



Chair and Trustee Recruitment Pack 2026

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recruitment@nationalyouthballet.org



Welcome from the Chair

National Youth Ballet exists to show what is possible. In thirty years, we have grown from a bold idea given life by one passionate individual, into one of the UK's most distinctive youth arts organisations, reaching young people from every background and every part of the country. We have never been content to do things as they have always been done.

That restlessness is what makes being a trustee of NYB genuinely rewarding. This is not a ceremonial role. We have a terrific executive and artistic team. Our board is very engaged, energetic, curious and committed to the mission, and the conversations we have reflect the ambition of the organisation itself.

We are now seeking to welcome new voices to our board, including a new Chair. We are looking for people who bring applicable skill and experience, of course, but who also share our belief that ballet can be transformative, inclusive, and socially relevant.

We want trustees who are as interested in the future of the art form as they are in the governance of a small, impactful youth charity.

If you have read this far and feel something stir, I hope you will get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

Patricia Castanha-Lloyd, Chair of Trustees



Welcome from the CEO

Since I joined NYB in 2021, it has been my enormous privilege to steward this incredible charity on an ambitious journey of growth. Working strategically with the Chair and the board has been key to our success.

The NYB of today has evolved from a volunteer-led vision of a founder director, to a professionalised arts organisation that punches above its weight in ambition and impact.

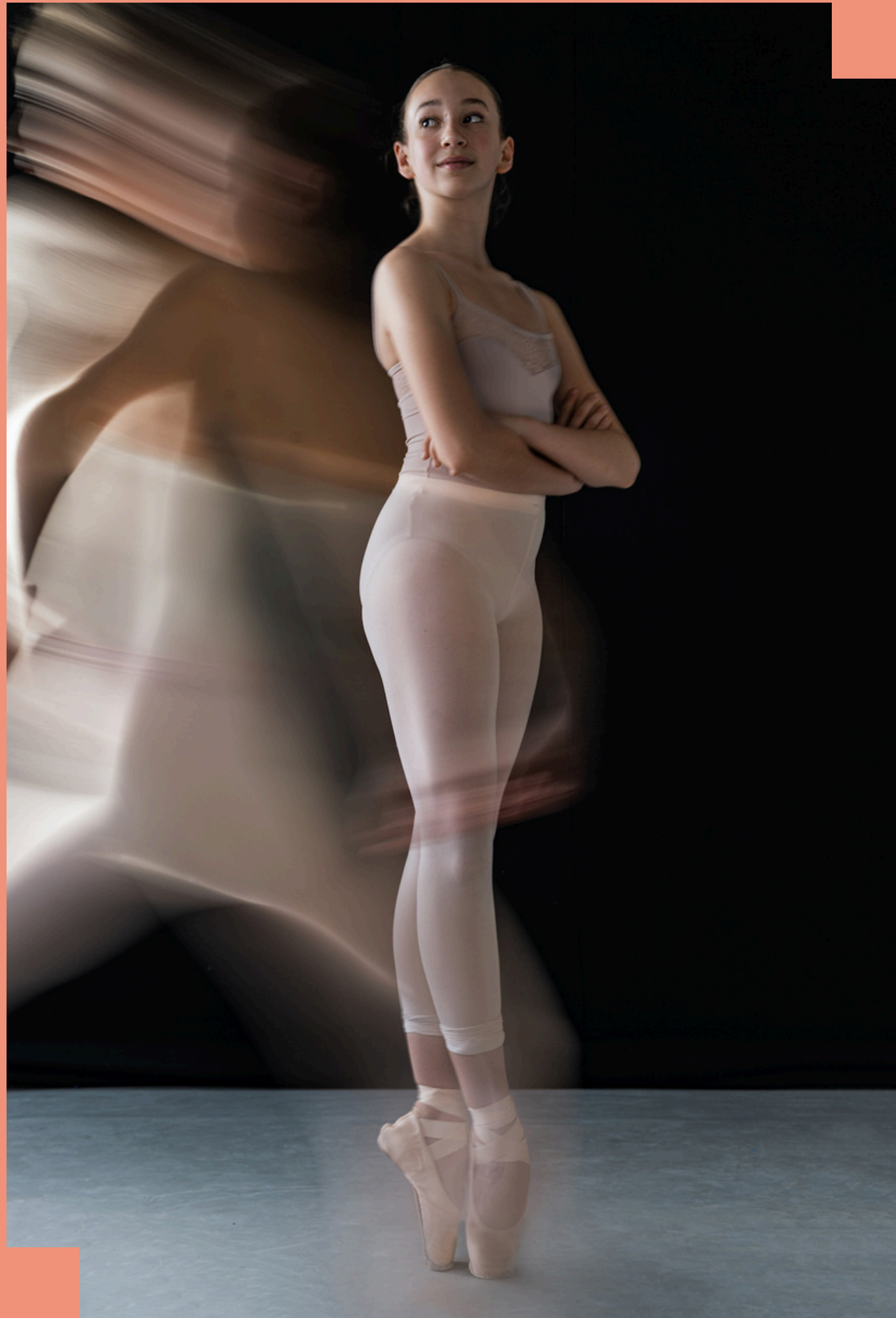
The NYB of today integrates a values-led culture of inclusive work on and off stage, and champions the voices of all our participants across a range of creative activities which have grown out of a shared commitment to making a real difference to young people's lives.

