

National Council Member with Music Expertise – Recruitment pack

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Chineke! Miles Brett, Sarah Martin, Didier Osindero. Credit: Ntando Brown

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Introduction

We are seeking to appoint a new member to Arts Council England's National Council, our non-executive board.

The National Council helps to ensure our organisation is well governed and successfully delivering our priorities through effective management of the resources we have thanks to investment from the public.

This briefing pack will guide you through the Arts Council's mission, the role of our National Council and its members, and the application process.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for making these appointments in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public](#)

[Appointments](#). The appointments process is regulated by the [Commissioner for Public Appointments](#). The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will manage the appointment process with support from Arts Council England.

DCMS is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity in its public appointments. We particularly encourage applicants from under-represented groups, those based outside London and the South-East, and applicants who have achieved success through non-traditional educational routes. This ensures that boards of public bodies benefit from a full range of diverse perspectives and are representative of the people they serve.

Brixton Chamber Orchestra. Performance – Havering Changing Celebration of Creativity. Credit: Hannah Davis.



National Council member

Embrace the pivotal role of National Council Member, where you become the key guardian of our organisation's governance. In this role you'll be championing the Arts Council and its mission to stimulate creativity and culture throughout England.

As a National Council Member, you will become a trustee for Arts Council England. You will contribute to the governance and strategic direction of the organisation, helping ensure creativity and culture continue to enrich lives and communities.

Joining forces with other Council members, you'll be at the forefront of:

- Advancing the Arts Council's mission and strategy.
- Shaping the organisation's strategic path, influencing crucial investment and policy decisions.
- Ensuring effective management practices and responsible resource handling.

Our National Council meets at least six times a year and is responsible for ensuring the achievement of our objectives, to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts and culture, and to increase the accessibility of the arts, libraries and museums to the public.

This is an opportunity to be a driving force behind the Arts Council, making decisions that impact creativity and culture across the nation.

Find out more about the National Council and its current members >
<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-organisation/national-council>

Not Too Tame, Hindley Sports & Social Club, Down to Earth. Credit: Patch Donal



About Arts Council England

We champion creativity and culture across the country, develop talent in every corner of the nation, and support artists, practitioners and cultural organisations to work in partnership and to be world-leading in their fields.

Our work is guided by a Strategic Framework, developed following the Independent Review led by Baroness Margaret Hodge (December 2025).

The Framework sets out how we prioritise activity, shape services and make funding decisions, providing clear direction as we move towards a new long-term strategy.

At its heart is a commitment that our investment must do three things: **support excellence, deliver for everybody**, and **reach everywhere**.

We believe creativity and culture do more than inspire – they bring people together, help us understand ourselves and the world around

us, and foster pride in the places we live. In short, they make life better.

We support a wide range of disciplines, including combined arts, dance, libraries, digital arts, literature, museums, music, theatre and visual art. Through a range of funds, we invest in individual artists, cultural organisations, museums, galleries and libraries, supporting both short- and long-term activity.

Our investment 2023 – 2026:

- **Over £467 million** of public funding from Government
- **Around £250 million each year** from The National Lottery to support **individual practitioners, cultural organisations, museums and libraries**
- Funding delivered in **every region of England**, from grassroots community projects to nationally significant institutions

National Youth Jazz Orchestra – Academy Rich Mix gig. Credit: Daniel Devlin



Joining our National Council

Arts organisations, museums and libraries contribute to people's wellbeing; they drive local economies and maintain our international reputation as a nation of innovators. As a member of our National Council, you will play a significant role in shaping the future of our national cultural life.

As a member of our National Council, you will gain a unique perspective of the broad-ranging benefits of arts and culture and deepen your understanding of our sector's national contribution: the quality jobs we help create and the many direct and secondary economic benefits of our work. You will also see the personal impact we make: lives enriched through individual creativity.

