

Northern
Ballet

Candidate brief for the position on the

Board of Trustees

February 2025



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Cover: Sarah Chun and Jonathan Hanks in *Four Last Songs*. Photo Emily Nuttall.
Above: Helen Bogatch and Filippo Di Vilio in *Romeo & Juliet*. Photo Kyle Baines.

Who we are

Northern Ballet is a powerhouse for inventive dance, creating and touring narrative dance at various scales nationally and internationally. Bold and confident in our approach, we engage, involve and move our audiences. We reach a diverse range of people through passionate storytelling, a mastery of classical dance technique and an absolute commitment to our leading role as an international ambassador for world-class dance.

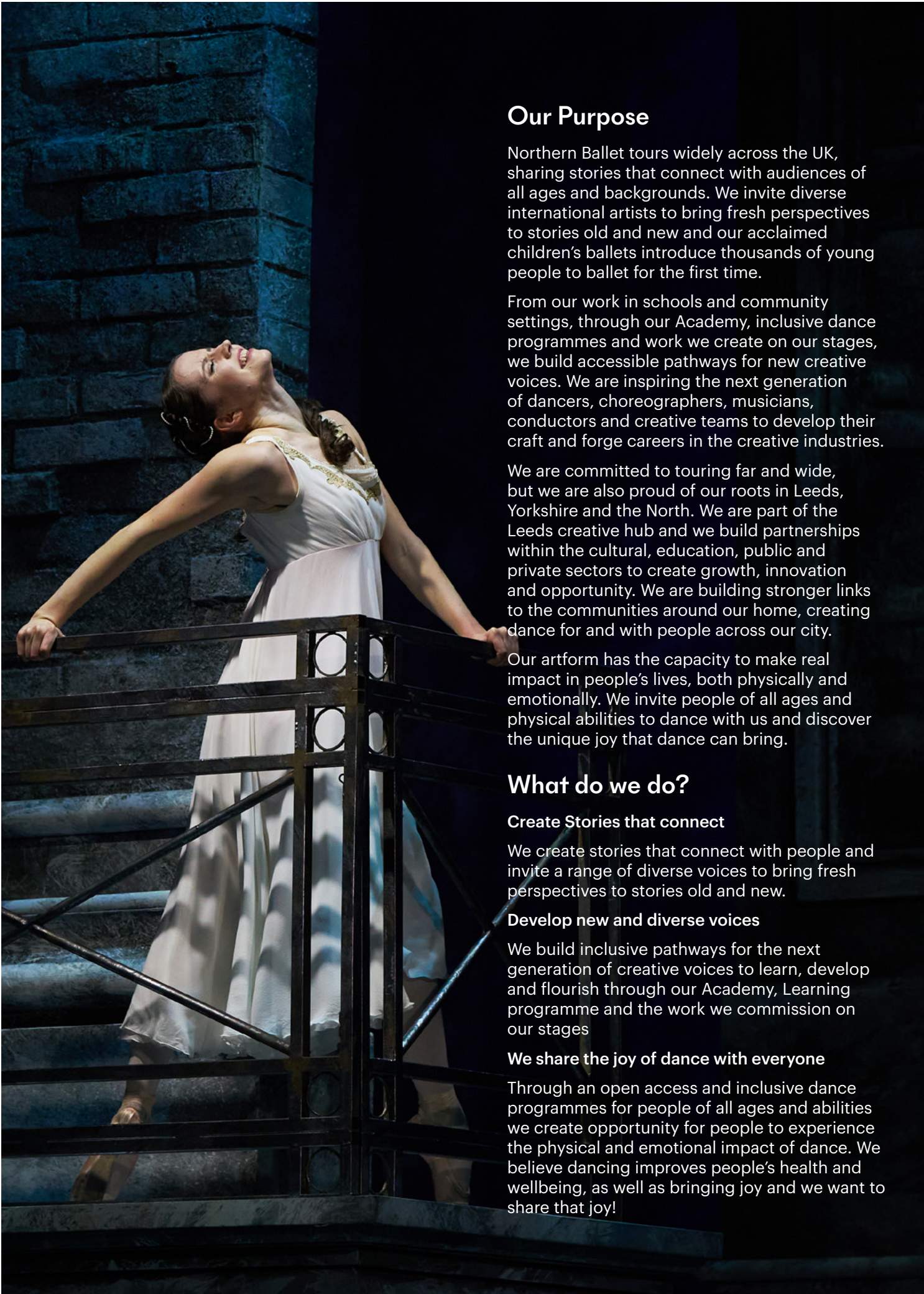
Based in Leeds with a major presence in the city, Northern Ballet tours widely across the UK, creating full-length narrative ballets, mixed repertoire, and productions specifically for children.