Our firmly held belief that ballet can be for everyone is reflected in the rich feedback we have from our audiences and participants. Our work celebrates what ballet can be when it is truly accessible to all. At a time where the challenges of our modern world can feel overwhelming, there will always be a need for the arts to transform lives. All charities rely on dedicated individual volunteers.

As a trustee, you can play a powerful role in affecting change. As our next Chair, we will welcome your dedicated passion and energy to drive our mission and vision into our next chapter. And as we look to our 40th anniversary year and beyond, I am excited to imagine what might be possible together.



Barbara Palczynski, CEO



Our Aim

To change perceptions about what ballet can be, who it is for, and how to reach the widest audience.

Our Mission

To bring young people together through creative, joyful and inclusive ballet activities that nurture confidence, skills and positive values.

Our Vision

That young people are empowered to thrive, shaping the future of ballet and the world around them.



About National Youth Ballet

NYB is one of the UK's leading youth arts organisations. Each year we work with over 500 young people to provide transformational opportunities for them to take part in, create and perform in classical and contemporary ballet.

Our programmes include our annual Residential Performance Companies which replicate a professional company environment for talented young dancers; creative workshops across the UK; our Beyond Ballet® programme nurturing early-career artists; NYB All In! which strives to make ballet accessible for all; and Moving Minds, which focusses on health, wellbeing and resilience. Our alums consistently join major international companies, contributing to a more diverse and representative dance sector.

**We are a small charity in financial terms.
We are huge in our ambitions and our impact.**

Our Values

Diverse

We make ballet accessible to young people from all backgrounds and levels of experience.

Ambitious

We create bold new works with young people's voices at the heart of our performance and production.

Nurturing

We prioritise the wellbeing and creativity of every dancer, building kind communities where they can be their authentic selves.

Challenging

We push the boundaries of how ballet is created, taught and experienced, inspiring a more accessible art form.

Ethical

We seize every opportunity to champion fairness, equity and the environment to make a positive impact.

Our Impact



NYB's impact is evidenced through changes in skills, confidence and wellbeing across every programme strand, and the results are consistently strong. Participants regularly describe feeling changed by the experience - more confident, more creative, more connected to themselves and to others. This is especially vivid in NYB All In!, where young people experiencing inclusive ballet for the first time leave feeling transformed.

The story of who we are reaching has shifted dramatically since 2021, when the majority of our participants came from London and the South East. Today our national reach has changed beyond recognition, with strong growth across the North West, West Midlands, South West and beyond. The diversity of the young people we work with - many of whom have never previously encountered NYB - shows how crucial an effective strategic approach to outreach is. Subsidies through bursaries continue to play a key role in helping to keep our activities affordable.

"I have more confidence in myself because of how inclusive and welcoming the NYB team is. It has also allowed me to figure out my strengths which will be extremely useful for finding my own dance career pathway." NYB participant

Our Impact

But the most powerful measure of NYB's impact is what happens beyond the studio. Young people tell us that NYB Moving Minds has given them tools for life - greater confidence, a more positive mindset, a relationship with their own wellbeing that many had never had access to before.

Emerging artists leave Beyond Ballet® with the networks and skills to build sustainable careers. And through our CPD programme, the NYB approach is spreading into the wider sector, reaching teachers and practitioners who carry it forward long after our programmes end.

NYB is not just changing who gets to do ballet. It is changing what ballet can be. As a trustee you can be part of this impact to support NYB to create these unique opportunities.





**“The programme was an
incredible experience and made
me feel comfortable to be myself.”
NYB All In! participant**

About The Board

National Youth Ballet is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity No. 1000932) and Companies House (Company No. 02557811). We are governed by a board of trustees who are collectively responsible for the strategic direction, financial health, and legal compliance of the organisation.

Our board operates in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidance for trustees, including CC3 (The Essential Trustee) and CC29 (Conflicts of Interest). All trustees are expected to be familiar with this guidance and to fulfil their duties accordingly.

The Chair and trustees serve in a voluntary capacity. The board meets formally four times a year, with additional committee meetings and occasional extraordinary sessions as required.

