants as soon as possible. However, as we are a small, part-time team, if you have not heard from us by 19th May, please assume that, unfortunately, you have not been selected for an interview this time.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss any aspect of this role in advance of applying, please contact Walter (they/he) by email walt@companydrinks.info. Please note, Walter works 2 days a week (generally Thursday and Friday) so allow plenty of time for a response.

Interviews will take place on 22nd May between 4pm-7pm, over Zoom. We aim to respond to candidates by 29th May.

The following board meeting to meet the current board members will be on 5th June, 4pm-5.30pm, over Zoom. There will also be opportunities to meet our team and keyholders.

Contact Company Drinks

Company Drinks Pavilion

Outdoor Bowls Pavilion
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Longbridge Road
Barking IG11 8TA

General E-mail: contact@companydrinks.info

To subscribe to our regular **newsletter** click [HERE](#)

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