We have our own studio theatre in our purpose-built facility in the city centre, programming dance from UK and International companies. Our programme is supported by a wide reaching learning programme and professional training routes provided by our Academy.

Northern Ballet is a registered charity benefitting from regular funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and this is an exciting time as we embrace the ACE strategy, Let's Create, whilst developing our own new five-year vision and strategy for the Company.

We also enjoy support from Leeds City Council and are a key part of the Leeds culture offering.

The last two to three years have been challenging for most arts organisations, but we have a strong foundation and leadership to take the company on to new heights of success.



Our Purpose

Northern Ballet tours widely across the UK, sharing stories that connect with audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We invite diverse international artists to bring fresh perspectives to stories old and new and our acclaimed children's ballets introduce thousands of young people to ballet for the first time.

From our work in schools and community settings, through our Academy, inclusive dance programmes and work we create on our stages, we build accessible pathways for new creative voices. We are inspiring the next generation of dancers, choreographers, musicians, conductors and creative teams to develop their craft and forge careers in the creative industries.

We are committed to touring far and wide, but we are also proud of our roots in Leeds, Yorkshire and the North. We are part of the Leeds creative hub and we build partnerships within the cultural, education, public and private sectors to create growth, innovation and opportunity. We are building stronger links to the communities around our home, creating dance for and with people across our city.

Our artform has the capacity to make real impact in people's lives, both physically and emotionally. We invite people of all ages and physical abilities to dance with us and discover the unique joy that dance can bring.

What do we do?

Create Stories that connect

We create stories that connect with people and invite a range of diverse voices to bring fresh perspectives to stories old and new.

Develop new and diverse voices

We build inclusive pathways for the next generation of creative voices to learn, develop and flourish through our Academy, Learning programme and the work we commission on our stages

We share the joy of dance with everyone

Through an open access and inclusive dance programmes for people of all ages and abilities we create opportunity for people to experience the physical and emotional impact of dance. We believe dancing improves people's health and wellbeing, as well as bringing joy and we want to share that joy!

A Centre of Excellence



Northern Ballet is one of the world's leading narrative ballet companies.

'A Company that boasts the best dance actors in the world.'

Dance Europe

'Polished, vivacious and expressive'

The Stage on *Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets*

'Northern Ballet is back with a bang'

The Telegraph on *Dangerous Liaisons*



'Northern Ballet has never been a company to shrink from a challenge'

The Telegraph on *The Great Gatsby*

'A beautifully filmed whirl of pleasure and pain, liberty and confinement'

The Guardian on *Ma Vie*, a Northern Ballet original short film

Nominated Outstanding Company at the National Dance Awards for 7 years running

Nominated for Excellence in Touring

UK Theatre Awards 2022

Nominated Outstanding Male Classical Performance for Joseph Taylor in *Casanova*

National Dance Awards 2022

Diversity & Equality

We are proud that 40% of our dancers are from global majority backgrounds and we continue to seek opportunities to further increase diversity throughout the whole Company. We continue with our long term strategy by developing the '[Spotted!](#)' programme at local schools to ensure any child with the potential to pursue a career in ballet is nurtured and supported to do so.

We work to an accessible pricing structure in all venues, with premium tickets available alongside entry prices of around £15. Our Children's Ballets continue to be priced accessibly to reduce barriers to attendance, with an average ticket price currently of around just £7.

