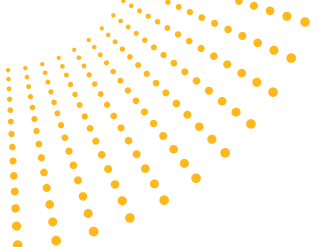


# CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

APRIL 2026





# CHIEF EXECUTIVE & CREATIVE DIRECTOR

- £65 - £67,0000 per annum + benefits
- Based in North East England with some hybrid working
- Applications close Tuesday 5 May at 10:00
- Preliminary interviews online Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 May
- Second round interviews at Dance City Wednesday 20 May

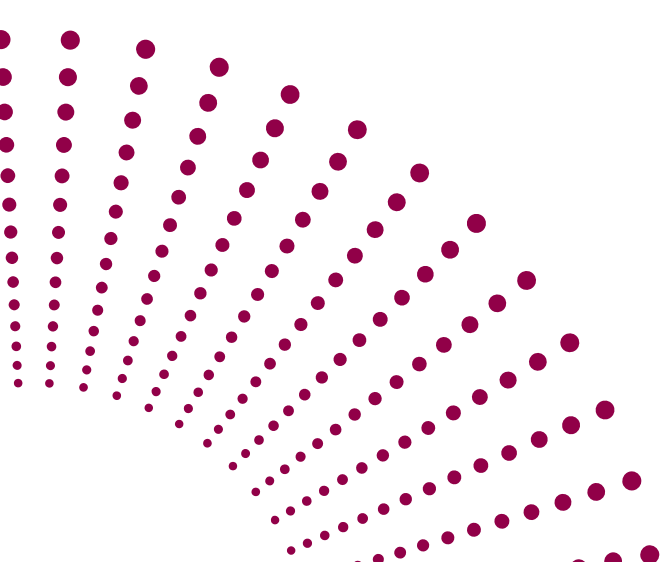
## Purpose of the role

The Chief Executive & Creative Director holds the most senior post at Dance City, unites the creative and strategic functions of the organisation, and is accountable to the board of trustees for the good management and impact of the charity.

The Chief Executive & Creative Director leads and works collaboratively with the board, senior management team (SMT) and stakeholders and partners to ensure that Dance City creates opportunities for people to create, produce and experience dance at its very best.

The Chief Executive & Creative Director drives the business, identifying commercial opportunities, securing financial resilience, and ensuring that Dance City's programme is at the vanguard of sustainable dance development in the region.

The Chief Executive & Creative Director is based in the northeast and plays an active role in the social life and cultural communities of the region.





# WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive & Creative Director at Dance City.

Last year we celebrated our 40th anniversary — a fantastic milestone that saw more than 31,000 people taking part in our classes and workshops across the region, and around 2,000 people joining us for performances at our city-centre theatre. It was a brilliant reminder of just how vibrant and energetic the Dance City community is.

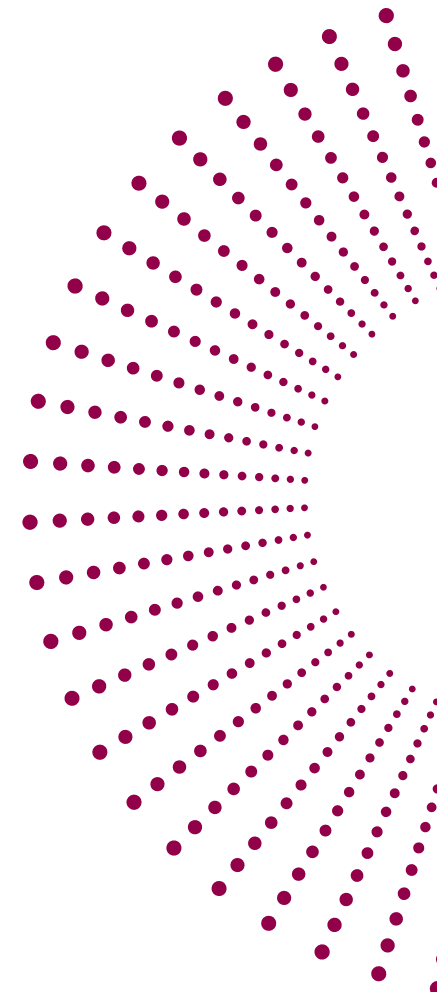
We're in a strong place, with a small but committed team and a great reputation, but like many arts organisations, we're navigating a challenging landscape. Our priority is to stay agile and adaptable as political and social change continues at pace. Our focus is on making sure we remain sustainable while still offering the region high-quality, accessible dance experiences — both within our building and out in the community.

