

Tim Richards announced as new chair of the British Film Institute

Tim Richards has been appointed as the next Chair of the BFI, Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has announced today.

Oliver Dowden has confirmed that Richards will take up the position as Chair from Tuesday 16th February and will serve a term of up to 3 years.

Since Richards founded Vue International in 1999, the cinema operator has expanded to 225 multiplex cinemas across Europe and Taiwan attracting over 100 million customers a year to screenings. He joined the BFI as a Governor in 2013 and has held positions on many industry boards since 2007.

Oliver Dowden, Culture Secretary, said:

The BFI showcases the great creativity and innovation of the UK's hugely successful screen sectors, which are already bouncing back strongly. I know Tim will be a brilliant champion for the industry and his extensive experience will help ensure the BFI plays an important role in our cultural and economic recovery.

Tim Richards, BFI Chair Designate, said:

I am honoured and thrilled to have been asked to chair the BFI, especially at such a crucial time for the arts and cultural sector. British film and television have always had a unique power to inspire people globally and I am confident that Britain's talent and creativity will help lead the screen industries to a great future.

Ben Roberts, BFI Chief Executive, said:

It's great news that Tim Richards will be the BFI's new Chair. Having been on the BFI Board for 7 years, Tim is already under the skin of our organisation, and has been an incredible supporter and champion of the work we do across film culture. His experience and knowledge of the business of film, particularly across exhibition but also across skills and education, will be enormously valuable to the BFI and I am very much looking forward to working closely with him as he steers us into our next exciting chapter.

The appointment process for the BFI chair is made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Code for Public Appointments and is regulated by the Office

of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' (OCPAs).

Official figures recently released by the BFI revealed strong signs of economic recovery in UK film and high-end TV production, including a £1.19 billion upturn in production spend for film and high-end TV in the last three months of 2020. Restarting film and TV activity has been made possible by the Government's £500 million Film and TV Production Restart Scheme, which has already supported more than 170 productions across the UK.

The BFI has also awarded more than £16 million in grant support to over 200 independent cinemas from the Culture Recovery Fund on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. More grant applications from independent cinemas are also currently being assessed. At the start of the year, cinemas were able to apply for another £14 million in grants as part of the second round of the Culture Recovery Fund. The new round of funding is in addition to the £30 million already being allocated by the BFI.

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Notes to Editors

In 1999, Tim Richards left Warner Bros. Studio in Los Angeles to found Vue International, which has grown into a leading international cinema operator with 225 multiplex cinemas in nine countries in Europe and in Taiwan. Over the course of the past 30 years in cinema exhibition, Tim has developed extensive international experience in all major markets globally. In December 2020, Variety Magazine named Tim as one of the 500 most influential business leaders shaping the global \$2 trillion entertainment industry. The Hollywood Reporter named Tim as one of the top five entertainment innovators of the Year and The Independent newspaper named Tim as one of the "20 Most Influential People in Film".

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. There is a requirement for appointees to publicly declare any political activity. No political activity has been declared by Tim Richards.

About the BFI

The BFI is the UK's lead organisation for film, television and the moving image. It is a cultural charity that:

- Curates and presents the greatest international public programme of world cinema for audiences; in cinemas, at festivals and online
- Cares for the BFI National Archive – the most significant film and television archive in the world
- Actively seeks out and supports the next generation of filmmakers
- Works with Government and industry to make the UK the most creatively exciting and prosperous place to make film internationally

Founded in 1933, the BFI is a registered charity governed by Royal Charter.

Government announces £20 million SME Brexit Support Fund

- Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster announces £20 million SME Brexit Support Fund to help small businesses with changes to trade rules with the EU;
- Traders will be able to apply for a grant of up to £2,000 to pay for practical support for importing and exporting;
- Fund will help businesses to prepare for the implementation of import controls which come into force from April and July.

Today (Thursday 11 February), the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove has announced a £20 million SME Brexit Support Fund to support small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) adjust to new customs, rules of origin, and VAT rules when trading with the EU.

SMEs who trade only with the EU and are therefore new to importing and exporting processes will be encouraged to apply for grants of up to £2,000 for each trader to pay for practical support including training and professional advice to ensure they can continue trading effectively with the EU.

