

National Centre for Music

Trustee & Chair Recruitment

April 2025



Welcome

from the Trustees

Thank you for your interest in applying to be a Trustee of the National Centre for Music (NCM).

Joining us at this moment means a chance to be part of the founding vision for an organisation set to bring new energy and resource to Scotland's full musical ecosystem - across all genres. NCM will run and be housed within Thomas Hamilton's old Royal High School buildings at the foot of Calton Hill in Edinburgh, currently being redeveloped by the Royal High School Preservation Trust under a £69m capital project.

With a rich multi-faceted offer, encompassing three mid-scale performance venues, spectacular events and conference space, creative offices, practice rooms, a recording studio, a light-filled café and 2 acres of landscaped gardens (the first public city centre garden in Edinburgh for 200 years), we have a unique opportunity to reawaken this significant piece of Scottish cultural heritage. We will create a welcoming, iconic destination that brings together and showcases the full richness of Scotland's music making - a place where Scotland's musical history is made.

Over the next two years we will grow and launch NCM as a new organisation - developing our brand, building our staff team, refining our business model, establishing partnerships and ensuring we integrate effectively and collaboratively into the music sector, and the cultural life of Edinburgh and Scotland.

We are currently looking for around four Trustees, including a Chair, to help steer us through the

next phase in our development. Alongside our four existing Trustees, this will create a board of eight, with a further recruitment round planned for 2026. Given the breadth of our cultural offer, our national remit, and our mission and values, we want to ensure our board has a rich diversity of perspective and experience, and that it welcomes voices from across Scotland. We value a culture of lively debate and challenge, and we're not focusing on a particular level of board experience. Instead we seek committed individuals with a flair for innovation, whose skills complement those already within our connections, ready to support our growing executive team in the complex but stimulating combination of 'cultural start-up with a national remit'.

If you are inspired by the ideas behind this project, and would like to be more involved, we look forward to hearing from you. We hope this pack provides some useful context to support you in your application. If it would be helpful, please do get in touch for a chat and more information before you apply.

Best wishes,

Jenny Jamison
Chief Executive & Creative Director

Colin Liddell, Carol Main, Carol Nimmo
NCM Trustees

VISION

Reawakening a spectacular Scottish heritage site, the National Centre for Music will become an energising force in Scotland's music sector, and an iconic cultural destination. Through our programmes and partnerships, Scotland's musical communities will come together, music will change peoples' lives, and Scotland will stay firmly at the forefront of global musical boldness.



MISSION

To create a nurturing and inspiring environment where Scotland's musical history is made.

VALUES

EVERY SOUND COUNTS

the explosion of different types of musical approaches, genres and passions that will exist here every day is what will make us special.

CURIOSITY FUELS OUR CREATIVITY

Our quest to celebrate the richness of music making in Scotland will never be exhausted – we know there is always more to discover, and we take that challenge seriously.

JOIN THE DOTS

We are an active connector - bringing different musical perspectives and knowledge together in respectful exchange for everyone's benefit.

WARM AND WELCOMING

We may look grand on the outside, but as soon as you enter, you feel at home. Our spaces will all have an uplifting atmosphere, and our friendly team will ensure everyone can access, enjoy and participate fully in what we have to offer.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

We are creating an organisation that will play a significant role in Scotland's cultural trajectory. People will start to rely on us, so we prioritise long-term resilience and put sustainability (in all its meanings) at the heart of our thinking, to ensure we become an organisation fit for the future.