Creativity and culture have long been among the nation's greatest strengths. We continue to champion the work of our artists and organisations at home and internationally, celebrating their role in shaping how we are seen on the world stage.

We are committed to promoting the importance of cultural education for young people, alongside the social and economic benefits of lifelong participation.

Arts and cultural engagement have a measurable impact on health and wellbeing. They enable us to share our experiences, foster understanding, and build stronger, more connected communities – helping people feel proud of where they live. While challenges remain, our outlook is one of confidence and optimism.

As the Arts Council embarks on a period of transformation and change, this role offers a unique opportunity to contribute to that journey. You will help build on strong relationships with our stakeholders, support the sector's resilience, and shape new approaches to funding and innovation – ensuring we are well positioned to navigate an evolving landscape with confidence and ambition.

Music for Youth Coronation Bandstand – Birmingham – April 2023. Credit: Alick Cotterill



The work of Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We support artists, cultural organisations, libraries and museums to flourish, innovate and deliver excellent work, while ensuring that people across the country can access, enjoy and take part in creativity.

We are an independent charity, registered with the Charity Commission, as well as an arm's-length non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. We were established as a distributor of National Lottery funds under The National Lottery Act 1993.

We deliver our work through investment, development and advocacy, underpinned by a commitment to diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity. As we develop our next long-term strategy, we are guided by a clear and simplified Strategic Framework designed to support confident, impactful decision-making during a period of transition.

Our framework focuses on three core objectives:

- **Excellence:** Supporting a creative and cultural sector that is ambitious, innovative

and world-leading, and nurturing talent at every stage

- **For everybody:** Ensuring our investment reflects the diversity of England and broadens access to opportunity and participation
- **Everywhere:** Reaching communities across the country, so that everyone can connect with high-quality culture and develop their own creativity

Alongside these priorities, we are evolving how we work:

- Designing simpler, more accessible services that are easier to engage with
- Providing clearer communication and reducing complexity in our processes
- Strengthening our support for artists, organisations and communities
- Building a more responsive, transparent and effective organisation

Through this approach, we aim to strengthen the impact of public investment in culture, champion its value, and ensure we are well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead.

The Complete Freedom of Truth – Opera Circus. Credit: Robert Golden



How we're governed

National Council

Our National Council is our main governing body, or non-executive board. National Council members are also the trustees of the charity.

National Council is currently supported by five Area Councils which advise it on and promote the work of the Arts Council in the five English regions: London, the South East, South West, Midlands and the North. Together all Area Councils fulfil a similar role – ensuring that the work of the Arts Council continues to be informed by a diverse range of perspectives from artists, local authorities and other key stakeholders across the country. Chairs of each Area Council also serve as members of the National Council.

The role of the Council

The role of the Arts Council's National Council is to:

- determine and uphold Arts Council England's mission and objectives
- be accountable to the Secretary of State for fiduciary matters and delivering the charitable objectives
- agree high level priorities and strategies
- approve Arts Council England's Grant-in-Aid and National Lottery accounts
- monitor delivery of Arts Council England's strategy against stated priorities

