

Introduction

National portfolio organisations

The National Portfolio funding programme is our programme for organisations that are applying for funding over a four year period from 2018/19 to 2021/22 to deliver arts and cultural activity, as well as those organisations applying to support the arts, museums and libraries sector.

The application form asks you a series of questions about how you plan to contribute to the Arts Council's goals and about your organisation's management, governance and financial viability. We will use the information you give us in your application form to decide whether we will offer you a grant.

The next three screens are autofilled with information you have already provided. The purpose of these is for you to ensure the information is correct. If you need to make any amendments, you will need to go back to the applicants section and make amendments to your applicant profile.

Throughout the application portal, any items marked * must be completed.

Any free text boxes have a strict character limit. Please stick to this character limit as any additional text will be automatically deleted.

If at any time you would like to contact us, click contact us in the left menu bar for contact information.

Good luck with your application and save often.

Organisation details

Non-UK address or address not found:

☐

Address name or number: NORTHERN STAGE,

Street: Barras Bridge

Locality:

Town / city: NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Postcode: NE1 7RH

Main contact number:

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Email address:
(Organisation email address
if applicant is an organisation)

Website address: <http://www.northernstage.co.uk>

Fax number:

**Please select the option that most closely
describes your organisation:** Arts organisation

**Select one of the options below to describe
your organisation's status:** Company limited by guarantee

Are you a registered charity? Yes

What is your charity number? 700055

Is your organisation a Museum? No

Your contact information

Contact type	Main contact	First name	Last name	Primary contact number	Email
Grant administrator	Yes	Kate	Denby	Section 40 (2)	
Grant administrator	No	Lorne	Campbell		
Board member	No	Simon	Elliott		

Contact details

Contact type: Grant administrator

Is this the main contact for the applicant? ☒

First name: Kate

Middle name:

Last name: Denby

Position: Executive Director

Primary contact number:

Alternate contact number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

Fax number:

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Contact details

Contact type: Grant administrator

Is this the main contact for the applicant? ☐

First name: Lorne

Middle name:

Last name: Campbell

Position: Artistic Director

Primary contact number:

Alternate contact number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

Fax number:

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Contact details

Contact type: Board member

Is this the main contact for the applicant? ☐

First name: Simon

Middle name:

Last name: Elliott

Position: Chair

Primary contact number:

Alternate contact number:

Mobile phone number:

Email address:

Fax number:

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Basic details

Information

What is your organisation or consortium's mission or purpose? No more than 2000 characters.

THEATRE FROM THE NORTH EAST
THEATRE FOR EVERYONE

Northern Stage is the largest producing theatre in the North East, touring regionally and nationally, and presenting the best local, national and international work in our venue in Newcastle. We champion creativity and support a diverse range of artists to create ambitious and adventurous theatre.

Our vision is to:

- Produce, co-produce and support the production of great theatre for regional, national and international audiences in live and digital forms
- Tour regionally, nationally and internationally on the mid-scale and small scale, with work that is popular, accessible, politically relevant and culturally diverse
- Establish Young Company as a flexible, dynamic and innovative model for the promotion of creativity and creative practice with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Become an industry leader in the innovation and delivery of inclusive practice and models for working with communities of profound economic disenfranchisement
- Be a strategic leader for our sector and region, supporting a network of creative relationships between artists, practitioners and communities both within and beyond the North East
- Pioneer new modes of collaboration with Newcastle University to evolve the role of a campus based producing theatre as a regional, national and international innovator

Do you, or does your organisation object to receiving National Lottery funding for religious reasons? No

Requested amounts**Amount summary**

	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Total (£):
Amount requested (£):	£1,562,496	£1,562,496	£1,562,496	£1,562,496	£6,249,984

Contributing to our goals

To be considered for funding you must be able to help the Arts Council meet our goals. You must contribute to:

Goals: Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries, Goal 3: The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable, Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries, Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries, Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled

Goal 1

**Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute towards Goal one.
No more than 20,000 characters.**

Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries.

1. THEATRE FROM THE NORTH EAST, THEATRE FOR EVERYONE

Northern Stage is the North East's largest producing theatre. We make theatre that is imaginative, engaging and politically connected to the life of our region; we present and collaborate with the most original regional, national and international theatre companies; create opportunities for a broad range of audiences to participate in the performing arts; and are a vital resource for theatre training in the North East. The Creative Case for Diversity sits at the heart of our approach to creative practice. As the only producing organisation of our scale north of York, we embrace the challenge of leading and serving a large geographically and socially diverse constituency.

