



RIDLEY HALL

Wisdom. Theology. Mission

Ridley Hall's trustees are seeking to
appoint a new Chair of the Board



About Ridley Hall

We are a Christ-centred community gathered around the study of theology and the pursuit of biblical wisdom. Generously grounded in the evangelical Anglican tradition, we seek to teach and form missional disciples to serve the kingdom of God.

Within this identity our primary calling is to educate and form missional disciples to serve the kingdom of God in our cultural moment.

Therefore, we have five main objectives at this time:

1. Form Christian disciples to serve God through lay and ordained ministry, with rootedness in Scripture and tradition and openness to the Spirit's leadership for today
2. Create, Sustain and Develop new opportunities for the Study of Theology and pursuit of Biblical Wisdom
3. Facilitate a community rich with opportunity to practice spiritual disciplines and the seeking of good relationship with God and one another
4. Become more sustainable, both financially and environmentally
5. Care for and maximise the use of our site and assets





We are in good heart about the future

Ridley Hall is a theological college rooted in the evangelical Anglican tradition and situated in the centre of Cambridge. Historically, our main focus has been on residential formation for ordained ministry in the Church of England but our mission now extends much more broadly.

The college is in good heart and has a strong reputation but, like all Theological Education Institutions (TEIs), we are working hard to recover from the financial challenges caused by Covid and a changing Church of England. We have diversified significantly in recent years and our excellent tutorial staff (and wider staff body) are looking to streamline and consolidate what we do in a way that is sustainable, hopeful and flexible. Our business plan sets out a clear path to ensuring a sustainable financial position in the next two years and the Board is confident that we have the people and resources we need to bring this about.

Our distinctive qualities

Ridley Hall operates within a diverse TEI sector in the UK. We have identified six particular qualities that distinguish what we offer from other institutions:

Innovative Education: We are anchored in the historic teaching of the Church and the Christian theological tradition, while aiming to be creatively responsive to the changing needs of ministry training for wide-ranging contexts. We aim to form the whole person in conversation with our community of students, both gathered and dispersed, so they can be rooted in Scripture and tradition and creative imaginative for the future of the church.

Collaborative Ministry: We are an Anglican theological college committed to developing training for students across the spectrum of the Church and the Anglican Communion. We welcome Gospel-shaped partnerships with networks and ministries within and beyond the Church of England.

Confessional Scholarship: We celebrate life-giving scholarship because theology is the study of the living God who gives life. At Ridley, we are not interested in academics for the sake of academics but in theology for the sake of the Church. Celebrating our partnerships with the Universities of Cambridge and Durham, we are passionate about shaping how the Church and wider society thinks by investing in rigorous confessional scholarship.

Cultural Engagement: John tells us that “the Word became flesh and dwelled among us” (Jn 1:14). Jesus embedded himself within the particularities of place and the apostles proclaimed the gospel within specific contexts. Ridley Hall discusses ancient texts and ancient truths in creative conversation with the ideas and values of our own cultural moment. This is core to our missional ethos.

Hospitable Ethos: A longstanding saying at Ridley Hall is “roots down, walls down, bridges out,” and as the Augustinian saying goes, “in essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.” We are secure in our evangelical tradition yet open to hosting difficult conversations and learning from others. And since God has gifted us with a beautiful site, we celebrate the ministry of hospitality by inviting new and old friends to join our community for worship and fellowship.

Theological Integrity: While culturally engaged and educationally innovative, we remain faithful to the Creeds and Confessions of the Christianity, including the Reformers’ commitment to the ongoing renewal and reforming of our thinking and practice. We celebrate Scripture as ‘inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work and rejoice in the Church’s creedal confessions of the Triune God’.



Our values

Gracious: because grace is at the heart of the Gospel. We know our own frailty and sinfulness and share the grace that God has shared with us with those around us

Faithful: because we are called to follow in the footsteps of Christ, in faithfulness to his teaching, to the words of Scripture and the witness of the church

Hopeful: because we trust that God is at work in the world around us, and we seek to join in with God's action and mission

Creative: because we live in changing times and God calls us again and again to proclaim the Good News of the kingdom in each new season, in ways that are rooted and faithful yet responding to new challenges, questions and situations

Responsible: because God has entrusted us with the welfare of his people training at this time, and with great resources in our staff, students, buildings and contacts, and we aim to be good stewards, who are both prudent and able to take risks under the Spirit.



What do others say

The best way to get a flavour of what Ridley is about is to come and talk to some of our students, but if you can't do that then we'd encourage you to read our recently-published Periodic External Review from the Church of England here:
www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2025-04/ridley-per-report.pdf

Among other things the reviewers said that:

"Ridley Hall offers residential training to enable the ministerial formation of ordinands through a number of pathways in an intentional broad and welcoming Anglican evangelicalism, where the students grow in their love of God, through rigorous study with their minds, pastoral development of their hearts, excellent worship with their spirits, and a well-rounded community experience for the whole person."