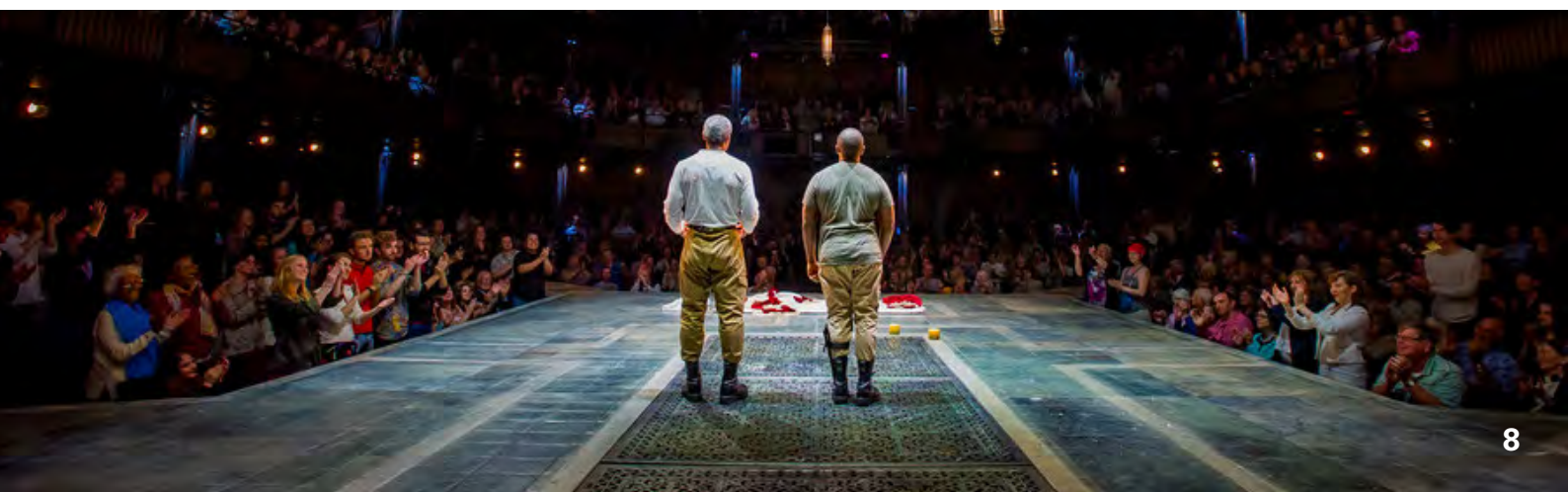
- advocate for the arts and culture
- Collectively the Council is expected to embody:
 - artists, arts and culture practitioners and managers
 - finance and management expertise, public and private sector experience
 - the Chairs of the Area Councils

The Arts Council's Chair, Dawn Airey, is strongly committed to improving the diversity of the Council. Its ability to represent England's diverse national identity and include a range of voices is key to ensuring that the Arts Council's programmes meet the creative and cultural needs of everyone.

The Executive Board

National Council is supported by an executive leadership team, which is led by Darren Henley, the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Darren Henley leads an Executive Board which includes two Deputy Chief Executives and four other Executive Directors. The Arts Council's Executive Board is responsible for developing the long-term strategy of the Arts Council and for the day-to-day running of the organisation. Further details about our Executive Board are available on the Arts Council website.

RSC – curtain call from The Merchant of Venice and Othello. Credit: David Tett © RSC



About the role and who we're looking for

Essential criteria

All applicants must demonstrate the following:

- **Music Expertise:** in at least one musical genre.
- **Knowledge:** a clear understanding of the work, priorities and challenges of Arts Council England and the context within which it operates.
- **Relationship building:** ability to build strong stakeholder relationships, with the creativity and culture sector and other stakeholders.
- **Communication:** strong communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to listen, accept challenge and constructively challenge others in discussions.
- **Judgement:** effective decision-making skills with the ability to critically analyse a wide range of information to make clear and objective evidence-based

- recommendations to support the delivery of Arts Council England's objectives.
- A demonstrable commitment to **equality, diversity and inclusion**; and tackling inequalities to unlock the advantages of creativity and culture for everyone.

Desirable criteria

We are also interested in applications from candidates with expertise/experience in one or more of the following areas:

Arts And Technology	Business/Commercial
Change Management	Children and Young People
Creative Education	Creativity, Health and Wellbeing
Developing community-led cultural activity	Environmental Responsibility and Innovation
FE/HE Education	International Cultural Exports
Philanthropy	

House of Curio, House of Suarez Vogue Ball. Credit: fotocad



How to apply

Applications are made online via the job advert at

<https://apply-for-public-appointment.service.gov.uk/roles>

In order to apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#).