This announcement follows extensive engagement with individual businesses, leading business organisations and trade associations from across all parts of the UK, including through the Brexit Business Taskforce. Chaired by Michael Gove the weekly meetings provided an opportunity to identify challenges and find solutions to outstanding issues. To provide SMEs with additional support, the fund will be administered through the pre-existing Customs Grant Scheme and will open for applications next month.

It has been set up to support businesses prepare for the new import controls coming into force from April and July, as set out in the [Border Operating Model](#). Having taken back control of our borders, we made the pragmatic decision to introduce new import controls in three stages up to 1 July 2021 to allow traders and hauliers time to adjust to new processes. This means businesses do not have to complete new import declarations for up to six months, unless they are moving controlled goods.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said:

The Government has listened carefully to the issues raised by the business community through the Brexit Business Taskforce and that's why we are bringing forward this financial support to help small businesses adapt to the changes to our trading relationship with the EU.

This new targeted funding will see small businesses get more of the practical support they need to adjust to the new processes and prepare for further changes as we implement our own import controls in April and July.

Together we will seize new opportunities available to a fully independent global trading United Kingdom.

Members of the Brexit Business Taskforce have welcomed the additional support.

Mike Cherry, National Chair at the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

Today's announcement is very significant. Small businesses, often with few cash reserves, are for the first time facing complex new customs processes, VAT requirements and rules of origin. While many have come to FSB for help, we have been asking for proper financial assistance of this scale, so that a cash-strapped small business can afford to buy-in expertise, training and practical support. The new fund will make a significant difference, and we are pleased that Ministers have really engaged with us on this, and come up with an excellent response.

Allie Rennison, Head of Trade Policy at the Institute of Directors said:

This support package delivers on the IoD's longstanding campaign to help SMEs access the professional advice needed in managing a suite of changes arising from Brexit.

Smaller firms simply cannot manage many of the processes themselves and require experts across a range of areas to assist with trade continuity, and we commend this government for responding to our call.

The government is also announcing that Logistics UK will be joining the Brexit Business Taskforce as standing members from today. Logistics UK's constructive engagement and advocacy in tackling issues relating to the end of the transition period has been vital in supporting hauliers, traders and their supply chains adjust to our new relationship with the EU.

David Wells, Chief Executive of Logistics UK said:

Logistics UK welcomes the additional support that is being put in place to help SMEs make sure they can adapt and succeed in the new trading environment. These issues directly impact the operations and livelihoods of our members who carry their produce into the EU and have to be confident that the correct paperwork is in place.

I'm delighted that the government has recognised the importance of Logistics to our economy, and the critical role it plays in our future trading relationships with the EU, by inviting Logistics UK to represent the sector on the Brexit Business Taskforce, alongside the other major business groups in the UK. Logistics UK has been at the forefront of helping government to keep Britain trading and I look forward to continuing our challenging and constructive dialogue focused on securing the best possible outcome for the whole sector and the economy.

In the last week we have seen overall freight flows between GB and the EU reach 98% when compared to the same time last year. There is still no disruption at ports and compliance with new rules remains high thanks to the continued efforts of hauliers and UK traders.

In addition to this new support, the government is:

- Meeting businesses from specific sectors across all parts of the UK weekly through the Brexit Business Taskforce chaired by Michael Gove. The latest meeting focussed specifically on businesses in Wales;
- Establishing the Seafood Exports Working Group, meeting twice a week to troubleshoot issues raised by the industry; and a newly established Scottish Seafood Exports Task Force;
- Offering support to businesses moving goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland through its Trader Support Service;
- Providing numerous [helplines](#) which businesses can contact if they need further information;
- This includes managing dedicated HMRC exporting telephone and online helplines; The number is 0300 322 9434 and businesses can also speak to an adviser online at tax.service.gov.uk;
- Running regular [webinars](#) with policy specialists;
- Providing the [Brexit Checker Tool](#) on GOV.UK which gives businesses a personalised list of actions that they need to take;
- Offering face-to-face support for exporters in delivered via a network of around 300 International Trade Advisers (ITAs);
- Leading a specific taskforce working with businesses across Northern Ireland and Great Britain on issues related to the Northern Ireland Protocol; and
- Operating a range of other support schemes including a guarantee scheme aimed at SMEs which means the government can provide an 80% guarantee on financial support from lenders to help with general exporting costs, up to the value of £25 million.

[Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to](#)

Tajikistan: Tim Jones

Press release

Mr Tim Jones has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan in succession to Mr Matthew Lawson.



Mr Tim Jones has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan in succession to Mr Matthew Lawson who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Jones will take up his appointment during September 2021.

Full name: Timothy Aidan Marschall Jones

Married to: Dr Christin Marschall Jones

Children: Two

Dates	Role
2013 to 2020	Berlin, First Secretary Economics, later Senior Economic Policy Advisor
2008 to 2013	Brussels, Principal Advisor, EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, later Global Issues and Counter-Terrorism, European External Action Service
2006 to 2008	Lille, Consul General
2003 to 2006	FCO, Head of Operations, IT Strategy Unit
2003	FCO, Rapid Deployment Team Coordinator, Consular Division
1999 to 2002	Yerevan, Her Majesty's Ambassador
1996 to 1999	Tehran, Deputy Head of Mission, later Chargé d'Affaires
1994 to 1995	Mostar, Press and Liaison Officer, WEU Police Mission, EU Administration
1992 to 1994	FCO, Permanent Under Secretary's Department
1988 to 1992	The Hague, Second Secretary
1987 to 1988	Vienna, Member of the British Delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
1984 to 1986	FCO, Assistant Desk Officer, Western Europe Department

Government sets out new plans to help build trust in use of digital identities

- Public invited to contribute to draft rules around data protection, security and inclusivity
- Part of work to help people prove who they are without the need for physical documents
- Aim is to make people's lives easier and boost the country's £149 billion digital economy

The government has today published its draft rules of the road for governing the future use of digital identities. It is part of plans to make it quicker and easier for people to verify themselves using modern technology and create a process as trusted as using passports or bank statements.

Digital identity products allow people to prove who they are, where they live or how old they are. They are set to revolutionise transactions such as buying a house, when people are often required to prove their identity multiple times to a bank, conveyancer or estate agent, and buying age-restricted goods online or in person.

The new '[trust framework](#)' lays out the draft rules of the road organisations should follow. It includes the principles, policies, procedures and standards governing the use of digital identity to allow for the sharing of information to check people's identities or personal details, such as a user's address or age, in a trusted and consistent way. This will enable interoperability and increase public confidence.

The framework, once finalised, is expected to be brought into law. It has specific standards and requirements for organisations which provide or use digital identity services including:

- Having a data management policy which explains how they create, obtain, disclose, protect, and delete data;
- Following industry standards and best practice for information security and encryption;
- Telling the user if any changes, for example an update to their address, have been made to their digital identity;
- Where appropriate, having a detailed account recovery process and notifying users if organisations suspect someone has fraudulently accessed their account or used their digital identity;
- Following guidance on how to choose secure authenticators for their

service.

Organisations will be required to publish a yearly report explaining which demographics have been, or are likely to have been, excluded from their service and why. The move will help make firms aware if there are inclusivity problems in their products while also boosting transparency.

The framework will also help promote the use of 'vouching', where [trusted people](#) within the community such as doctors or teachers 'vouch for' or confirm a person's identity, as a useful alternative for those without traditional documents, such as passports and driving licences.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman said:

Establishing trust online is absolutely essential if we are to unleash the future potential of our digital economy.

Today we are publishing draft rules of the road to guide organisations using new digital identity technology and we want industry, civil society groups and the public to make their voices heard.

Our aim is to help people confidently verify themselves while safeguarding their privacy so we can build back better and fairer from the pandemic.

[Economists](#) have estimated the cost of manual offline identity proofing could be as high as £3.3 billion per year. The new plans will not only make people's lives easier but also give a boost to the country's £149 billion digital economy by creating new opportunities for innovation, enabling smoother, cheaper and more secure online transactions, and saving businesses time and money.

The move has been welcomed by industry and civil society groups which have praised the government's open and collaborative approach, as it works to develop a final trust framework that meets the needs of all users.

Stuart Young, Managing Director at Etime Technologies, said:

"This framework is key to developing a trusted digital identity market that will make people's lives easier and save businesses time and money.

We look forward to contributing further to these plans to help make sure the final framework works for everyone in the home buying and selling sector.

Emma Lindley, Co-founder of Women In Identity, said:

We believe that digital identity systems should be inclusive and accessible for anyone that chooses to use them.