Over the last three years we have:

- Increased audiences in Newcastle by 25%, from 48k in 13/14 to over 60k in 15/16 by producing and presenting a diverse programme of performance from established and emerging artists
- Increased the number of Northern Stage-produced shows from 5 in 13/14 to 8 in 16/17
- Completed a £400k capital redevelopment of Stage 3 without requiring ACE investment
- Increased the amount of work being produced, co-produced and created in association with diverse and independent artists, doubling the number of performances in Stage 3 in a year and increased average occupancy from 56% to 63%
- Reduced ACE income as a percentage of turnover from 59% to 50%
- Delivered our multi-award winning Edinburgh programme, strategically enabling over 25 companies and artists to access the largest arts market in the world

2. STRATEGIC AIMS 2018-2022

- Strengthen our identity and reputation as a producing theatre
- Increase audience attendance and reach
- Increase opportunities for creative participation in theatre by children and young people in the region
- Strengthen our programme of sector support to develop talent, resilience and infrastructure in the region
- Increase the quality, volume and reach of digital content
- Establish a business model in which earned and contributed income forms the majority of our turnover

These strategic aims are delivered within four strands of activity:

- Productions
- Talent Development

- Participation
- Resources & Assets

3. PRODUCTIONS

Our 440 seat main house, STAGE 1, hosts 5-7 productions/co-productions per year alongside visiting work from acclaimed theatre and dance companies. STAGE 2 (160 seats) is home to established mid-career artists from the North East region, and high quality National/International small-mid scale touring that would otherwise not be seen in the region. Fringe venue STAGE 3 provides performance opportunities for the many early career artists we support and presents outstanding work made on a small scale by emerging artists from other regions. Since 2012 our Edinburgh Fringe venue has hosted 44 productions, seen by audiences of over 26k.

2020 marks Northern Stage's 50th birthday and we plan a year of celebrations and high profile productions to further cement our reputation as a regional theatre of excellence, serving the whole of the North East.

Over the course of the next investment round we will deliver the following:

3.1 Produced & Co-produced

Our work will be united by a house style that embodies the 'popular, political form': this work is theatrical, live, contemporary and accessible. We are committed to gender balanced, inclusive and diverse casting. To build a consistent, identifiable and inclusive offer for all audiences, we will continue with the programming rhythm we have established during the current NPO:

- February: Flagship Production, Stage 1/2

Innovative in form, with digital engagement and output embedded at the planning stage, this production expands the expectations of our audiences, embodies our ambition and seeks to make work of international quality. The Flagship may be solo or co-produced and will tour nationally on the midscale for 4-6 weeks during March/April; international touring will also originate from this slot. In 2020 we will add an additional flagship production with a local connection to the schedule in May/June.

"this riveting production takes a piece of iconic cinema and transforms it into a theatrical experience of the highest order."

*****The Independent, GET CARTER

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- March: NORTH small-scale tour & Stage 2

A small-scale tour of regional schools & rural venues, performed by actors drawn from our training programme NORTH, this production will extend our regional reach, serve audiences not currently attending Northern Stage and provide a crucial first paid opportunity to early career actors in the region. The production will tour for 6-8 weeks, play in Stage 2, and be accompanied by

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- May: Good Night Out, Stage 1

A co-production, the title is chosen to appeal to a broad audience, aimed at providing a first point of contact for new audiences and deepening our engagement with existing audiences.

“One delicious disaster”

**** The Times NOISES OFF

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- August: Open House, Outdoors

Growing our profile in the North East, we will develop large-scale participant-driven projects culminating in outdoor performances across the region. We are currently developing projects with Commonwealth Theatre and Slung Low.

- September: Great Plays, Stage 2

Varying our drama offer by presenting work from the classic and contemporary canon in small-scale productions, this work will be directed by an emerging director; in year 1 this director will be supported by an Associate Director heme (RTYDS).

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- October: Curriculum Text, Stage 1

Developing our relationship with secondary schools, FE institutions, and traditional theatre audiences, we will annually produce a curricular text. This co-production, led by a partner venue, will allow us to present work with larger casts at lower cost.

- November/December: Family Christmas, Epic Space

At Christmas we transform Stages 1 & 2 into an Epic playing space to perform a classic children’s story, which allows us to increase our audience capacity for our best attended show. This model was trialled in 2016 with JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH, our highest grossing and best attended Christmas production for 10 years. For younger children we produce a Christmas show for under 5’s in Stage 3.

