



Trustee Recruitment – Youth Development

Information Pack

The National Youth Orchestra (NYO) is seeking to appoint a trustee with strong understanding of teenage development and the role that high quality arts can play in helping young people achieve their potential and thrive. We welcome applications from people with experience in secondary education, youth-focused arts organisations, youth services, or programmes within the music education sector.

This is an opportunity to contribute to the strategic direction and governance of NYO, helping ensure our work remains relevant, inclusive and impactful for young people nationwide. You would be joining an energised and committed group of trustees who share NYO's ambitions for growth.

NYO mission and context

The National Youth Orchestra is the UK's leading organisation championing orchestral music as a powerful agent for teenage development. NYO exists to empower teenage musicians, developing their confidence, skills and leadership through world-class orchestral experiences. Our mission is to build a significantly larger, more inclusive national community of young musicians over the next decade.

NYO's programmes connect with large numbers of teenagers each year, through performance, participation and learning opportunities. We work with young people in settings that range from local activity to major projects and residential experiences. We believe adolescence should be a time of discovery and optimism, and we value youth voice in shaping our work.

This specialist trustee will help the Board strengthen NYO's understanding of what helps teenagers thrive, particularly in and through the arts. They will bring insight into how exceptional arts experiences can support young people to build confidence and independence, develop skills, and feel connected to others. In youth development terms, this includes supporting young people's agency and creativity, meaning their ability to make choices, take initiative and express themselves.

The trustee will also bring awareness of the safeguarding responsibilities that come with large-scale youth projects and residential environments, helping the Board continue to embed strong safeguarding culture, oversight and learning.

NYO is committed to creating multiple entry points and opportunities for musical discovery. We are also dedicated to sector-leading safeguarding and to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Application process

We invite applications from individuals with strong relevant experience who are motivated to contribute to NYO's mission and governance.

We are committed to broadening the diversity of perspectives on our Board. We particularly encourage applications from women, individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and those based outside London. All appointments will be made on merit.

To apply, please submit a letter of interest to Ella Bennett, Chair of the Nominations Committee, outlining your motivation for the role and relevant career achievements.

Email your letter to recruitment@nyo.org.uk. Deadline for applications: **Monday 23 February 2026**.

If you would like an initial, informal conversation about the role, please contact us via recruitment@nyo.org.uk.

Interviews will take place during weeks of 9 and 16 March. We would expect the selected candidate to attend their first meeting on Thursday 14 May at 3pm.

Role description

The Board of Trustees ("the Board") is the ultimate governing body of the charity. Working together as members of the Board, Trustees have control of NYO's property and funds and are responsible for the determination of major strategic, financial and artistic policies; approval of the annual business plan and budget; appointment of the Chief Executive; approval of trustee appointments; and the framework of risk and internal control.

Key responsibilities

Governance & compliance

- Ensure NYO pursues its charitable purposes for public benefit and complies with its governing documents, charity law, company law, and relevant regulations.
- Manage resources responsibly: protect assets, approve budgets and annual accounts, and oversee financial controls and reserves.
- Ensure accountability and transparency, including fair, clear reporting in the Trustees' Annual Report and financial statements.
- Uphold the Charity Governance Code's recommended practices for an effective board team and culture.

Strategy, performance & risk

- Contribute to NYO's strategy and monitor delivery against objectives; scrutinise performance information and challenge constructively.
- Identify and manage principal risks; satisfy yourself that systems exist to mitigate them.

Conduct & conflicts

- Adhere to board ways of working and the Trustee Code of Conduct. Participate in annual board evaluations and training.

- Handle information in accordance with NYO's data protection and confidentiality policies.
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest and related-party matters, completing annual declarations and updating the register as needed.

Safeguarding, EDI and culture

- Promote a safeguarding culture; complete annual training; and monitor safeguarding information at board level.
- Champion equality, diversity and inclusion, including accessible meetings and recruitment practices consistent with the Charity Governance Code.

Engagement & fundraising

- Play an active role in developing NYO's networks. Build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including donors, sponsors, and partners.
- Support fundraising initiatives and help open doors through your networks.

Additional specialist responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities that apply to all trustees, this specialist trustee will be expected to:

- Provide insight on the realities young people face today, including barriers to participation and progression, and what helps teenagers thrive in arts and education settings.
- Engage with and help NYO develop its approach to youth voice, across a portfolio including opportunities for agency, ambassadorship, meaningful input into decisions, and building confidence through leadership opportunities.
- Support board-level safeguarding oversight, with particular awareness of safeguarding responsibilities within large-scale youth projects and residential environments.
- Contribute to strategic thinking about inclusion, participation and progression, recognising that when a teenager finds something they love they need opportunities to progress and to explore whether it could be part of their future.

Person Specification

All trustees are expected to demonstrate the following:

- Commitment to NYO's mission and values, including youth voice.
- Strategic vision and the ability to scrutinise performance information and financial reports.
- Willingness to constructively challenge and devote the necessary time and effort.
- Understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- Readiness to maintain confidentiality and manage conflicts.
- Good, independent judgement and a willingness to speak your mind.
- Inclusive behaviours and a commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- Commitment to the Nolan principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Additionally, for this specialist trustee role, we are seeking an individual who can demonstrate:

- Strong understanding of teenage development and the role that arts and education can play in supporting young people to build confidence, independence, skills and connection with others.
- Experience in secondary education, youth-focused arts organisations, youth services, or programmes within the music education sector (or a closely related field).
- Sound understanding of safeguarding responsibilities in youth work, including within residential and large-scale project settings, and the ability to contribute to board-level safeguarding culture and oversight.
- Knowledge of secondary education policy and networks.
- Commitment to youth voice and a belief that adolescence should be a time of discovery and optimism.
- Ability to think strategically about participation and progression, including what helps young people take next steps when they find something they love.

Time commitment

- Attend quarterly Board meetings and ad hoc/standing committee meetings as required
- Attend a board away day every 1-2 years
- Visit at least one NYO residency or project a year and attend key donor events (3-4 evenings per year)
- Participate in induction sessions and attend annual safeguarding training.

Quarterly board meetings usually take place on weekday afternoons (forthcoming: 14 May, 8 July, 22 October 2026 at 3.00 – 5.30pm)

Term of office

- Four-year term, renewable once on invitation from the Chair.

Remuneration & expenses

- The role is **unpaid**; reasonable expenses (e.g., travel) are reimbursed.

Equal Opportunities

NYO is committed to Equal Opportunities. Diversity and inclusion are central to our work, including recruitment practices. We aim to ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Individuals are selected, promoted, and treated based on their relevant merits and abilities. Trustees are expected to comply with and actively promote this policy.

Safeguarding

NYO is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children and young people we work with. Our policies and procedures ensure sector-leading safeguarding practices. All employees, contractors, trustees, and volunteers are dedicated to maintaining an environment where young people's welfare is paramount. Our policies protect young people from harm, ensuring all concerns and abuse allegations are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.