We're now looking for a dynamic, inclusive leader to guide Dance City into the next funding period. Someone who can confidently champion our story, build relationships and partnerships, and help us to continue to grow our work and profile as a leading dance house for the city, the region and the UK. A background in dance is a bonus, but not essential. At this moment in our journey, we're looking for an imaginative, entrepreneurial and resourceful person who can help steer us into our next 40 years.

Dance City is a fantastic organisation — and the Northeast is a brilliant place to live and work. We'd love you to consider joining us.



Lyndsey Turner-Swift  
Chair of the Board of Trustees



# ABOUT DANCE CITY

## A regional powerhouse

Dance City is the biggest dance house in the north of England. Based in Newcastle city centre but working across the northeast of England, we have been a catalyst, convener and creator of dance and movement experiences in the region for more than 40 years.

Employing around 130 core staff, freelancers and artists, Dance City is a vibrant and friendly place where people come together to experience dance. Professional and aspiring dancers meet here to learn and train, audiences come to watch world class dance performances, and people from all walks of life come to socialise, learn new skills and to keep fit and active.

Dance City is a member of a national network of dance organisations across the UK and regularly takes part in international platforms, conferences and collaborations. It is an active member of NewcastleGateshead Cultural Venues (NGCV), a proactive forum of ten building-based cultural producers operating twenty venues across the arts and heritage sectors in the region.



# OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

We believe that dance can inspire people and unite communities.

Our mission is to ensure the northeast of England is the best place to dance and to experience dance.

Our values are:

- Integrity
- Inclusion
- Equity
- Boldness
- Kindness
- Joy



# A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

We believe that dance belongs to everyone. Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion shapes everything we do, from our creative programming and community engagement to our workplace culture and recruitment practices. We recognise that people's experiences, identities and backgrounds enrich our organisation, and we are dedicated to creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued and supported.

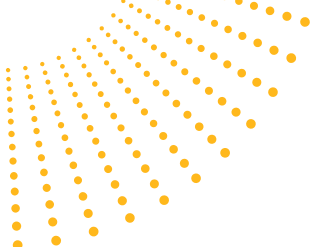
We are actively working to remove barriers to participation, whether cultural, financial, physical or environmental. This includes offering accessible recruitment processes, supporting students through means-tested bursaries on programmes and offering level and lift access throughout our building, along with accessible changing facilities and an induction loop at the ticket office.

Our programmes reach diverse communities across the region. We work in partnership with local schools, community groups and cultural organisations to widen participation and ensure our work reflects and celebrates the people we serve.

As an employer, we are committed to fair, transparent and equitable recruitment. We encourage applications from individuals who are underrepresented in the arts and cultural sectors. We specifically welcome applications from women, disabled people and those from Black, Asian, ethnically diverse, LGBTQ+ and international backgrounds with the right to work in the UK. We welcome conversations about adjustments or support needs at any stage of the recruitment process.

We are continually reflecting, learning and improving to ensure our organisation remains a place where everyone can thrive — as an artist, an employee, a participant or an audience member.





# OUR PROGRAMMES

We offer more than 70 public classes in all forms of dance, attracting more than 800 people per week.

We present a regular programme of dance performances from contemporary to ballet, world dance styles to breakdance bringing leading northeast, national and international artists and companies to Newcastle. We also commission original new works, which premiere in our theatre. Each year we welcome 2,000 people to our theatre.

We offer specialist training for gifted and talented young people from the age of 10 through our Centre for Advanced Dance Training (CAT), managed in partnership with the Department for Education (DFE).

Dance City's engagement team aims to get people moving and to make dance accessible, working from our home base and in schools, hospitals and local communities across the region and creating and distinctive events where people can experience and enjoy dance regardless of their background or circumstances.

Each year we work with more than 8,000 people of all ages in a variety of settings. We aim to be at the heart of art form development, supporting professional dancers through a programme of free classes, commissioning opportunities, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), free studio space and much more.