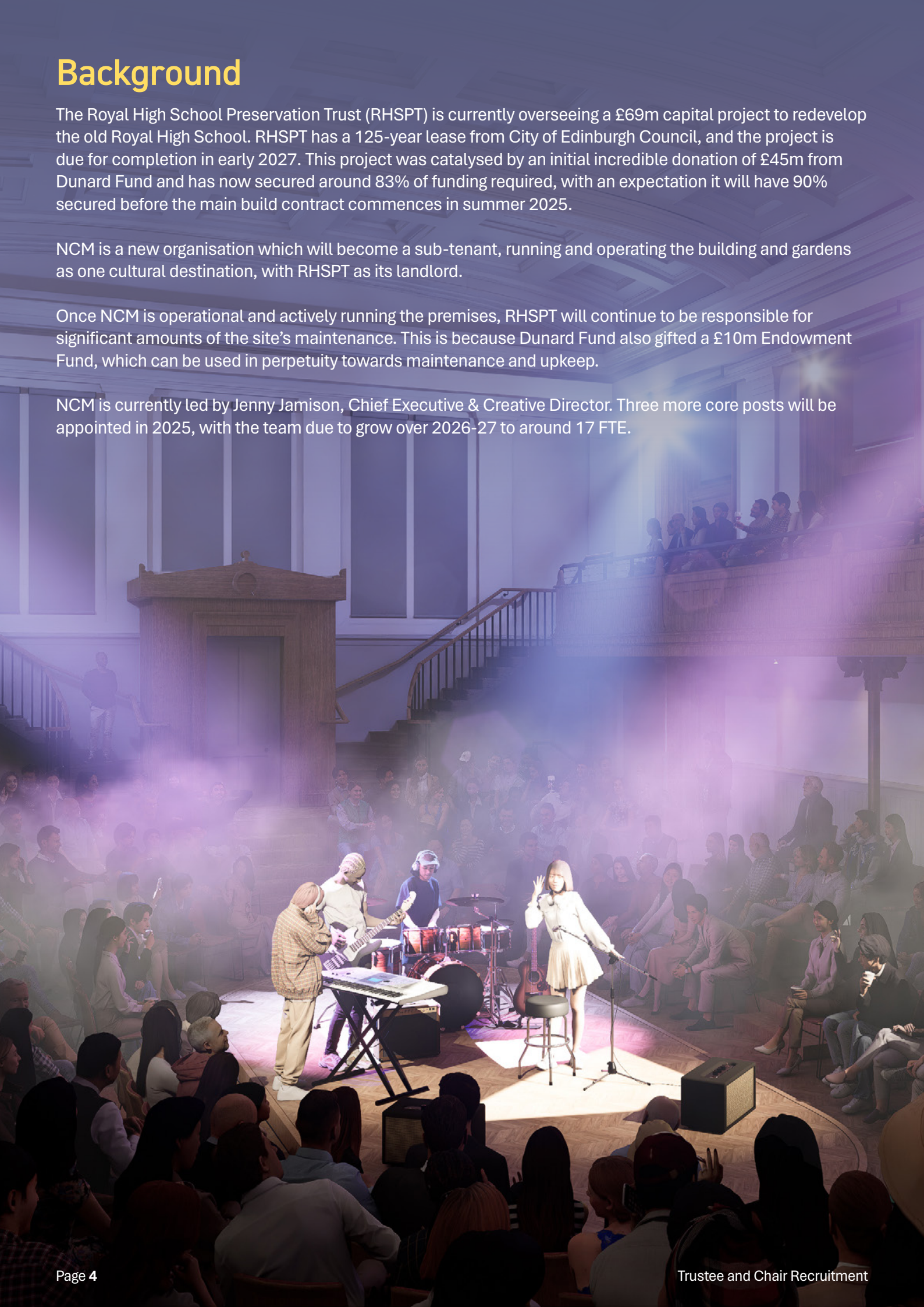
Background

The Royal High School Preservation Trust (RHSPT) is currently overseeing a £69m capital project to redevelop the old Royal High School. RHSPT has a 125-year lease from City of Edinburgh Council, and the project is due for completion in early 2027. This project was catalysed by an initial incredible donation of £45m from Dunard Fund and has now secured around 83% of funding required, with an expectation it will have 90% secured before the main build contract commences in summer 2025.

NCM is a new organisation which will become a sub-tenant, running and operating the building and gardens as one cultural destination, with RHSPT as its landlord.

Once NCM is operational and actively running the premises, RHSPT will continue to be responsible for significant amounts of the site's maintenance. This is because Dunard Fund also gifted a £10m Endowment Fund, which can be used in perpetuity towards maintenance and upkeep.

NCM is currently led by Jenny Jamison, Chief Executive & Creative Director. Three more core posts will be appointed in 2025, with the team due to grow over 2026-27 to around 17 FTE.



