



National Centre for Music

Recruitment Pack

# Director of Partnerships



## Key Information

<b>JOB TITLE</b>	Director of Partnerships
<b>CONTRACT</b>	Permanent
<b>SALARY</b>	£60,000 - £65,000 per annum
<b>HOURS</b>	Full-time (though open to discussion, and negotiation of compressed hours, job-shares or flexible structures)
<b>LOCATION</b>	Hybrid (at least 2 days/week in offices in central Edinburgh)
<b>REPORTS TO</b>	Chief Executive & Creative Director
<b>START DATE</b>	January 2026, or as soon as possible (six-month probation period)
<b>HOLIDAYS</b>	22 days annual leave, plus 10 public holidays.
<b>BENEFITS</b>	Employee Assistance Programme (wellbeing advice, mental health support, access to counselling)









## SUMMARY

The National Centre for Music (NCM) is a new organisation which, in 2027, will open and operate the iconic old Royal High School at the foot of Edinburgh's Calton Hill. Offering new mid-scale performance and rehearsal spaces, practice rooms, a recording studio, co-working and creative office space, events and conferencing facilities, a cafe and bar, and two acres of flower-filled landscaped gardens - the first public city centre gardens to be opened in Edinburgh in 200 years – the centre will become an iconic destination and a place where Scotland's musical history is made.

The site is currently managed by the Royal High School Preservation Trust (RHSPT), who are leading a £70m redevelopment project to reawaken this significant Scottish heritage site. In 2027, the National Centre for Music will become the tenant, operating the whole site and programme.

NCM aims to gather, nurture and celebrate all of Scotland's musical ecosystem – providing opportunities and pathways for people to participate in, perform or soak up and enjoy music making of all genres. We will both showcase Scotland's musical heritage and support the creation of music that will inspire people for centuries to come.

We will be a meeting point that connects Scotland's musical communities – on stage and off. Partnerships will be a core part of our developing identity, and we aim to work closely with our tenants, 'house musicians', local community and volunteers, as well as with national networks, to ensure we offer new resource and a platform for the benefit of creators and audiences alike. It is our firm intention not to duplicate work that is already flourishing in Scotland and to look for strategic gaps and ways to boost or catalyse existing opportunities. This will require a really outward-looking approach and a constant thirst to understand the full richness of Scotland's music making.

The spaces we have to offer range from a 2-person practice room to a 300-seater main hall. We will be an engine-house for the creative process, well-placed to support new work, artists pushing their boundaries, emerging talent, as well as to create accessible and safe environments for participation and learning.

We are currently seeking a Director of Partnerships to help us shape the frameworks and relationships that

will go on to define how we work, who we engage with and who we inspire. Taking on this role at this moment will see you become part of the founding story of a new major player in Scotland's music scene – you will be in at the start of things, helping to set the tone and possibilities for the future.

You will help build and lead our team, and will work as part of a senior management team on the development of our performance, participation, engagement and commercial activities. The possibilities for partnerships are extensive – you could be having a conversation with a university one day, and a freelance collective the next; a local community group in the morning, and a national conference convener in the afternoon – and you will have to manage the expectations and balance the needs of a wide range of collaborators. It will be a complex role, but an inspiring one, and the relationships and trust you build with people across the music sector will be fundamental to our success.

This pack outlines what we anticipate this role will involve, and what we think would ensure a candidate would be able to flourish in this role.

If you would like to speak to our Chief Executive & Creative Director prior to application, please get in touch to arrange a chat by emailing [jenny@rhspt.org](mailto:jenny@rhspt.org).

### ***Some behind-the-scenes information:***

- you might have noticed that we don't have a website yet! Working with an external agency, we're in the middle of a brand development process to consult on and settle our identity and the way we communicate.
- you will be our second member of staff, joining our Chief Executive & Creative Director. When we open, our core team will be approx. 18 people.
- we recognise there are risks that come with a young organisation and we want to reassure candidates that we have secure finances, a supportive and growing board, and appropriate HR, financial and governance structures and policies in place.

# About the National Centre For Music

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## 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 Scottish musical history is made.

## VALUES

### **Every sound counts**

The explosion of different types of musical approaches, genres and passions that exist here every day is what makes 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 all have an uplifting atmosphere, and our friendly team 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.







## Strategic Partnership Frameworks

### With the CEO & Creative Director...

- Identifying strategic partnership opportunities at a national and international level -which answer sector gaps, catalyse innovation, or give a boost to existing initiatives
- Establishing transparent, effective partnership models which enable NCM to engage and collaborate with a wide range of partners, and support the development of a sustainable business model
- Modelling and refining robust financial models that balance organisational resilience with a collaborative, practical approach for those we seek to work with (across access-driven hall hires, tenancies, commercial events, co-productions)
- Maximising NCM's convening role, looking at opportunities to bring together the wide range of partners we engage with in formal and informal ways, for learning, development, training or profile-raising

## Creative Partnership Development

- Building partnerships that will underpin our programme and content, including 'House Musicians' (i.e. associate ensembles, featured artists, resident composers) and our Programming Allies (artists contributing to curation and programming)
- Identifying partnerships which will engage and increase access for underrepresented audiences and artists, and engage communities that might traditionally feel excluded by an organisation like NCM
- In pre-opening years, seeking pilot programming partnerships to help connect with performers and audiences across the country and raise the profile of the project
- Looking at a 'co-production first' mindset to enable the majority of musical organisations working with us / on our site to do so in partnership
- Being a key point of contact and friendly face for our partners