# OUR HOME

Located in the heart of Newcastle, just a short walk from Central Station, our purpose-built dance house – which opened in 2005 – brings together studios, performance spaces, social areas and professional workspaces under one roof.

Across three floors, five fully equipped dance studios support a huge range of classes, training, rehearsals and creative development. It is also home to our fully-equipped 250-seat theatre — an intimate performance space where new work is premiered, artists share their practice and communities come together to celebrate dance.

The building also houses office suites for staff and for several resident or partner companies, contributing to a busy creative ecosystem on site. This blend of professional, participatory and educational activity under one roof is part of what makes Dance City the region's hub for dance.

Dance City is also home to The Seven Bridges cafe, a unique collaboration with West End Refugee Service (WERS). At the heart of The Seven Bridges lies a deep commitment to empowering refugees and asylum seekers through training and development. Creating the menu in collaboration with WERS volunteers, we aim to showcase the rich techniques and traditions of those who volunteer there, while enabling them to enhance their skills and gain experience which will become a stepping stone to future employment.



# HOW WE ARE FUNDED

Dance City is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) and delivers the CAT programme on behalf of the Department of Education. We earn income from public classes, hires and theatre ticket sales. The organisation is also supported by a range of trusts and foundations, whose contributions help to sustain and grow its artistic, educational and community work.

Our 2025 annual report and statement of accounts can be viewed here on the [Companies House website](#).



# OUR IMPACT IN 2024/25

**31,300**

public classes  
attendances

**117**

students  
participated in  
CAT programmes

**76%**

of CAT students  
received  
means-tested  
DFE funding

**9**

BA (Hons)  
graduates

**50+**

educational  
establishments  
engaged

**1,653**

students  
reached  
through one-off  
workshops

**163**

students  
engaged in  
youth groups  
and tasters

**256**

over 55 sessions  
delivered

**4,246**

over 55  
attendances

**68**

school sessions  
delivered

**704**

studio hours provided for professional artists

**2,668**

young people  
attendances

**23**

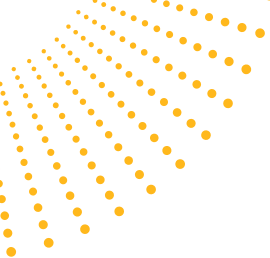
individual theatre  
performances

**210**

days of artist  
residencies provided

**2,000**

theatre programme attendances



# GOVERNANCE

Dance City is registered as Dance North as a company limited by guarantee (02490618) and a charity (702801).

## Board of Trustees

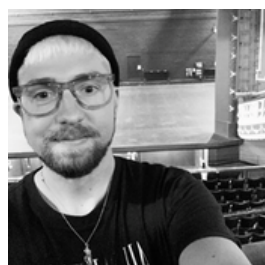
As a registered charity, Dance City is governed by its board of trustees who are also directors of the limited company. Trustees are unremunerated and bring their skills, expertise and time in support of the organisation on a voluntary basis. There are currently ten Trustees.



Sarah Dewar  
(Vice-Chair)



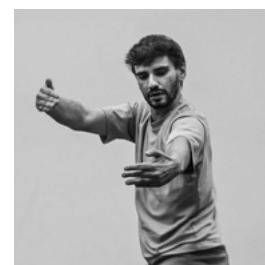
Emma Harrison



Anthony Hope



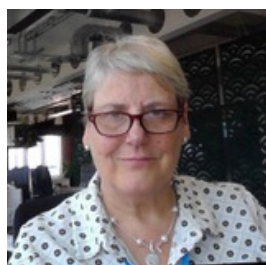
Dr Tomke Kossen-  
Veenhuis



Aaron Markwell



Shirley Marland



Karen Muir



Charlotte  
McMurchie



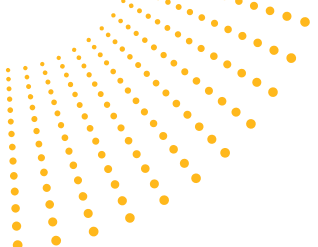
Emily Snow



Lyndsey Turner-  
Swift  
(Chair)