Committees

NYB's governance structure includes three standing committees. The Safeguarding Committee provides oversight of NYB's safeguarding vital framework, policies, and practice. The ESG Committee oversees NYB's approach to environmental sustainability, social impact, governance development and has a remit for AI governance within the organisation. And the Finance Committee has oversight of financial matters and compliance within the organisation and within the Charity Commission guidelines.

All committees report to the full board and are supported by executive team members. Trustees may be asked to take a lead role on one or more committees, depending on their skills and interests.

Youth Council

Youth voice is incredibly important to NYB and we always try to include young people's ideas in our future vision and strategy. We do this through our Youth Council. We meet with the Youth Council four times a year, to hear their thoughts and share ideas, often with a specific focus. This contribution to the future development of the organisation is central to our values. The Youth Council has helped us finalise our company tagline, supported us in choosing our new brand identity and logo, given advice on merchandise and offered feedback on the nature and development of our programmes.

We have Youth Council champions for Sustainability, Inclusion and Youth Voice. We also have event ambassadors who represent NYB at events with new audiences. Co-chairs Grace and Honor attend the quarterly board meetings to share the work of the Youth Council and to ensure that youth voice is fully considered across all levels of the organisation. In turn they learn about the governance and management of the charity.

Working Groups

As well as our Youth Council and governance committees, we have a number of different working groups that meet on an adhoc basis, as required.

This includes our NYB All in! steering group, creative advisory group and business development working group.



Meet the Board



Patricia Castanha
Chair



Ashley Dixon
Finance Committee



Clint Hayashi
Business Development
Working group



Sasha Henry-Crawford
Chair, ESG Committee



Sonney Lalwani
Chair, Finance
Committee



Paul Reeve
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees
Chair, Safeguarding
Committee



Rosemary Ryde
Legal Trustee

The Role of the Chair

The Chair leads the board's approach to trustee recruitment and development, ensuring the board has the skills and diversity it needs to govern effectively. The Chair also leads the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive.

In matters of safeguarding, the Chair holds ultimate board-level responsibility for ensuring that NYB meets its obligations to the children and young people in its programmes.

Time commitment:

Approximately two to three days per month, including four full board meetings per year, committee involvement, and regular liaison with the Chief Executive. The term of office is three years, renewable twice by agreement with the board.

The Chair of Trustees provides leadership to the board and works closely with the Chief Executive to support the strategic direction of the organisation. The Chair is the primary point of contact between the board and the executive, and plays a central role in ensuring that NYB is well governed, financially sustainable, and true to its mission.

Key Responsibilities for the Chair

The Chair leads the board in setting and reviewing NYB's strategic direction, ensuring that decisions are made in the best interests of the charity and those it serves. The Chair facilitates effective board meetings, encourages constructive challenge and open debate, and ensures that the board functions as a cohesive and high-performing body.

Working closely with the Chief Executive, the Chair provides a confidential sounding board on significant decisions, supports the executive team, and acts as an ambassador for NYB with funders, partners, and the wider arts sector.



The Role of the Trustee

Trustees of National Youth Ballet share collective responsibility for the governance and strategic oversight of the charity. Each trustee brings their own expertise, perspective, and professional network to the board, contributing to a diverse and effective governing body.

Trustees act as ambassadors for NYB within their own professional networks, showing leadership in fundraising, supporting the organisation's reputation, partnership development, and advocacy. We are proud that all board members make an annual or monthly donation

The Charity Commission's guidance for trustees, including CC3 (The Essential Trustee), sets out the legal duties and responsibilities that apply to all trustees of registered charities in England and Wales. All trustees are expected to be familiar with this guidance and to fulfil their duties accordingly.

The guidance is available at [gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved)

Key responsibilities for the Trustee

Trustees attend and contribute to full board meetings, held four times a year. Between meetings, trustees may be asked to participate in one or more board committees, providing specialist input on matters within their area of expertise.

Trustees are responsible, alongside the rest of the board, for setting and monitoring NYB's strategic direction, approving budgets and annual accounts, overseeing risk management, and ensuring that the organisation operates in accordance with its charitable objectives, its governing document, and all relevant legislation.

Time commitment

Approximately one day per month, including four full board meetings per year and committee involvement as required. The term of office is three years, renewable by agreement with the board.

Chair and trustee roles are unremunerated voluntary roles; reasonable out-of-pocket expenses are reimbursed.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for any individual with access needs, including appropriate personal access costs.