We offer accessible performances for visually impaired patrons through audio described performances in partnership with VocalEyes.

We continue to deliver relaxed performances of Children's Ballets in the Stanley & Audrey Burton Theatre and work with partner venues to encourage and support them to do the same.

At our state-of-the-art studios we deliver [Ability](#), our dance course for adults with learning disabilities and [In Motion](#), our dance course for wheelchair users and each year we hold [Expressions](#), our festival of inclusive dance.

The Academy of Northern Ballet

We offer opportunities for people from all walks of life and of all ages and ability to experience the joy and excitement of dancing. Our [Centre for Advanced Training \(CAT\)](#) delivered in partnership with the Northern School of Contemporary Dance, continues to grow and proves highly successful in providing high quality dance training to young people enabling them to succeed in entering vocational training. CAT graduates from the ballet strand have continued onto training at the Royal Ballet Upper School, English National Ballet School, Central School of Ballet, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Elmhurst, the School of Hamburg Ballet and National Ballet of Canada School.

Our [Associate Division](#) offers training in classical and contemporary dance and is a less time intensive course with less focus on progression to a career in dance.

Our [Professional Graduate Programme](#) is an exciting one-year classical ballet finishing course designed to make the connection between full-time training and professional performance.

We also offer a range of Open Classes to children, young people and adults of all backgrounds and ability.



Websites for Further Information

northernballet.com

digitaldance.org

northernballet.com/academy

Northern Ballet Learning

Our Learning Team is committed to creating opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to experience and learn about dance. We work in schools, theatres, and community settings across the UK to bring the joy of ballet to as many people as possible. From talks at theatres, to regular weekly specialist dance classes, the team works tirelessly to make ballet accessible to all.

We work in schools to support and encourage an active and creative approach to the curriculum, using the Company's narrative dance works as a tool to develop children's physical and emotional wellbeing through projects such as [Rise](#). Our Early Years work is well-established and uses popular stories to encourage creative movement-play with music. We also support teachers and dance practitioners to develop their skills through regular CPD sessions and a range of resources to support the teaching of dance.

Inclusive Dance Practice is key to our success; the team have developed inclusive pedagogy across our output to ensure our teaching methodology is world-class, leading the way in making ballet more accessible. Our specialist courses include [Ability](#), a dance course for adults with additional learning support needs, [In Motion](#), a course for wheelchair users and [Dance for Parkinson's](#). Each year we host [Expressions](#) – a festival of inclusive dance, bringing professional and community dance groups together to perform, learn, and share their passion for dance.

We believe that everyone can enjoy dance. Whether watching or joining in, experienced, or brand new to ballet – all our work is designed to be fun, creative, and inclusive.



Overview

Our Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance of Northern Ballet. Its members act both as Trustees of the Charity and Directors of the Company. The Board meets four times a year with other sub committees focused on finance and people.

We are seeking new board members to join the Board of Trustees to help us to realise our ambitious plans to break down barriers to world class ballet for people across the UK and to develop the business to ensure our long-term sustainability.

We are committed to attracting, representing and amplifying the voices of people currently underrepresented in our workforce, our audiences and our thinking. We encourage applications from candidates from diverse backgrounds, with a range of experiences and skillsets, and welcome applications from people at different stages of their careers. We want to particularly encourage applications from candidates who have previously been underrepresented at Northern Ballet and within the wider industry due to barriers linked to ethnicity, class, disability, gender, or geography.

The role of trustees

The Board of Trustees oversees the company's strategy, finances, operations and governance, working with Artistic Director Federico Bonelli, Executive Director David Collins and Finance Director Ameena Bradford.

The Charity Commission identifies six essential duties of members of a Board of Trustees:

- To ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit
- To comply with your charity's governing document and the law
- To act in your charity's best interests
- To manage your charity's resources responsibly
- To act with reasonable care and skill
- To ensure your charity is accountable

We are seeking new board members who share our commitment to making world class dance accessible to all, be it through active participation in one of our teaching activities, or attendance at a touring production. They will have the confidence and ability to become part of an experienced and highly motivated board guiding Northern Ballet's future.