“It feels like a show that will stay in the imaginations and memories of a generation of children in this city”

Annie Rigby, Artistic Director, Unfolding Theatre on JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

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3.2 Visiting work

Complementing our produced work, the visiting DRAMA programme enables us to serve a breadth of tastes, diversity of artform, and present some of the best theatre produced in the rest of the UK. STAGE 1 partners include Kneehigh, the RSC, Improbable and Filter. STAGE 2 will showcase innovative work from across the UK, and will enable us to build audiences for diverse work, including by LGBTQ+, BAME and D/deaf and disabled artists. STAGE 3 will host new work by emerging artists drawn from the region and the best new small-scale work from across the country. We will remain a key partner in the Venues North collaborative programming network.

Our DANCE programme presents highly theatrical work, such as Phoenix Dance Theatre and Mark Murphy. Partnership with Dance City allows us to coordinate our programming and employ the dance agency for the North East to develop audiences. We are also partnering with local choreographers Martin Hylton (Gateway Studios) and Liv Lorent (Ballet Lorent) to access their knowledge of dance to support programming. Fundamental to our dance programme is our relationship with Dance Touring Partnership.

FAMILY AUDIENCES represent an area of steady growth and we remain committed to programming high quality imaginative work for our youngest audiences. We partner with JUICE festival at October half term and present work from companies such as Half Moon, Polka, Tangled Feet and story-teller Chris Bostock year round. Work for children with PMLD is a priority and is programmed in each season, e.g Oily Cart, Frozen Light.

As we extend our summer season into June & July and we will build a programme of contemporary CIRCUS, programming innovative companies such as No Fit State.

In Stage 1, we will continue to use COMEDY programming to drive revenue and broaden audiences. We focus on up-and-coming comedians not yet performing at No.1 venues but with a significant following. In keeping with our commitment to the Creative Case, BAME, disabled and female comedians are central to our repertoire.

3.3 International

Northern Stage has a strong International history which we will re-invigorate. To drive this aspiration we have formed a consortium – Birmingham REP, Brighton Festival, Hall for Cornwall, HOME, LIFT, Norfolk & Norwich Festival and West Yorkshire Playhouse - committed to making a step change in international theatre practice in England. With the support of ACE strategic funds and our own resources we will work over the coming investment round to ensure that:

- Audiences and artists are exposed regularly to exceptional international theatre, with existing mid-scale productions toured into the UK alongside regular programmes of residencies, workshops and masterclasses

- A programme of skills development and capacity building is developed with staff across organisations to improve international working; this will engage Artistic/Executive Directors, producing, communication, learning and participation and technical teams
- A home-grown programme of internationally-led artistic productions will be developed, co-produced and jointly presented by the network partners, embedding international practices into our organisations and enriching and diversifying our artistic offer

Over recent years limited resources have made it challenging to deliver strategic international programming. In a post-Brexit country it is more vital than ever that we remain open to the artistic practices and influences of international artists and companies. We know that our audiences are excited by international theatre and that the practice of the artists we work with is transformed by access to international artists

3.4 Edinburgh

Since 2012 Northern Stage has operated a venue at the Edinburgh Festival, subsidising the cost and increasing the impact of independent artists presenting work. The diversity of programming has been notable, with performances from Deaf & Hearing Ensemble, Selina Thompson, Zoe Murtagh, Open Clasp, Zendeh, Tamasha and over 40 artists from the Middle East through our cabaret show HERE IS THE NEWS.

"Northern Stage has become a major producer of work by north Britain-based companies on the fringe, with a model that is about supporting and developing work and artists who might not be able to get to Edinburgh without it. It is a significant part of Northern Stage's artist development programme and one with regional and national benefits."

Lyn Gardner, The Guardian, August 2016

Successes during this time include a Spirit of the Fringe Award for THE BLOODY GREAT BORDER BALLAD and Fringe First's for Dan Bye's HOW TO OCCUPY AN OIL RIG and GOING VIRAL, Chris Thorpe and Rachel Chavkin's CONFIRMATION, Open Clasp Theatre's KEY CHANGE (which also won the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh Award), and RashDash's TWO MAN SHOW. Our work in Edinburgh was recognised by UK Theatre with the Renee Stepham Award for Best Presentation of Touring Theatre in 2016.

Edinburgh provides a training opportunity for up to 20 volunteers who deliver FOH and technical operations, creating life changing outcomes, with past volunteers securing professional acting roles and taking up paid employment as theatre technicians.

"I...ended up with a job as a stage manager and ended up on tour (no sooner after Edinburgh). I'll also add a thanks as if it wasn't for Northern Stage, and the experience in Edinburgh, I would have never have got the job."