Governance

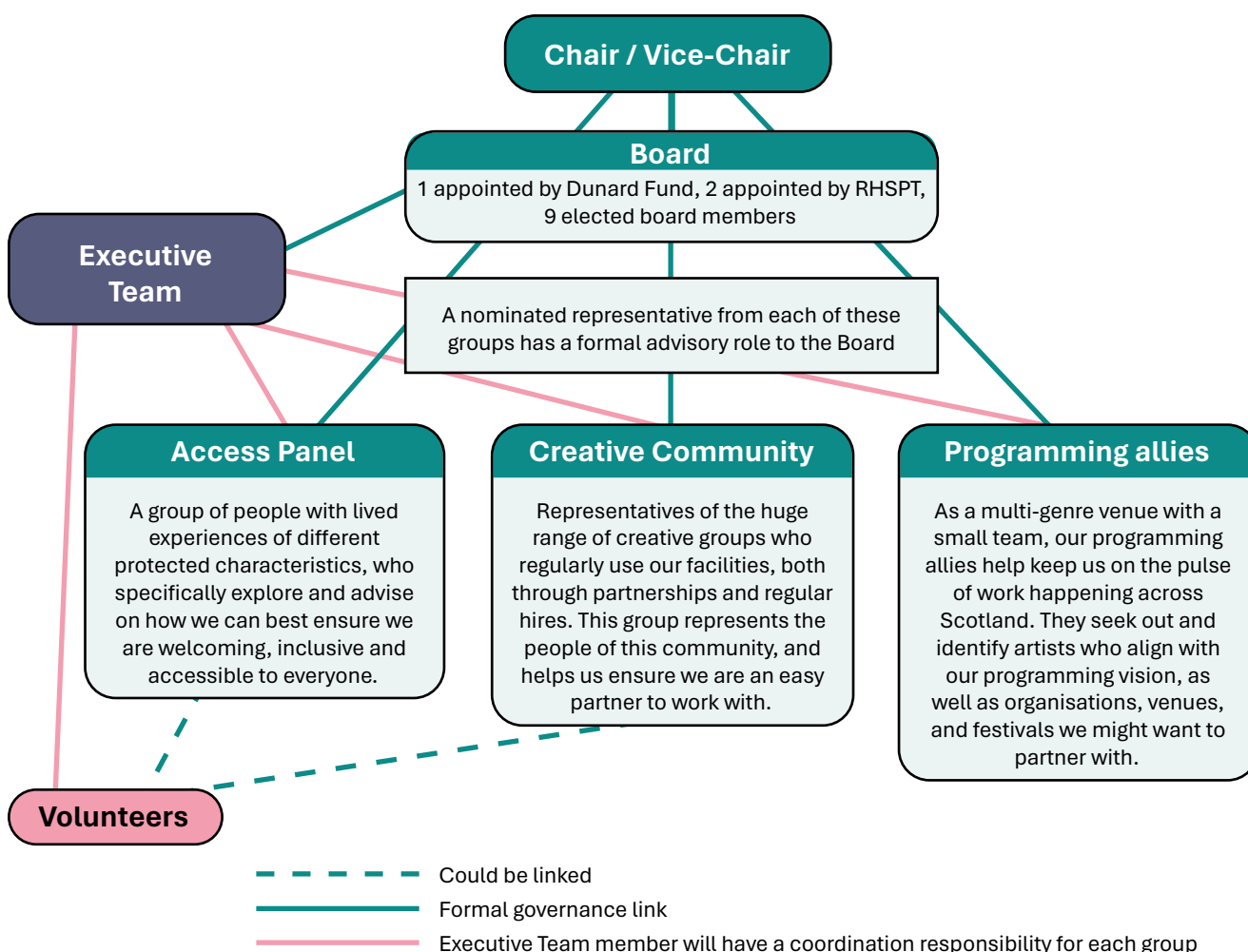
RHSPT and NCM are two distinct and independent charities with two boards and two executive teams, who work closely together with a shared goal but clear lines of responsibility.

NCM's future use of the premises supports RHSPT's charitable purposes of preserving the old Royal High School and giving it a public cultural use. NCM's use will also be relevant in ensuring RHSPT delivers on the conditions of the lease it holds with the City of Edinburgh Council. RHSPT can therefore appoint up to two Trustees to the NCM Board to ensure appropriate awareness and collaboration. Dunard Fund (principal funder of the capital project) can also appoint one Trustee, and there is provision in our Articles for an Executive Trustee (currently the Chief Executive & Creative Director).

The remaining nine places are for independent Trustees, elected by the board based on skills and experiences required. At any given meeting where a decision is being made, at least half the Trustees present and being counted for voting must be Elected Trustees.

A Strategic Development Working Group, comprising individuals with skills relevant to NCM's early development, is also currently supporting the Chief Executive & Creative Director. The timeframe and remit of this group will be reviewed following this board recruitment process – it is currently expected to remain to support on key strategic areas.

As we build our board, we will establish structures which ensure that the voices of our community and stakeholders feed into our governance and decision making. While in development, the following diagram gives an indication as to a potential structure:





Finances

NCM has secured seed funding from philanthropic sources to support reasonable pre-opening costs and reasonable post-opening losses. This gives us a strong basis from which to plan and progress during the period before any additional income can be raised via our core business model.

