

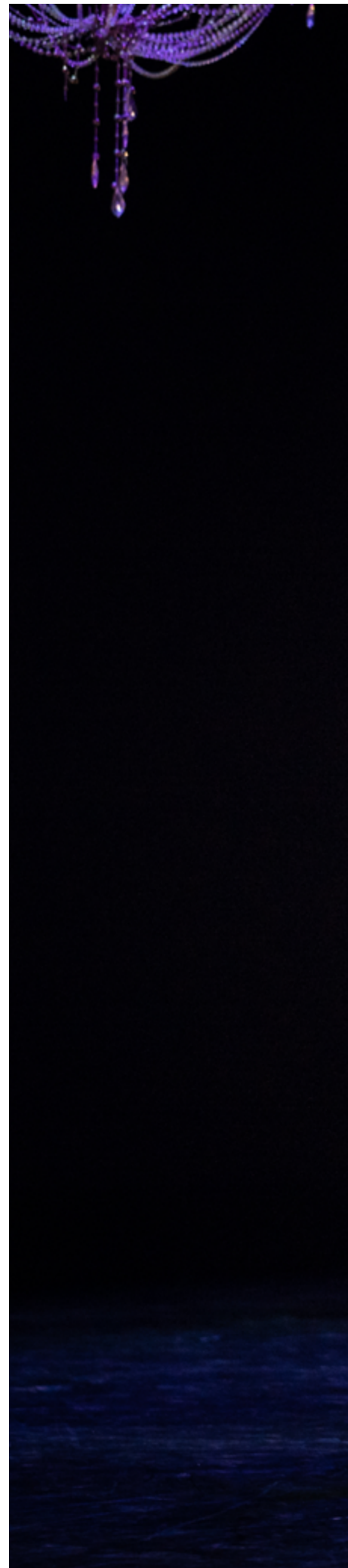
Candidate brief for the position of
Executive Director

July 2022



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Front: Northern Ballet dancers in *The Great Gatsby*. Photo Emma Kauldhar.
Above: Isabella Gasparini and Javier Torres in *Dangerous Liaisons*. Photo Riku Ito.

Introduction

Based in Leeds with a major presence in the city, Northern Ballet is the widest touring ballet company in 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.

Northern Ballet is a registered charity and relies on 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. During the recent pandemic, Northern Ballet developed its digital strand creating many short and full-length films and we are keen to build on this success.

Following the announcement of the retirement of CEO Mark Skipper, DL, after 25 years of dedicated service in the role and 35 with the company overall, we are now looking for an exceptional leader to join our newly appointed Artistic Director Federico Bonelli, to shape the future of Northern Ballet and take the organisation to new heights.

The last two or three years have been challenging for most arts organisations, but we have come through it and this is an exciting moment to join our remarkable company and lead it to further success.

Breaking down barriers to world-class ballet

Northern Ballet breaks down barriers to world-class ballet, telling unexpected stories that move audiences, across the country and online.

We aim to reach as many different people and places as possible with our passionate storytelling, mastery of classical dance technique and live music.

We create innovative full-length ballets and tour these to as wide an audience as possible, alongside pieces from existing repertoire.

We are an extraordinary company, rooted in the North, with a national reach unmatched by other arts organisations, and an international profile.

Excellence and diversity are recognised as critical to all areas of the organisation.

We are committed to diversifying audiences. We remain committed to the Creative Case for Diversity as Let's Create becomes our focus in 2022/23 and beyond as we embed the four investment principles into our work.

We are proud to deliver more performances than any other British ballet company to the most diverse audiences throughout the UK and beyond. The breadth of the tour is unrivalled by any other and the geographic range of our tour remains hugely important to us for developing relationships with our audiences and funders.

We are committed to producing a programme of new creations and collaborations as well as reviving existing works; performing ballets for children; developing diverse choreographers; continuing the expansion of our digital output, whilst increasing the diversity of those who work for, and with us.

Ballet is still inaccessible for far too many people, but everyone deserves to experience the best of ballet. We want to build the audiences of the future by taking them on a journey from being ballet avoiders right through to becoming ballet lovers. We break down barriers by:

- Telling stories that connect
- Travelling far and wide
- Impacting communities
- Nurturing exciting and diverse creatives
- Amplifying our mission with digital





A Centre of Excellence

Northern Ballet is widely reviewed in the regional and national press, and we have received some excellent praise for our work:

- Dance Europe said, 'The Company that boasts the best dance actors in the world.'
- *Victoria* received four stars from The Guardian, Independent, Mail on Sunday, The Stage and Daily Telegraph.
- In 2019, Dance Europe stated 'Northern Ballet deserves every honour in striving for excellent standards in repertoire that will engage audiences of all ages and backgrounds.'
- *The Great Gatsby* received four stars in the Daily Telegraph and stating that 'It (NB) has never been a company to shrink from a challenge.'
- *Dracula* received five stars in the Yorkshire Post who called it 'Flawless.'
- The Daily Mail gave BBC Four's screening of *Dracula* four stars describing it as 'a fast-paced and atmospheric affair.... must have been fantastic to see live.'
- The Sunday Express awarded five stars to *EGO* – 'a stunning short film... exquisitely shot.'