Christopher Barton, Technical volunteer, 2014

Over the next investment round we will evolve and expand the impact of the Edinburgh programme by leading a consortium programme with the major Northern buildings. Working with colleagues at the Royal Exchange, West

Yorkshire Playhouse, Hull Truck and HOME, we will present a programme of work in Edinburgh for 4 years while also establishing a commissioning and touring network for work before and after Edinburgh. This collaboration will result in more commissions, co-productions, touring opportunities, increased international impact and deeper relationships with and between a Northern community of artists.

3.5 Creative Digital Content

Through the next period we will significantly expand the impact of our digital work to reach more audiences. We will encourage experimentation with new digital approaches across the company, and embed successful experiments in our day-to-day activity. We will invest in digital infrastructure allowing us to operate in more efficient and flexible ways.

We have submitted a bid for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Newcastle University through which Northern Stage will work with a creative digital expert for 18 months to innovate new models of planning, practice and delivery for the integration of digital practice into our core creative activity, focussing on Young Company, Epic Christmas and our spring Flagship production.

In Summer 2017 we will make a feature film of our production of DR FRANKENSTEIN for digital distribution through Cinegi, an innovative non-theatrical distribution network bringing filmed arts content to audiences where provision has traditionally been poor. Working with established film producer Mike Knowles, this pilot project will present a highly innovative new model for the development of creative collaborations between film and theatre producers to increase impact, develop audiences and generate revenue.

We are creating a digital archive to launch on our 50th anniversary, giving audiences access to digitised material from the company's past and marking a shift to creating digital learning content that is a long-term resource.

4. TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Northern Stage places talent development at the heart of our creative activities, leading a national trend for regional theatres to embrace their responsibility for developing artists at all stages of their careers.

"Northern Stage is not alone in thinking this way, but it's a subtle yet significantly different way of thinking about artist development. Instead of simply seeing artist development as one of a long list of things that any modern funded theatre should be doing, it's about seeing it as a way of hooking up with those who can add greater value in delivering jointly conceived projects. That can provide more opportunities, greater agency for the companies involved, and more equitable and sustainable long-term relationships."
Lyn Gardner, The Guardian, October 2016

4.1 NORTH

Our Esmée Fairbairn-funded graduate training scheme NORTH has engaged 27 young people over the last 4 years in an intensive programme of skills development and performance making. Participants have gone on to establish new companies touring work nationally, work professionally as actors at

Northern Stage and elsewhere, take on paid roles as facilitators, and access further training opportunities such as RTYDS and Bridging the Gap.

"I wouldn't have got the jobs I have in the sector if it wasn't for NORTH and Northern Stage"
NORTH participant

We are restructuring the NORTH offer to provide a 3-year inter-related framework of training, guidance and mentoring interventions that will address the financial, educational and social barriers faced by young people from working-class backgrounds who aspire to professional work in theatre. The new programme will deliver three distinct strands:

- Professional performance training of skills traditionally only available through conservatoire training: voice/text, movement, acting, improvisation, directing and devising
- Small-scale touring of GCSE-related texts to schools and community venues in the region, creating opportunity to gain experience of performing
- Bespoke strategic development for artists and companies to develop professional skills, networks, creative practice and organisational capacity

4.2 Residencies

Residencies offer space, time, creative and financial production support to enable artists to make their most adventurous work. Ranging from established and highly innovative companies like Improbable, Will Adamsdale, Greyscale or Gecko, to the best of emerging talent like Curious Monkey, Daniel Bye and The Letter Room, we work with artists to increase their capacity, raise their aspiration a
to be made. rk

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Through bid writing mentorship and the seed funding we offer as part of our residencies, we have so far helped to leverage £10 for every £1 of NS cash investment.

"The support and nurturing that Northern Stage has given us since completing the NORTH programme in 2013 has changed our lives as theatre makers. Without it, we wouldn't have been able to create a successful and sustainable theatre company."
The Letter Room

4.3 Associate Artists

Over the next 24 months we will pilot a programme of Associate Artists at Northern Stage. This fixed term opportunity is intended to support an

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4.4 Creative Team

Creative Team is an online community resource for artists, offering workshops, masterclasses, peer mentoring and CPD opportunities for members.

Membership provides:

- Access to online resources, detailing development opportunities, jobs and networking events
- Public facing diary software to book free rehearsal and meeting space
- Priority access to perform in First in 3, a bi-annual scratch night
- Priority access to a programme of masterclasses
- Discounted tickets, food and drink

4.5 Continuing Professional Development

We offer several Assistant and Associate Director placements with the RTYDS. Opportunities for skills training are offered with JMK Trust, who also sponsor an Assistant Director, and visiting companies are encouraged to share their practice with artists in the region.