As previously mentioned, NCM will not be responsible for the majority of maintenance costs - as these will be supported by the Endowment Fund RHSPT has received from Dunard Fund. This significantly increases the strength of NCM's business model, by reducing what would have been a major financial obligation.

Based on current projections, it is estimated that NCM's turnover in the first 5 years of its life will be c.£1.6m, with income generated from office tenancies, room hires, box office income, fundraising, commercial events, casual visitor spend, and food & beverage.

Time Commitment

NCM will hold at least five board meetings per year, plus one Strategy Development Day.

As a new organisation undergoing an intense period of development, we anticipate the call on Trustees' time may be slightly higher than might be considered average for an arts organisation board. However, we will aim to schedule all meetings to accommodate our board members' needs and other commitments. This will include being flexible about time of day, to ensure attendance at meetings is possible for those who are working, studying or have dependants.

To ensure the establishment of NCM progresses according to target timelines, we also anticipate asking some Trustees to lead working groups, and to attend workshops on key organisational areas (e.g. brand development / community consultation).

Terms

Trustee roles are not accompanied by any financial remuneration, though reasonable travel expenses are offered. NCM encourages sustainable travel options and will support Board members to consider sustainability in their choice of travel.

One third of Elected Trustees shall retire from office at each AGM. Generally, no elected Trustee can serve more than three consecutive terms of office without at least one year out of office, before being eligible again.



Seeking a Chair

As part of this recruitment drive, we are seeking our first Chair.

Working closely with the Chief Executive & Creative Director, our Chair will be foundational in ensuring the NCM develops a resilient attractive model that is well received by all key stakeholders - from artists to audiences, the local community to international visitors, donors to politicians.

We are looking for an experienced Chair, and someone with a **clear passion for Scotland's cultural sector**. You will be a key figurehead for the project, and so **confidence in advocacy and public engagement** will be an advantage. A **strong knowledge of business development** will also help you to act as a 'critical friend' to our CEO, ensuring we test, challenge and refine every key decision and build the best possible start for NCM.

If you are interested in considering the Chair role, please feel free to get in touch to arrange a more detailed conversation.



Skills & Experience Sought

At this stage in our development, in addition to the statutory obligations common to all charitable boards (including putting the charity's interest first, acting with care and diligence, good financial record keeping and reporting, communicating the charitable status and purpose, and others, which can be found [here](#)), we anticipate we will wish to focus the board's attention and support on:

- Detailed scrutiny of business plans and organisational development
- Promoting this new organisation, and ensuring more people know and care about it
- Fresh thinking and an entrepreneurial approach to the possibilities this project creates
- Connections and partnerships which might be relevant to how we develop
- Embedding good governance and best practice into our operations

To support with the above priorities, and taking into account the skills of existing Trustees, we are looking in particular for skills or experience in the following areas:

- Business Development
- Branding, marketing and communications
- Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion
- Finance

As we launch ourselves as a new national player, we also want to ensure that the music community feels represented in our governance. We therefore will be looking for some Trustees who have direct knowledge of Scotland's music sector, and/or are practising musicians.

We are very happy to receive applications from individuals for whom this would be a first board experience - training, inductions, training and mentoring will all be offered and we will support you to ensure you feel confident round the board table.

Board meetings will be held in Edinburgh. In person attendance will be encouraged but it will always be possible to attend online as we value the fact hybrid working enables greater inclusion.



Application Process

To apply, please send us a CV and letter of application (of no more than 2 pages) - telling us why you are interested in this opportunity and what you would bring to the role. Please email this to hello@ncmscotland.org.uk with 'NCM Trustee Recruitment' in the email subject. Please do not use AI to write your application.

We are committed to ensuring everyone has access to the same resources and opportunities in applying for this role. If you have any access requirements, or we can do anything to help you feel more supported in your application, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will make any reasonable adjustments we can. If you would prefer to submit a video or audio recording in place of a written letter, you are welcome to do so – please ensure your recording is no more than eight minutes long.

If you would like to speak to someone before applying, please drop us an email at the same address and we will set up a call.

Deadline for applications Friday 9 May, 1pm
Meetings with applicants Tuesday 20 May
Meetings can be held in person in Edinburgh or online.

In determining who to welcome onto the board, we will take account of skills offered, diversity of perspective and lived experience, our national remit and need for connections across Scotland, and passion for NCM's vision.

We look forward to hearing from you!