**“The whole week was incredible,
I absolutely loved learning new things,
discovering new styles and meeting so
many amazing, kind and nice people.”**

RPC participant

Skills for the Chair

Essential

- Demonstrable experience of senior level leadership (board or Chief Executive) in a charity, public body, or comparable organisation.
- Strong strategic thinking and the ability to lead a high-functioning board through periods of ambition and change.
- Financial literacy, confidence in management accounts, reserves, cash flow, budgets.
- Governance knowledge, Charity Commission regulations, trustee duties and legal responsibilities.
- Risk management, able to identify organisational risks - reputational, financial, operational, safeguarding.
- The ability to build an effective working relationship with a Chief Executive, combining support with the capacity to act as a critical friend.
- A genuine commitment to inclusion, diversity, and the transformative power of the arts.
- Sufficient time to fulfil the role with energy and attention.

Desirable

- Experience of the arts, cultural, or creative education sector.
- A passion for ballet and dance.
- Familiarity with Arts Council England's strategy, understanding of NPO work.
- Fundraising or philanthropic networks relevant to NYB's funding landscape, understanding the current fundraising landscape, supporting bids where appropriate, maintaining funder relationships.
- An interest in sustainability in the arts and what responsible environmental practice looks like for a performing arts organisation.
- Familiarity with AI, data, or digital transformation in a charitable or creative context.

Skills for the Trustee

Essential

- A commitment to NYB's mission, values, and the role of inclusive ballet in young people's lives.
- The ability to think strategically, exercise independent judgement, and contribute constructively to board discussions.
- Willingness to fulfil the legal duties of a charity trustee as set out by the Charity Commission.
- Sufficient time to prepare for and attend board and committee meetings.

Desirable

At least one or more:

- Professional experience in the arts, cultural education or creative industries, ideally from working in an Arts Council England NPO setting.
- Experience or interest in fundraising, philanthropy, or income diversification for charities.
- An interest in sustainability in the arts, including environmental responsibility and sustainable production practices.
- Experience with AI, data, or digital tools in a charitable, creative, or educational setting.
- Lived experience of disability, or a strong understanding of inclusion in practice.
- Experience of working in a school setting or other educational / safeguarding context.
- Experience of ballet/dance training
- Performance expertise in sports or performance psychology.
- Human Resource experience.

Joining the Board



Joining the board of NYB means joining something genuinely unusual. We are a small team with huge ambitions, and the board reflects that. Trustees are part of the conversation about what NYB can become.

Board meetings are held in person and online and we have an annual away day for the board in the Autumn. We invest in induction and ongoing development for trustees, because we believe governance is something you grow into, not something you arrive already knowing.

We are actively working to ensure that our board reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and identities, and we are particularly keen to hear from those who feel that boards like ours do not always look or sound like them. If you have questions about what the role involves before deciding whether to apply, we would warmly encourage you to get in touch.

"NYB is proof that a small charity, with the right people around it, can have an outsized impact on young people and on an entire art form. Being part of that is a privilege."

Current trustee

How to Apply

We want the application process to be as straightforward and as human as possible. If you are unsure whether this role is right for you, please do get in touch before submitting anything formal. A conversation costs nothing, and we would rather hear from more people than fewer.

Stage one

Expression of interest. Please send a brief note (either one side of A4 or a short video) explaining your interest in joining the NYB board, together with a current CV or biography. You do not need to address every point in the person specification; we are more interested in understanding what draws you to this role and what you would bring to it.

Stage two

Informal conversation. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an informal conversation with the Chief Executive and, for the Chair role, the outgoing Chair. This is an opportunity for both sides to explore the fit.

Stage three

Formal appointment. For those progressing, a brief meeting with a small panel of trustees will complete the process. We aim to make the entire process straightforward and responsive.

Key dates

Expressions of Interest received by 31 July 2026 will allow us an opportunity to invite you to a performance of Echoes of Tomorrow.

Expression of interest deadline: 0900, 30 September 2026

Informal conversations: From 19 October 2026

Board observation: (by invitation) 21 July or 22 October 2026

Panel meetings: w/c 16 - 27 November 2026

Anticipated start date: from 1 January 2027 subject to agreement

Contact

Applications and enquiries to:
recruitment@nationalyouthballet.org

Data Protection

To understand how we process your data please refer to our [Privacy Notice](#).

Equal opportunities

National Youth Ballet is committed to equality of opportunity in all its activities and actively encourages applications from people who are underrepresented in the governance of arts organisations. This includes, but is not limited to, people from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people, people with lived experience of socioeconomic disadvantage, and people from LGBTQ+ communities.

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments at every stage of the process. All trustees are subject to a DBS check prior to appointment, in line with our safeguarding obligations as an organisation working with children and young people.

We are looking for people who believe, as we do, that ballet belongs to everyone. If that is you, we very much hope to hear from you.



NYB
national youth ballet

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