Once you are logged into your account, click on 'apply for this role' and follow the on-screen instructions. To apply, all candidates are required to provide:

- equality information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues
- a Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- a supporting statement
- a short professional biography (150 words)

We will ask you to check and confirm your personal details to ensure your application is accurate.

You will also have the opportunity to make a reasonable adjustment request or apply under the disability confident scheme before you submit your application.

If you have any questions about the appointments process, please contact publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk or aedan.obrien@dcms.gov.uk

If you would like to speak about the role itself, please contact David.Bryant@artscouncil.org.uk

Merhaba 2025 – A celebration of the Islamic World in Rochdale. Credit: Alan Hamer



Overview of the Application Process

Public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition process which is conducted in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments.

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will keep you informed at key stages.

The assessment process

1. Ministers are responsible and accountable to Parliament for the public appointments made within their department. As a result, they must be consulted at every stage of the appointments process.
2. An Advisory Assessment Panel ("Panel") is appointed by Ministers to assist them in their decision making. The role of the Panel is to decide, objectively, which candidates meet the eligibility criteria for the role.
3. At the shortlisting meeting the Panel will assess applications against the eligibility criteria and decide which candidates have best met the criteria, who should be recommended for interview. Ministers will then be consulted on the Panel's recommended shortlist. If you have applied under the Disability Confident Scheme and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for an interview.
4. Once the shortlist has been agreed by Ministers, you will be advised (by e-mail) whether you have been shortlisted. Those shortlisted will be invited to an interview.
5. The Panel will meet again to interview candidates and determine who is appointable to the role. The Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post. The Panel will also explore with you any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from your personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision.
6. Details of the panel's assessment of interviewed candidates are provided to Ministers, including whether they have judged a candidate to be appointable to the role. It is then for Ministers to determine merit and decide who should be appointed. In some circumstances, Ministers may choose not to appoint any candidates and re-run the competition.
7. Ministers may choose to meet with candidates before deciding the outcome. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.
8. Once the decision on the appointment has been made, interviewed candidates will be advised of the outcome of their application, including whom they may approach for feedback. Successful candidates will be issued with their Terms & Conditions and a letter of appointment should they agree to take up the position.

Further information about appointments, including tips on applying, can be found on the Public Appointments [guidance pages](#) on gov.uk.

Diversity and inclusion

We encourage applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and across the whole of the United Kingdom. Boards of public bodies are most effective when they reflect the diversity of views of the society they serve.

We collect data about applicants' characteristics and backgrounds, including information about people's educational and professional backgrounds, so that we can make sure we are attracting a broad range of people to these roles and that our selection processes are fair for everyone. Without this information, it makes it difficult to see if our outreach is working, if the application process is having an unfair impact on certain groups and whether changes are making a positive difference.

When you submit your application, your responses are collected by the Cabinet Office and the government department(s) managing your application. The data is used to produce management information about the diversity of applicants. You can select “prefer not to say” to any question you do not wish to answer. **The information you provide will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel who review applications against the advertised criteria and conduct interviews.**

Disability confident

We are a member of the Government’s Disability Confident scheme. We use the Disability Confident scheme symbol, along with other like-minded employers, to show our commitment to good practice in employing people with a disability. The scheme helps recruit and retain disabled people. As part of implementing the scheme, we guarantee an interview for anyone with a disability whose application meets the essential criteria for the role, set out in the advert, and who has asked that their application is considered under the scheme.

Indicating that you wish your application to be considered under the scheme will in no way prejudice your application. By ‘essential criteria’, we mean that you must provide evidence which demonstrates that you meet the level of competence required under each of the essential criteria, as set out in the job-advert. When you apply you will have the opportunity to select if you would like your application considered under this scheme.

Reasonable adjustments

We are committed to making reasonable adjustments to make sure applicants with disabilities, physical or mental health conditions, or other needs are not

substantially disadvantaged when applying for public appointments. This can include changing the recruitment process to enable people who wish to apply to do so.