"Both sponsoring bishops and Diocesan Directors of Ordinands expressed their confidence in Ridley Hall's formational programmes. Of particular note was the high quality of the theological education, producing ordinands 'who are prepared to wrestle with the issues' and are 'missionally switched on'. The attention to integration of learning and practice and the support for those from less traditional academic backgrounds was also affirmed. External stakeholders valued the supportive community life and the community's pattern of prayer. Overall, they shared their confidence in Ridley Hall and its current leadership."



The Board

The Board of Trustees consists of up to 15 members with a variety of backgrounds and experience.

We seek to maintain a good balance of women / men/ lay / ordained and other forms of diversity to ensure that a range of voices are represented and heard at Board level.

We meet formally 4 times per year and occasionally do informal business by email between meetings. Our usual pattern is for subcommittees (education, finance, and fundraising & development) to meet in the morning, followed by a full Board meeting in the afternoon. Attendance at Board meetings is supplemented by the Principal, Vice Principal and Senior Student, with other staff and students contributing to meetings as appropriate.

What we are looking for

Our primary hope is to appoint a prayerful, committed Christian who locates themselves within the Evangelical tradition of the Church of England. Our new Chair of Trustees will also need to have integrity and humility in enabling the college to be the best it can be, and be a wise and courageous leader who can work with the Board and the leadership team to implement clear and inspiring strategic direction. Our new Chair also needs to have sufficient time and energy to invest in the role to quickly develop strong relationships with key stakeholders.





Chair of the Board : Key Responsibilities

- **Leadership and Governance:** Strategic direction and leadership to the board of trustees, ensuring effective governance and adherence to the college's mission and values.
- **Collaboration:** Working closely with the Principal and senior leadership team, to realise strategic direction, monitor progress, and provide support and challenge as needed.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, including alumni, donors, and the wider community, while advocating for Ridley Hall within the wider church as appropriate.
- **Team Building and Support:** Developing an effective team of senior staff and trustees, supporting the chairs of board subcommittees, ensuring decisions are made, and strategies are put in place.
- **Financial Oversight and Risk Management:** Overseeing the college's financial health, ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory responsibilities (including safeguarding), managing risks, and maintaining the organization's reputation.

Skills and Experience

Skills Needed

Essential

- Effective chairing of a Board of Trustees
- Excellent people and communication skills
- Strategic, business and financial acumen
- Ability to build relationships at all levels

Desirable

- Fundraising expertise
- Change management and team-building skills
- Theological understanding and an entrepreneurial, innovative mindset

Experience Needed

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience (ideally within a related context)
- Experience of working with others to lead change
- Understanding of the structures of the Church of England
- Strong governance background – able to hold together policy, process and strategic direction at Board level while supporting the executive to realise these
- Working knowledge of the theological education sector

Desirable

- Previous experience as Chair of a Board of Trustees, demonstrating an ability to build up and maintain an engaged and positive Board
- Experience in enabling people to bring together a range of factors (pastoral, educational, financial, legal, practical, theological) into a coherent strategic plan with clear implementation steps
- A range of connections and networks both within and beyond the Church of England (including international)
- Significant experience within the theological education sector

Additional Information

- **Location:** Ability to be in Cambridge for Board meetings four times per year, and other in-person meetings as needed. Some meetings may take place remotely.
- **Commitment:** Approximately 2-3 days per month on a flexible basis, with capacity to increase involvement for a time if needed.
- **Reporting to:** Board of Trustees.
- **Term:** The Chair will be appointed for an initial five-year term, with the option to extend once.
- **Timing:** We are hoping to appoint a new Chair by the autumn of 2025 to allow a short handover period before the current Chairs step down in March 2026.
- **Remuneration:** The Chair role is unpaid, commensurate with Ridley Hall's charitable status. Reasonable expenses in connection with the role will be covered.
- **Clerical support:** The Chair is provided with excellent clerical support by the Clerk to the Trustees.
- **Safeguarding:** As a person of significant influence within the college an incoming Chair would be expected to be familiar with safeguarding processes and procedures (additional training can be provided if needed) and will need to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

Interested in the role?

For more information you can contact either the Principal, the Revd Preb. Dr Isabelle Hamley (principal@ridley.cam.ac.uk), or the Chair of the Board Nominations Committee, the Revd Michael Bigg (mdb47@cam.ac.uk) for an informal conversation. It may also be appropriate to speak to the outgoing Chair, Mr Mark Spelman, and this can be arranged if needed.

How to apply

If you would like to be considered for the role please send a current CV and covering letter to the Clerk to the Trustees, Katie Bowers pa@ridley.cam.ac.uk

Closing Date: Thursday 31st July 5pm

Interviews: Thursday 18th September, Discernment Day for shortlisted candidates to meet with trustees, staff, and students at Ridley Hall, Cambridge.



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