## Partnership governance & finance

- Creating appropriate contracts, memorandums of understanding, or partnership agreements to support a range of models
- Refining tenancy models for those organisations looking to move their day-to-day operations into our offices
- Developing strong monitoring and evaluation processes to track the impact of partnerships
- Ensuring NCM's values live through our partnerships, with a particular focus on embedding inclusive and sustainable practices
- Overseeing the programming and hires budget, and ensuring good forecasting, risk analysis, tracking, and financial controls are implemented in this budget area

## Other

- Recruitment of the growing NCM team, leading on some positions
- Line management for c. 5 staff (an organogram will be provided to candidates selected for interview) including supporting staff wellbeing, training, CPD, and appraisals
- Senior Management Team responsibilities including:
  - Representing NCM at events and with wider key stakeholders (e.g. supporters, donors, prospects, industry)
  - Presenting to the NCM board (and potentially convening sub-committees)
  - Generally ensuring that the organisation is working effectively and generating maximum benefit for our partners and for audiences

In the pre-opening years, while this is a senior role, there will be quite a lot of 'doing' as well as planning, as you will be part of a small core team establishing this organisation. Looking ahead, this role is set to be the senior planning role in our team, managing colleagues across events, production, and programming, and ensuring NCM becomes known as an effective partner and a great place to make work. We also anticipate that this role will evolve in response to the successful candidate's particular strengths and skills.

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## PERSON SPECIFICATION

We appreciate that everyone's career journey is different and we are not setting a specific number of years' experience and you do not have to have direct experience in the arts. However, this is, of course, a 'Director' role, so we need to see evidence of leadership and strategic thinking, as well as key practical skills and an ability to manage competing priorities in what will be a complex period of organisational expansion. Ultimately, we are looking for someone who can demonstrate the following capabilities and a passion for the possibilities this role represents:

### Skills and Experience required for this role

- Experience of developing effective partnerships with a range of stakeholders
- Experience of contract negotiations
- Excellent communication skills, and an ability to convey information with clarity
- Evidence of building positive relationships with performers and producers alike
- An existing network in Scotland and/or the music sector would be an advantage, but given our truly multi-genre ambitions, we appreciate this is more likely to be in one or two areas
- Knowledge of effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and how to assess and evidence impact
- Experience of line management, cultivating talent and developing a team
- Strong financial credentials and experience of budget management

### The characteristics of someone we think would flourish in this role

- A personable individual who enjoys working with others and is able to get people 'on side'
- Someone who feels comfortable with risk, unknowns and managing competing strategic priorities (we're new, there will be curve balls, and all our partners might have a slightly different view of what's important!)
- Someone with a flair for creative and innovative thinking – there is room to shape things in this role and so an entrepreneurial streak may be an advantage
- A good decision-maker
- Someone who is extremely organised with excellent prioritisation skills and an ability to balance long-term planning with short-term deadlines
- And, of course, a passion for music is a must

In terms of working environment, while you'll be the second official member of NCM staff, we work very closely with the Royal High School Preservation Trust, and currently share an office with their team, and second some time from their team too. So you'll be coming into contact with highly committed individuals bringing lots of different perspectives on how we can best reawaken this fantastic location. We all work flexibly – a mix of at home and in person, and many of us have family commitments and other needs. We can accommodate a range of approaches to the working week and want to explore what would work best for the successful candidate.







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## HOW TO APPLY

Please email [hello@ncmscotland.org.uk](mailto:hello@ncmscotland.org.uk) with 'Director of Partnerships as your subject header, attaching:

- a copy of your CV
- a covering letter of not more than two A4 pages (or a short video or audio recording of not more than 7 minutes in length), which responds to the following three prompts, as well as giving us any other relevant information as to your suitability for the role:
  - Please give us an example of a partnership you have developed, what made it successful and what challenges you encountered that you think often crop up in partnership working
  - Please give us a sense of what you think NCM could mean for music makers and music audiences in Scotland
  - Please tell us one thing you would love to achieve in this role

You do not have to give individual answers to each of these points if you would rather weave them through your letter. These are just to give a guide as to what we want to understand about your approach, experience and passion.

- Please also complete this [monitoring form](#) (this will not be shared with panellists, and will be stored separately and anonymously). This helps us to track who we are reaching through our recruitment, and will inform changes in our practice to increase the accessibility of our opportunities.

CVs and Covering Letters will be anonymised before initial review by the shortlisting panel. As indicated above, if you do not feel comfortable sharing a written submission, we are also happy to accept video or audio recordings of a covering statement. If you choose to submit a recording, the shortlisting panel will hear your voice (and, if you submit a video, know what you look like) but will not have access to your name or personal details.

First interviews are expected to take place on Thursday 25 September and can be done online or in person. Second interviews will be held on Tuesday 30 September.

CLOSING DATE for applications      12 noon on Friday 12 September

For an informal conversation in advance of applying, or to ask any questions, please contact [jenny@rhspt.org](mailto:jenny@rhspt.org).

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## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

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.

To give everyone the best chance of demonstrating their suitability for the role, we will share the core interview questions a few days in advance of first interviews.