Diversity and accessibility are core to our work and in order to ensure this in every part of the organisation, we will work with new Trustees to meet any requirements that support access to meetings and other Board duties.

How our trustees make a difference to our work

- Ensure that Northern Ballet has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction.
- Approve and monitor delivery of Business Plans, including overall objectives and budgets while delegating implementation to the staff, ensuring Northern Ballet's overall financial stability and sustainability.
- Oversee the delivery of Northern Ballet's funding requirements, in particular commitments to Arts Council England and Leeds City Council, supporting strategic direction, agreeing appropriate targets and evaluating performance.
- Ensure that the charity's governance is of the highest possible standard in pursuit of its objectives. This includes compliance with its governing document, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- Safeguard the reputation and values of Northern Ballet.
- Champion equality and diversity and ensure Northern Ballet fosters a positive, inclusive culture.
- Have a willingness to contribute to the achievement of the fundraising targets of Northern Ballet annually, which could include: attending fundraising events, introductions to potential individual or corporate supporters, or personal support through membership, donation etc.
- Be willing to use your professional networks for the benefit of Northern Ballet.
- Periodically evaluate the board's effectiveness in consultation with Chair and senior management.

The specific skills and experience we are looking for at this time to develop our board

Whilst we'd like to hear from applicants from a range of backgrounds and experiences, at this time we are particularly keen to hear from those with lived or professional experience in inclusive dance or experience in higher education.

The attributes we're looking for in potential Trustees include:

- An appreciation of dance and a belief in the positive role culture can make in people's lives.
- Integrity, impartiality and the ability to think strategically.
- An ability to collaborate and work as part of a team.
- Effective interpersonal skills.
- An active commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- An understanding and acceptance of a Trustee's legal duties and responsibilities.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort required.
- An understanding, either live or professional, of inclusive dance. Or someone working in higher education.

What we ask of you:

- To serve an initial term of 3 years, with the possibility of re-appointment until 9 consecutive years' service has been reached.
- To attend 4 x 2-hour Board Meetings a year, committee meetings as required and an annual Away Day.
- To attend events, opening nights and other engagements, to gain a full experience of the breadth of Northern Ballet's work.
- To provide specialist advice and expertise as required and appropriate.
- To advocate and champion Northern Ballet's work, values, ambition, and strategic direction.

What you can expect from us:

- The opportunity to help shape the future direction of a leading national dance company, committed to breaking down barriers to world class ballet, as part of an active, loyal, and engaged group of Trustees.
- Flexibility when it comes to attending meetings either in person or remotely via video call.
- A full Trustee induction with current Trustees and permanent staff.
- Regular training and development opportunities.
- An offer of an annual 1-2-1 with the Chair.

How to apply

Applications should be made by submitting a statement explaining why you are interested in joining the Board and how you feel your experience could contribute to Northern Ballet. In addition, please include:

- A CV
- A completed [Equal Opportunities Form](#) (this information is anonymous and will not be taken into consideration when assessing the potential candidates)
- Closing date for applications is Wed 16 April.

Applications should be emailed to: recruitment@northernballet.com c/o the Nominations Committee.

If we can support your application by offering an alternative format, please do let us know. Likewise, we want to ensure interviews are as accessible as possible, so please do let us know in your application if there is anything we can do to support this.

Northern Ballet strives to understand, respect and champion diversity in all its forms and believes in embracing diversity within our workforce, repertoire and practices. Therefore, we support and encourage people from a variety of backgrounds and experiences to apply. As part of our commitment to the disability confident employer scheme, we guarantee to interview disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for our vacancies.

If you require any adjustment during any stages of our recruitment process, please contact hadmin@northernballet.com and we will be in touch with you to make the necessary arrangements. Some examples of adjustments could include sending documentation in alternative formats such as large print, braille or audio. Adapting the environment for the interview or allowing additional time for you to answer questions.

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northernballet.com