This collaborative approach by the government in designing the trust framework is a step in the right direction towards accountability across all stakeholders who are involved, and ensures no one is left behind.

The 'trust framework' forms part of the government's commitment to taking a leading role in developing the digital identity market without the need for national identity cards. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will work with the digital identity community to develop the framework and aims to publish the next iteration in the summer. DCMS continues its work on proposals on laws that will underpin the digital identity market and will consult on these later this year.

Cabinet Office Minister Julia Lopez said:

Products that help digitally to verify a person's identity are becoming increasingly important as more areas of our work and home lives move online. Creating a common trust framework will give greater clarity and certainty to organisations who want to work in this field about what is expected of them. More importantly, however, it will help to deepen users' trust and confidence in digital identities and the standards we expect in the safeguarding of their personal data and privacy.

GDS is working closely with DCMS and across Government to develop guidance and products in support of the trust framework. We believe building users' confidence will be fundamental to delivering our overall ambition to make it much easier and simpler for citizens to access government services online.

Notes to editors

- The full [UK Digital Identity and Attributes Trust Framework](#) is available online, along with details of how to provide comments and feedback.
 - The new proposals, drawn up by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), will help restrict opportunities for criminals and allow organisations who choose to sign up know they are meeting the necessary requirements. This will help give people confidence that particular service protects their data and privacy.
 - Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman chaired a series of roundtable sessions with industry and civil society groups in the autumn to hear first hand their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges involved in the government's trust framework ambitions.
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Apprenticeship route to work pays dividends for two leading managers

Two of LLWR's most senior personnel are fine adverts for what can be achieved by going down the apprenticeship route after leaving school.

CEO Designate Martin Walkingshaw and Becky Ruddy, Head of Infrastructure, were both given a solid grounding in the nuclear industry as Sellafield apprentices.

Martin, currently Deputy CEO, hailed his apprenticeship with British Nuclear Fuels as a "great foundation" for his subsequent career.

He said: "I occasionally tease people who went down the university route that when they were contemplating a gap year, I was working with spent fuel and radioactive waste, and learning my trade, instrumentation and control, in some of the most advanced nuclear plants in the world, as well as some of the earliest!

"It isn't an easy route, working full time and also studying (for me that meant day release/two-night classes a week) is hard, but the friendships I made during my apprenticeship have lasted a lifetime. An apprenticeship gave me confidence to seek more responsibility and encouraged me to be professionally curious.

"It also taught me about the fundamental importance of safety and quality in our industry. These things allowed me to advance through engineering, operations, business management and commercial roles. And even though my trade skills are a bit rusty I reckon I could still calibrate a gamma monitor. And you never know when that will come in handy."

Becky went into her apprenticeship at 18 and has not regretted it for a moment.

"I had an interest in biology and chemistry at A level and applied for a Gen2 Scientific Apprenticeship," she said. "I hadn't felt ready to leave home and go to university so an apprentice was an ideal compromise. After spending a few weeks in the training centre we went straight into the workplace, at Sellafield, in the labs at THORP.

"An apprenticeship gave me the chance to learn about a subject I enjoyed, but also gave me an opportunity to put it into practice whilst getting paid.

"I learned about being part of a team and also about being accountable for my own work. It instilled a really good discipline in me early on I've been able to progress through my career after starting on the shop floor, where I got a really good grounding."

Becky went on to complete her three year apprenticeship in just over two and moved into a staff job as an Analytical Chemist at Sellafield.

She added: "An apprenticeship can open so many doors and gives you the opportunity to do many different things. Mine was in quite a technical subject, but I am doing something totally different now, and there have been lots of things in between."

Apprentice Chloe Glaister has been working as part of Becky's team and receiving a thorough grounding in all aspects of the department. Chloe has also recently been successful in securing a permanent role following her apprenticeship.

"Chloe is doing a real job that is of value to LLWR whilst gaining experience and qualifications, and she is being supported in a 'safe' environment where she can learn," Becky said. "She is gaining experience in different areas of Infrastructure under the direction of her mentor Megan who is doing a fantastic job supporting Chloe."

Becky leaves LLWR at the end of this week after 11 years to take up a new role at Dounreay as Head of Decommissioning of the Fuel Cycle Areas. Where, no doubt, she will continue to take a keen interest in the development of her apprentices.