4.6 Partnership with Newcastle University

We are developing a range of new projects with Newcastle University to explore and evolve the role of a campus-based theatre, including: international collaboration and symposium with campus-based theatres; action-practice research and evaluation around creative and participatory projects; resource and skill sharing to develop low cost creative training models for diverse participants; and co-working on the capital development of creative hubs in the North East which will provide significant capital and human resource support for early career artists in cross-artform physical and digital creative incubators.

Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute to the Creative Case for Diversity. No more than 10,000 characters.

1. CREATIVE CASE STRATEGY

Northern Stage has a strong record of delivery of the Creative Case for Diversity in artist development, presentation of work by diverse artists, access for D/deaf and disabled audiences and representation of a broad demographic of performers within our casts.

While our approach to advancing the creative case engages with the full range of protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, responding to our regional demographics and history we have set two area of focus for the period 2017-2022:

- Engaging artists and audiences of South Asian heritage, who form one of the largest and longest-standing non-white communities in Newcastle, making up 7% of Newcastle vs 2% of the North East
- Addressing barriers to access due to low socio-economic status. Newcastle has large areas of social and economic deprivation: it is ranked 53rd (of 326) most deprived local authority on the IMD 2015, and almost 23% of our population live in the most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. These statistics are repeated across the North East: 8 of 12 local authorities are in the top 25% most deprived areas in the country.

Advancing the Creative Case is a strategic priority embedded across the organisation and led by the Board of Directors, who took part in an in-depth discussion on the Creative Case in autumn 2016, facilitated by Nazli Tabatabai-Khatambakhsh of Zende.

Our Creative Case strategy looks at three areas:

2. CREATIVE DIVERSITY

We take a curatorial approach to our produced and visiting programmes of work, ensuring a range of artists and artistic practices contribute to our artistic programme, and actively participate in strategic touring initiatives. We will present Mind The Gap's CONTAINED in 2017, a performance created and performed by learning-disabled artists and accompanied by workshops to connect with existing regional groups including The Lawnmowers, Twisting Ducks and Liberdade. In autumn 17 we will build on our 10-year association with South Africa by presenting the Market Theatre, Johannesburg's THE SUITCASE within the Freedom City festival commemoration of Martin Luther King.

We have presented work by South Asian artists for many years, most recently LOVE, BOMBS and APPLES by Asif Khan and HOW TO MAKE A KILLING IN BOLLYWOOD by The Bilji Project. A renewed strategic commitment to artists of South Asian heritage will begin with our 2017 production of Ayub Kahn Din's EAST IS EAST, directed by Newcastle-born director Suba Das. To increase the profile of British Asian artists working in the region we will collaborate with Gem Arts to establish a regular presented programme in Stage 3, and will encourage artists to consider showcasing opportunities within our Edinburgh Festival programme. We have regularly collaborated with Tamasha and their work will remain a regular feature of our visiting programme.

Within our produced and artist development programmes we ensure a range of creative voices are developed and given a platform to showcase their talent. Through commission, presentation and residency we have supported and championed the work of diverse artists in the region including composer Mariam Rezaei (BEATS NORTH, HERE IS THE NEWS, A SONG FOR ELLA GREY), performer Selina Thompson (CHEWING THE FAT, DARK AND LOVELY, SALT) and choreographer Martin Hylton (Gateway Studios at AFROVIBES, JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH, A SONG FOR ELLA GREY). In 2017 Martin Hylton will become one of our inaugural Associate Artists, developing new work and regularly choreographing for productions, and drawing on his knowledge of contemporary dance to contribute to our dance programming conversations. We are developing Mix programme,

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Over the last 3 years we have increased our programme of work by LGBTQ+ artists, including work by Kate O'Donnell, Cameron Sharp and Seiriol Davies. We are in conversation with Phil Douglas about supporting the annual CURIOUS festival of LGBTQ+ work in Newcastle Gateshead. We host Twisting Ducks, a theatre company run with and for learning disabled performers, and Little Cog will return with their new show BUTTERFLY following the success of their last visit in 2015. Deaf and Hearing Ensemble were part of our Edinburgh 2016 programme with their show PEOPLE OF THE EYE.

Over the next period we will address the issues that prevent artists who have experienced economic, social or educational disadvantage from competing for work alongside their more privileged peers. Our successful intensive training programme NORTH will expand to offer more opportunities for training, development and employment, including bespoke artist/company support, conservatoire-level training and employment as performers in a regional school/rural venue tour.

3. AUDIENCE & PARTICIPANT DIVERSITY

Northern Stage has been a leading champion of integrated signed performance in all of our productions and tours; each Northern Stage production includes a signed, audio described and captioned performance, and these access services are offered on tour.