## Senior Management Team

The Chief Executive & Creative Director leads and works closely with three experienced department heads who form Dance City's Senior Management Team. Together they are the key decision-making group for the organisation. They are: Christine Brown (Senior Marketing and Communications Manager), Rachel Fenton (Senior Fundraising Manager) and Graeme Thompson (Senior Producer). For more information, please visit [www.dancecity.co.uk/about-us/people/](http://www.dancecity.co.uk/about-us/people/)



# LIVING & WORKING IN THE NORTHEAST

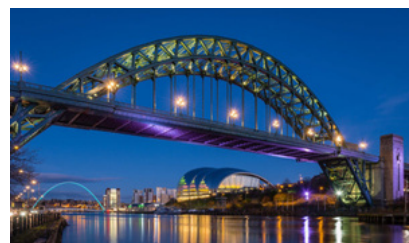
England's northeast is a region filled with character, creativity and opportunity. United by the iconic River Tyne, the cities of Newcastle and Gateshead continue to evolve as one of the UK's most exciting urban centres, a place where culture, innovation and quality of life come together in a way few cities can match. Recent years have seen significant investment in new venues, attractions and public spaces, reinforcing the area's reputation as a vibrant, modern and welcoming place to live and work.

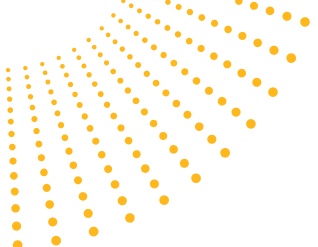
As a compact European city with a strong identity, NewcastleGateshead blends heritage with forward momentum. From the historic architecture of Grey Street to cutting-edge redevelopments such as Grainger Market's restoration and new cultural spaces at the Discovery Museum, and world-famous landmarks such as the Angel of the North and the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Durham Cathedral and Hadrian's Wall.

The local food and culture scene continues to thrive, from independent markets and craft breweries to a year-round programme of festivals, exhibitions and major events. New and redeveloped venues — such as the region's refreshed markets, cultural attractions and large-scale performance spaces — reflect the northeast's commitment to creativity and ambition.

The northeast is a hub of innovation with a proud industrial heritage and a future focused on science, data, clean energy and the creative industries. Newcastle alone is home to around 9,000 businesses.

Newcastle also offers excellent national and international connections. London, Edinburgh and Manchester are all within three hours by train and Newcastle International Airport provides links to more than 80 global destinations. Newcastle offers the best of both worlds: a lively, energetic city at the heart of stunning landscapes. Beautiful beaches, the rugged Northumberland coastline, and national parks are all reachable within 30 minutes, allowing residents to balance city life with nature on their doorstep.





# ROLE PROFILE & PERSON SPECIFICATION

## Key deliverables

Lead on Dance City’s vision, values and organisational objectives and ensure the relevance and sustainability of its creative programme.

Ensure there is alignment between Dance City’s creative ambitions and its business needs and that all activity is delivered to the highest possible standards to plan and within budget.

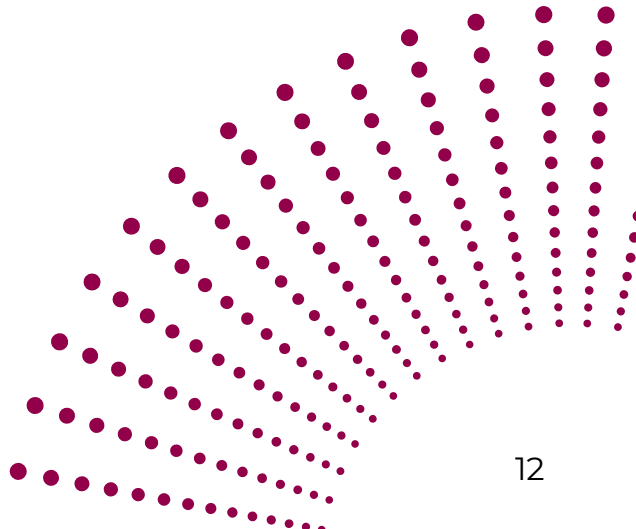
Grow the organisation’s earned income and shape and set targets for initiatives embracing commercial ventures, corporate partnerships, public funding, trusts and foundations and individual philanthropy.