Our achievements were recognised in the past year by:

National Dance Awards

Best Classical Choreography, Geisha

Kenneth Tindall

Nominated

National Dance Awards

Best Classical Choreography, The Shape of Sound

Kenneth Tindall

Nominated

National Dance Awards

Outstanding Company

Nominated

Charity Virtual Event Awards

Best Virtual Non-Fundraising Event Expressions

Learning

Nominated

HSJ Partnership Awards

Most Impactful Project Addressing Health

Inequalities Children's Ballet Outreach

Learning Shortlisted

Pippa Moore awarded MBE for services to dance

Diversity & Equality

We are proud that 40% of our dancers are from ethnically diverse 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 £10/£15. Our Children's Ballets continue to be priced accessibly to reduce barriers to attendance, with an average ticket price 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 for wheelchair users.

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, adults and older people of all backgrounds and ability.



Websites for Further Information

northernballet.com

digitaldance.org

northernballet.com/academy

The Role

The Executive Director is responsible for leading Northern Ballet's strategic planning and income generation and together with the Artistic Director acting as an advocate for the Company promoting its vision, mission, ethos and values in all matters. The Executive Director has responsibility for recruiting, motivating and developing staff and leading all areas of the business under their direct control. This includes line management responsibility for the following areas of the organisation:

- Administration
- Finance
- Development
- Communications
- Digital
- Planning
- HR, Health and Safety
- Technical
- Music (financial)

The Executive Director is based in Leeds and works in a joint leadership position with the Artistic Director, both of whom report to the Chair and the Board.



Key Responsibilities

- To lead and own the relationship with the two key statutory funders of Northern Ballet, namely, Arts Council England and Leeds City Council. To prepare and submit business plans and funding applications, co-ordinate and submit annual reviews and attend all ACE and LCC meetings as they arise. To lead the development of Strategic plans for the organisation as a whole and to assist the Artistic Director in developing his artistic plan and support delivery.
- To work closely with the Finance Director to ensure budgets, departmental targets and outcomes are accurately set and management accounts and cash flow is reviewed frequently and regular dialogue is maintained with the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.
- To maintain and develop key relationships with private donors and corporate sponsors alongside the Director of Development. To work closely with the Artistic Director and the Director of Development to identify new and innovative income streams. To provide support in identifying suitable Trusts and Foundations and preparing applications.
- To input into sales and marketing campaigns designed by the Director of Communication. To participate in strategic discussions on brand strategy and develop new markets in order to capitalise on the Company's digital offering. Maintain positive relations with the media, print and social.
- To work closely with the Director of Planning to maximise the income streams the Company has within its touring schedule; review contracts and closely manage costs associated with touring. Set budgets for new productions and revivals. Explore opportunities to drive revenue from letting out space in the building to external users.
- Alongside the Artistic Director work with the Director of Learning to ensure all Learning and Participation activities are clearly defined and have desired impact in the communities we serve.
- Work with the HR Manager to oversee all recruitment and staff training except those reporting directly to the Artistic Director. Work closely with the Artistic Director to set EDI and other Company wide policies. Negotiate with Equity and the Musicians' Union as appropriate. Assume responsibility for all Health and Safety matters.
- Line manage and support the Technical Director, overseeing technical expenditure and technical standards in performances.
- Lead, with the support of the Head of Administration, all administrative and facilities tasks required in the smooth running of the organisation including internal communications, reporting and liaising with Board members, and reporting and communicating with all stakeholders.
- Alongside the Orchestra and Concerts Manager review the Orchestra's cost base. Negotiate rights and royalties for the use of music in productions.
- At all times seek to connect with National influencers, local politicians, councillors and the dance community. Attend press nights and networking events and seek out opportunities to promote the Company, the dancers and the Company's tour programme. Act as an advocate for the work of the Company and for Ballet as an art form.
- Act as host at sponsorship and marketing events on behalf of the Company as appropriate.

The Individual

The ideal candidate will have experience of working for a government funded Arts organisation. An independent strategic thinker able to develop relationships and drive consensus with financial and commercial acumen, the successful individual will have a track record of growing sustainable revenue streams.

The role requires the following experience, skills, knowledge and qualities:

- Experience of working at a senior level in an arts or cultural organisation of at least similar size to Northern Ballet with multiple functions.
- An appreciation of, and ideally some experience of touring, and the role a touring arts organisation can play in the community.
- Experience of working with multiple external stakeholders and ideally experience of working in an arts charity that has been successful in raising money from private sources.
- Experience of leading change or transformation.
- Experience of working with a Board of Trustees, or a similar independent body.
- A demonstrable commitment to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and to widening access and participation in ballet and the arts.
- Working knowledge of the charitable sector and the Charities Commission.
- Proven success in leading, developing and building teams.
- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills.



How to Apply

Key dates

To apply for this role, please complete your application by 19 August.

Successful candidates will be invited to attend interviews late August / early September.

How to apply

The preferred method of application is online at: www.odgers.com/86600

If you are unable to apply online please email: 86600@odgersberndtson.com

All applications will receive an automated response.

At Northern Ballet, we believe that a diverse workforce leads to an organisation that is more innovative, more creative and gets better results. We want our workforce to represent the diversity of the people and communities we serve. We also want our workplace to be one where different experiences, expertise and perspectives are valued, and where everyone is encouraged to grow and develop.

This means that when we are recruiting, we actively seek to reach a diverse pool of candidates. It also means that we are happy to consider any reasonable adjustments that potential employees may need to in order to be successful.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Diversity Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist Northern Ballet in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Diversity Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and / or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/ application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

Contact details

For a conversation in confidence, please contact:

Samantha Colt
samantha.colt@odgersberndtson.com

We are committed to ensuring everyone can access our website and application processes. This includes people with sight loss, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to these documents in alternative formats, please contact victoria.mayes@odgersberndtson.com

Also, if you have any comments and/or suggestions about improving access to our application processes please don't hesitate to contact us response.manager@odgersberndtson.com