Engaging with audiences in areas of economic disadvantage is a significant priority. We want to reach people outside the top three Audience Spectrum segments, and introduce young people from these areas to creative experiences. Studies recognise that education and social status are the most important determinants of participation in the arts, and we will implement a holistic programme of audience development that involves marketing & communications, participation and programming to build up a body of evidence and best practice.

We intend to use our rehearsal-venue presence in Byker as a catalyst to community engagement and dialogue. The Byker project will be a long-term investment of time and resource, taking performance and participatory activity directly into the Byker community, and will involve innovative partnerships with

existing community groups working in the creative, social and health sectors. Within Newcastle almost one in three children, and over half of children living in Byker, are classed as living in poverty and are less likely to engage in cultural activities or to stay on at school beyond year 11. The project will enable us to trial and monitor a range of models and settings for audience engagement, to develop models of long term impact measurement, and through which we can develop methodologies that can be replicated in other communities and shared with colleagues in the industry. We will then apply successful methodologies to our work in other communities in the city and region.

In order to engage with the range of diverse communities represented in the city and the wider region we need to be working with schools. The Census 2011 estimates 82% of Newcastle's population is white British and 12% comprised of other ethnic groups. However, School Census data shows that the proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) children is much higher than for adults and continues to rise, with Reception intake in primary schools increasing significantly. Almost 32% of the 2011/12 reception cohort are from BME backgrounds compared 16.6% in year 11.

Our Young Company programme will offer a range of activity, from performance outcomes to practical or technical training and the development of leadership skills, to groups of young people across the region. This will be open for young people from across the region, including students from Gateshead and Newcastle Colleges who currently engage on specific projects but not throughout the year. Young Company will be underpinned by a research project delivered in collaboration with Newcastle University to critically examine the potential for creative engagement in theatre of young people aged 16-21 from areas of economic disadvantage, and pilot and evaluate creative practice training models.

Through the next period we plan to further strengthen our regional profile by expanding our small-scale regional touring. Working with colleagues at Culture Bridge and Highlights we will build a regional touring network for Northern Stage productions to schools, small-scale and rural venues, starting with the professional performance strand of our NORTH programme and then studio-scale Stage 2 productions.

4. WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

We are committed to increasing the diversity of our workforce. In 2016 we took part in Tonic Theatre's ADVANCE 2, looking at gender diversity within the performing arts. We implemented the gender tracker to monitor our engagement of women in creative practitioner roles; we anticipate achieving gender parity across our freelance creative roles across the life of the current NPO. We have since adapted the gender tracker to allow us to track ethnicity alongside gender and will continue to use this tool during the next NPO.

Our casting policy ensures the performers on our stages represent the diversity of our community, and all visiting directors writers and co-producers are expected to deliver to our policy. Most productions have a significant number of actors from the North East, and BAME and disabled performers have been cast in significant roles, including Tyrone Huggins as Prospero on THE TEMPEST and Rachel Denning as Thea in HEDDA GABLER.

We operate a robust recruitment process that ensures equality of opportunity, with practices such as 'name-blind' application forms during shortlisting removing the potential for unconscious bias. Over the next period we intend to review and refresh our recruitment procedures for administrative, technical and front of house roles to increase the number of applications received from non-traditional applicants.

Goal 2

**Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute towards Goal two.
No more than 20,000 characters.**

Everyone has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries.

1. EVIDENCE OF DEMAND

We have implemented a number of initiatives to grow audiences: increasing annual performances from 248 in 14/15 to 319 in 16/17; extending season lengths; and creating a new performance space, Stage 3, to serve new artists and audiences. A regular programming rhythm with thematic and stylistic consistency supports audiences to develop venue loyalty.

These initiatives have seen audiences increase from 8k bookers (48.5k tickets) in 13/14 to 12k bookers (60.2k tickets) in 15/16. From 2013 to 2016 audiences attending twice or more a year increased by 54% and audiences attending 3+ times a year increased by 50%.

Productions like GET CARTER and JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH have seen record sales, and easy-access ticket deals, like 3 shows for £45, have contributed to increased frequency of attendance. In 15/16 we attracted 6000+ first time bookers (FTB) to our Newcastle venue. Northern Stage productions are proving most popular to FTBs: GET CARTER 44% FTB, THE SEASON TICKET 48% FTB, JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH 48% FTB.

The Audience Spectrum profile of our audiences has shifted over this period. Our largest segment, and biggest growth, is in Dormitory Dependables who now represent 25% of our audience. Trips and Treats bookers have increased by 700+ attendances, a direct response to our change in programming to attract a broader audience.