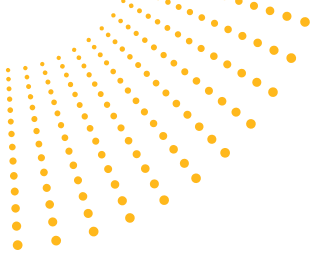
Be accountable to the board and to funding bodies, and for the responsible stewardship of Dance City.

Ensure a strong profile and reputation for the organisation and for dance practice locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Initiate, develop and sustain partnerships with existing and potential funders and key stakeholders.

Lead and enable the senior team; motivate, inspire, and support the development of the wider staff team.





## Role profile

### **Leadership and governance**

Develop and monitor the strategic plan with the SMT and board.

Work closely with the chair and trustees to ensure the good governance of the charity and that organisational performance is structured and monitored using well articulated, achievable KPIs.

Support Trustees in being an effective board, ensuring it comprises the appropriate range of skills and has access to training and development opportunities.

Deploy trustees' skills and networks to identify and activate opportunities for commercial development and business growth.

Be an inclusive leader, collaborate with and empower the SMT, and motivate, support and develop the wider staff team.

### **Advocacy, profile and civic engagement**

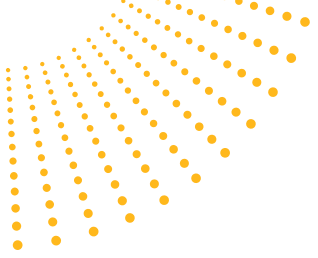
Promote the profile and reputation of Dance City locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Initiate and enable constructive debate about dance and its development by artists, policy-makers and the public, and to promote Dance City's role in dance leadership.

Articulate the transformative potential of dance in enabling social cohesion, the centrality of its place in the wider creative industries sector, and its potential, through civic partnerships and collaboration, to make a major contribution to the economy and well being of the city and region.

Ensure Dance City is part of local, regional, national and international arts discussions and networks, is represented at key events and viewed as crucial to decision-making processes in the dance and wider cultural and social sectors.

Be the face of Dance City in professional and community networks and at events in the northeast; communicate and advocate for its plans and ambitions to the widest range of people including politicians, the media, funders, artists, audiences and the public.



## **Creative**

Shape, co-create and communicate the creative vision for Dance City.

Oversee the development and delivery of a creative programme which appeals to a wide range of audiences, demonstrates excellence, and sets out to grow appetite and demand for diverse dance experiences.

Build and manage sustainable commercial and funding partnerships which will enhance the profile of the programme and enable the commissioning, programming and presentation of dance within and beyond Dance City.

Oversee the evaluation of the programme, to ensure quality, to engage in reflection and implement learning with colleagues.

Maintain an overview of the local and national dance ecology in order to inform advocacy and planning.

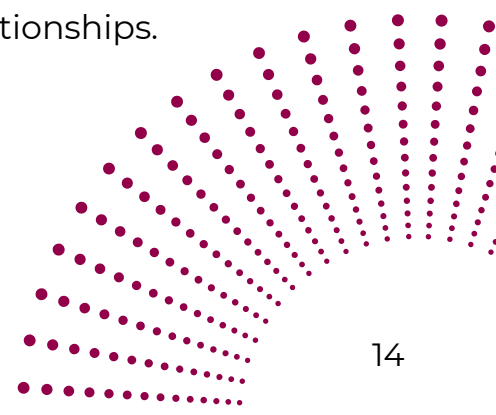
## **Brand, commercial performance and income**

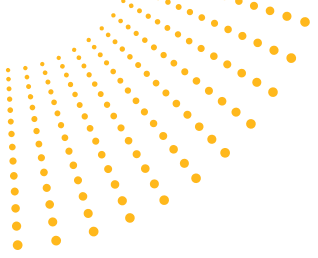
Oversee the design and delivery of effective marketing and communications strategies that are developed and effectively delivered, to retain existing and grow new audiences for dance in the northeast and to promote the Dance City brand.

Be proactive in the development and delivery of effective fundraising and income generation strategies for Dance City, to ensure that contributed income grows and is diversified, and to develop commercial opportunities enabled by the building and programme.

Play an active role in identifying and approaching prospective donors, sponsors and funding partners.

Develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with existing and potential supporters and to lead on key public funding and donor relationships.