Some examples of common changes are:

- ensuring that application forms are available in different or accessible formats;

FolkDanceStepHop. Credit: Robin Zahler



- making adaptations to interview locations;
- allowing candidates to present their skills and experience in a different way;
- giving additional detailed information on the selection / interview process in advance
- to allow candidates time to prepare themselves;
- allowing support workers, for example sign language interpreters;
- making provision for support animals to attend.

When you apply you will have the opportunity to request reasonable adjustments to the application process.

About DCMS

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport supports culture, arts, media, sport, tourism and civil society across every part of England — recognising the UK's world-leading position in these areas and the importance of these sectors in contributing so much to our economy, way of life and our reputation around the world.

The department champions sport for all at every level, supports our world-leading cultural and creative industries, and enhances the cohesiveness of our communities.

DCMS is a ministerial department, supported by 42 agencies and public bodies.

Sheffield Museums – Weston Park Museum. Credit: Andy Brown



If you are not completely satisfied

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy.

Please contact the DCMS public appointments team in the first instance if you would like to make a complaint regarding your application at publicappointments@dcms.gov.uk. They will acknowledge your complaint upon receipt and respond within 15 working days.

Eligibility criteria

In general, you should have the right to work in the UK to be eligible to apply for a public appointment.

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards.

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you are disqualified from acting as a company director (under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986);
- have an unspent conviction on your criminal record;
- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors.

When you apply, you should declare if:

- you are, or have been, bankrupt or you have made an arrangement with a creditor at any point, including the dates of this.
- you are subject to a current police investigation.

You must inform the sponsor department if, during the application process, your circumstances change in respect of any of the above points.

When you apply you should also declare any relevant interests, highlighting any that you think may call into question your ability to properly discharge the responsibilities of the role you are applying for. You should also declare any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of the Code of Conduct of Board Members (see Outside interests and reputational issues section below)

Code of conduct for Board Members

The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. In support of this, all non-executive board members of UK public bodies must abide by the principles set out in the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies. The Code sets out the standards expected from those who serve on the boards of UK public bodies and will form part of your terms and conditions of appointment.

Management of outside interests

Holders of public office are expected to adhere and uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life and the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies. Before you apply you should consider carefully:

- any outside interests that you may have, such as shares you may hold in a company providing services to government;
- any possible reputational issues arising from your past actions or public statements that you have made;
- and/or – any political roles you hold or political campaigns you have supported; which may call into question your ability to do the role you are applying for.

You will need to answer relevant questions in relation to these points when making an application. Many conflicts of interest can be satisfactorily resolved and declaring a potential conflict does not prevent you from being interviewed.

If you are shortlisted for an interview, the panel will discuss any potential conflicts with you during that interview, including any proposals you may have to mitigate them and record that in their advice to ministers. Alongside your own declaration, we will conduct appropriate checks, as part of which we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This may include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. The successful candidate(s) may be required to give up any conflicting interests and their other business and financial interests may be published in line with organisational policies.

Details of declared political activity will be published when the appointment is announced, as required by the Governance Code (political activity is not a bar to appointment, but must be declared).

Status of appointment

As this is an office holder appointment, you will not become a member of the Civil Service. You will not be subject to the provisions of employment law.

Appointment and tenure of office

Appointments are for the term set out in this advert, with the possibility of re-appointment for a further term, at the discretion of Ministers. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory annual appraisals of performance during the first term in the post. There is no automatic presumption of reappointment; each case should be considered on its own merits, taking into account a number of factors including, but not restricted to, the diversity of the current board and its balance of skills and experience. In most cases, the total time served in post will not exceed more than two terms or ten years in any one post.

Expenses

The role is not remunerated however reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out the role as a National Council member will be reimbursed. Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed, except in exceptional circumstances and only when agreed in advance.

'11 Million Reasons to Dance'. Credit: Sean Goldthorpe