Unsurprisingly, 61% of our audience fall into the top 4 most engaged segments (Metroculturals, Commuterland Culturebuffs, Experience Seekers, Dormitory Dependables) predominantly residing in NE2, NE3 and NE6, whilst census data suggests that these segments represent only 25% of the population of our region. We have however, since 13/14, seen an increase of over 70% in the number of bookers from some of the least engaged segments (Heydays, Up Our Street, Facebook Families) who are much more prevalent in our region and who are responding to some of our more regional programming.

Though we have seen positive movement in the last 3 years, we recognise that we have progress to make increasing audience attendance, retention and reach. Our audience development objectives for the next NPO are to:

- Increase regional profile
- Target areas of economic disadvantage
- Grow audience numbers

2. INCREASING REGIONAL PROFILE

Increasing awareness of Northern Stage within our local and regional communities continues to be a priority as it underpins the effectiveness of all our work, including participation, artist development and fundraising.

68% of current audiences are within 30 minutes drive of the theatre (approximately 18 miles); as the region's flagship producing venue we will proactively build our regional audiences. Northern Stage has strong national profile – our Edinburgh venue and national touring have contributed to this – but currently we receive more web traffic from Sheffield than South Shields. We want to address this.

Through increased touring to schools and rural venues, regional deployment of Young Company, and the participatory performances of Open House, we will strengthen our profile and position as a creative and cultural asset for the region. We will commission high-profile writers, performers and creatives from the North East to frame a broad and accessible conversation about the political and social tensions of the region. Recent productions of CLOSE THE COALHOUSE DOOR, GET CARTER and THE SEASON TICKET are examples of work with strong regional resonance that have attracted a more geographically and socially diverse audience; new commissions will include RED ELLEN by Caroline Bird, about the MP who led the Jarrow March; and PAN ON THE TYNE by Archie Maddox, telling the experiences of Caribbean migrants to Newcastle in the 60s. Our 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2020 will position Northern Stage as a theatre for the whole of the North East.

3. INCREASING ENGAGEMENT IN AREAS OF ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

In common with other Northern post-industrial cities, Newcastle has large areas of social and economic deprivation. We intend to make a significant priority of engaging with audiences in areas of economic disadvantage through the next period. We will develop a model of best practice for targeted long-term engagement with disadvantaged communities. Our rehearsal venue is in Byker, one of the top 1% most deprived areas of the UK, at the former Raby Street Youth Centre next to Byker Primary (68% free school meals; 34% ESL). Through a long-term investment of time and resource we will establish innovative partnerships with community organisations working in the creative, health and social sectors. The Byker project is a strategic priority for our participation, audience development and fundraising teams; activity includes:

- A strategic partnership with Byker Primary School, engaging the whole school in the process of making work
- Training specialists in making work for early years, with Theatre Hullabaloo and Byker Primary
- Supporting Artists for Change to work with looked-after families in Byker Nursery and Borough Road Nursery, Darlington
- Establishing Young Company for older teens based out of Raby Street
- Delivering a major Open House participatory performance project in 2020
- Collaborating with Well Newcastle to implement cultural activity to improve social isolation, mental health and low self-esteem in adults
- Working with Commonwealth Theatre on a new production that brings together former soldiers and refugees from areas of conflict to examine the impact of PTSD

This long-term commitment to Byker will enhance the social and cultural capital of a generation of young people we work with. We will trial and monitor a range of models and settings for audience engagement which we will then replicate in other communities in our city and region. To support the delivery of this intensive programme of community engagement we will develop plans for a

capital redevelopment of the Raby Street site, such that it can once again become a vibrant cultural and community resource.

4. ACCESS

Northern Stage has a strong record of delivery to advance the Creative Case for Diversity. We have increased accessible performances over the last 5 years, from 9 in 13/14 to 14 in 15/16 and plan to reach 18 in 16/17. Every in-house production has a captioned and audio described performance scheduled, and we have a reputation for our innovative Integrated BSL Performances, which are offered both in Newcastle and on our mid-scale tours. We offer £5 tickets to accessible performances for audiences who use the services: for the BSL performance of JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH we increased the amount of £5 tickets available twice due to demand. We work closely with DeafLink and SPIT to ensure awareness of these performances. In 2013 we held our first relaxed performance for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder; these have since been offered on 4 more productions. Front of House and Box Office staff are given training in accessibility awareness and the North East Autism Society advise us on improving our relaxed performances and communicating our offer to families.