## **Finance and operations**

Be accountable for the financial operation of the organisation, ensuring budgets are set and monitored, appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place, compliance with appropriate legal and fiscal frameworks is followed, and that there is timely reporting to the relevant funders and authorities.

Oversee and ensure the smooth and efficient management of Dance City's facilities and infrastructure.

Ensure Dance City remains a visible champion of environmental responsibility.

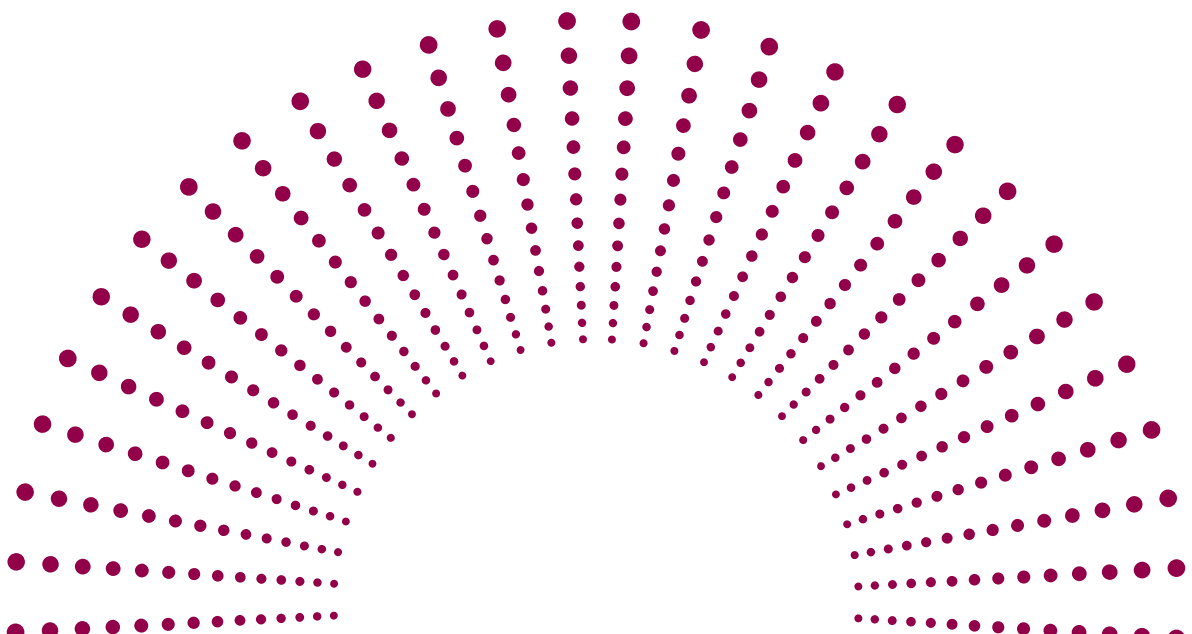
Ensure the organisation is fully compliant with all legal requirements, including health and safety, and that all staff are trained appropriately.

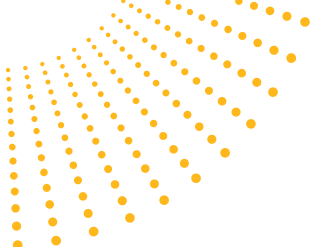
## **People and culture**

Set the tone for and model the organisational culture, be an inclusive and consultative leader, championing employee wellbeing and engagement.

Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place for recruitment, induction, appraisals and the professional development of staff.

Ensure the organisation upholds its principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, valuing the wellbeing of all colleagues.





## Person specification

### Essential

Has held a senior role in a cultural venue or within an organisation with a substantial arts programme or partnerships; is well networked in and beyond the cultural and creative industries.

Understanding of the current landscape and eco-system in the cultural sector and awareness of local/national political initiatives that will impact on - and create opportunities for - Dance City and its partner organisations.

Understanding of the legal, fiscal, social and political context within which the arts operate, and the contribution they make to health, education, social cohesion and civic pride.

Understanding of the needs of dance as an art form and a commitment to best practice and to promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity.

An inclusive leader with experience of overseeing organisational transformation and managing change.

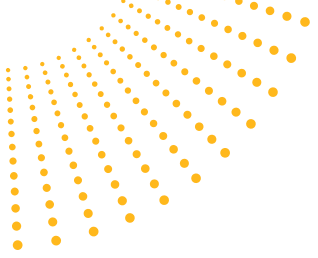
A track record in relationship building, working in partnership with a range of funders, agencies and organisations, and of successful fundraising and income generation from a range of sources.

A strong advocate and compelling storyteller, able to network, represent the organisation, communicate its vision and inspire confidence among existing and potential peers and stakeholders.

Strong financial literacy and skills, knowledge of charity governance and relevant financial policies and procedures; experience of senior financial accountability.

Experience of working effectively with a Board of Directors, understanding of best practice in governance and organisational development.

A commitment to living in the region, able to travel nationally and internationally, and to work some evenings and weekends where there is reasonable expectation to attend events.



## **Desirable**

Experience of running a building with a diverse and impactful arts programme.

An extensive network in the cultural sector.

Experience of significant national/international cultural partnership projects.

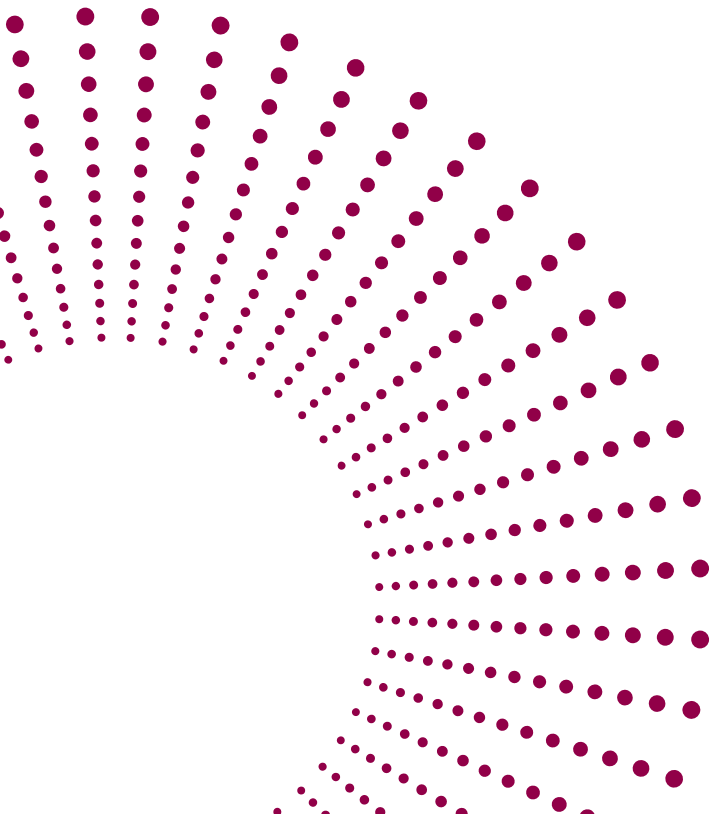
Experience of managing significant public investment programmes such as ACE NPO, Creative Scotland RFO or equivalent.

## **Equity, diversity and inclusion**

At Dance City we believe that voices and perspectives from a range of backgrounds and lived experiences make our understanding of the world and the arts more relevant.

We believe that difference is our strength.

Therefore we actively encourage applications from people from all backgrounds and those that are under-represented in our city and region and in dance leadership.



## HOW TO APPLY

Dance City has engaged independent consultant Gregory Nash as its search partner for the recruitment of the Chief Executive & Creative Director. If the role may be of interest we ask that, in the first instance, you send a CV or professional profile link to **dancecityceo@gregory-nash.com** before Wednesday 29 April.



If your skills and experience meet the core criteria for the role, Gregory will be in touch to arrange a confidential conversation prior to you considering an application. He will also advise on the application process and formats should you decide to proceed to a submission.

If you require this information in a different format, or would rather submit a video or audio file, please let Gregory know and we can enable this to happen.

- Applications close Tuesday 5 May at 10:00
- Preliminary interviews online Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 May
- Second round interviews at Dance City Wednesday 20 May

Dance City,  
Temple Street,  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4BR

0191 2610505  
dancecity.co.uk

 @dancecity  
 @dance\_city\_newcastle