"I have to say the entire cast/director and staff were all completely amazing and understanding. They had clearly researched what the triggers and/or needs might be for anybody needing to access a relaxed performance. The cast seemed to be able to feed off of the audience and adapt their performance accordingly as and when required to do so. It has to be the best relaxed performance we have been to. The size of the venue and the enthusiasm of the venue staff, director and cast altogether for us means it is an absolute certainty that we will be visiting again soon. Simply brilliant!"

Audience member at Relaxed Performance of JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH, Dec 2016

We offer free space at Northern Stage to Twisting Ducks Theatre Company who run a weekly theatre group for people with autism here once a week, and with Open Here, a drama group for teens in the early stages of psychosis; both groups meet and perform at Northern Stage, meet staff and watch and review productions.

5. KEEPING & GROWING CURRENT AUDIENCES

Over the next NPO we will make a transformational change in audience retention and growth. Analysis shows we are successful in attracting new attenders – about 55%-60% of bookers each year will be first time attenders. Our challenge is retention: 70% of all bookers in any one year won't attend the following year, rising to 80% of first time attenders.

We have appointed US consultants TRG Arts to support the expansion of integrated, data-drive audience communications. From Jan 17 TRG will work across the organisation – with box office, marketing, fundraising and programming – to develop patron loyalty and implement campaign management, monitoring and evaluation tools. We will implement demand management strategies including proactive inventory management and dynamic pricing to reward early booking and loyalty. We anticipate that the results of our TRG programme will see more people coming more frequently from our top

segments and increasing our box office income.

Ahead of our production of EAST IS EAST in 2017 we will continue to develop relationships with South Asian audiences in our region as identified as a priority group in our Creative Case Strategy. We will grow the number of audiences attending Northern Stage from this ethnic group over the next 4 years.

6. DISCOVER

Discover is our regular programme of public enhancement activities, including post-show discussions, workshops and events around productions, which increase the depth and quality of the audience experience.

Activity includes post-show discussions led by a member of the artistic team in conversation with the cast and company. READ THROUGH is a fortnightly group for over 60s who read and discuss plays thematically linked to the artistic programme. We have had particular success with initiatives such as Township Café as part of Afrovibes Festival in 2014, providing a curated programme of free events around the central programmed shows, or themed pre-show talks eg. 'Newcastle in the 60s' alongside GET CARTER and we intend to increase this offer over the next NPO cycle. Creative workshops with visiting artists and local performing arts students remain a regular part of our offer, alongside sessions for our Creative Team members on creative practice.

7. TOURING

Northern Stage is a leading cultural ambassador for the region, with a reputation for touring high-quality, innovative drama to venues across the country. The breadth of our touring output was recognised with the Renee Stepham Award for Best Presentation of Touring Theatre at the 2016 UK Theatre Awards.

Each spring we tour nationally on the mid-scale and have strong relationships with national venues, including Nuffield, Richmond, Gala, Lowry and CAST. We work in partnership with venues on strategic initiatives to improve access to quality work, including the delivery of integrated BSL performances on tour.

"a stylish and unremitting piece of slow-burning brutalist noir"

**** The Herald on GET CARTER, 11 March 2016 (performed at Glasgow Citizens)

We are recognised for the investment we make to support independent artists to increase the number and reach of audiences for their work. Our Edinburgh Fringe venue removes the financial barriers that impede access, and the consortium with regional buildings will build a commissioning and touring network around the festival programme, creating more opportunities for touring by independent artists.

"There's already demonstrable interest in the future life of OIL RIG – the spring tour is filling up nicely. And of course THE PRICE OF EVERYTHING is still going after last year's incredible August – by this time last year it had been performed just over 30 times; by the end of this year it will hit 3 figures and counting. I've just been invited to perform it at a festival in Mumbai, thanks to the British Council Showcase. And that of course wouldn't have happened if it

wasn't for last year."

Dan Bye in 2013, THE PRICE OF EVERYTHING (2012); HOW TO OCCUPY AN OIL RIG (2013); GOING VIRAL (2015)

The schools and small-scale touring of NORTH 16 has exposed a demand for quality work on this scale in the region. We will develop a sustainable touring network that serves both as an opportunity for artists to gain experience of performing, and as a powerful resource for the secondary education sector. It will create a far-reaching audience development tool for Northern Stage, serving previously under-engaged audiences in our region.

"Slick, utterly professional and pacy, the performance had us all gripped from start to finish...Northern Stage would be welcome back at Ferryhill any time!"
Teacher, Ferryhill Business & Enterprise College, Durham, NORTH tour of ANIMAL FARM, March 2016

8. DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION & ENGAGEMENT

We have increased digital output but need to expand beyond digital marketing, and increase skills and confidence to embrace digital opportunities in the wider staff team. In 2017 we will begin an 18-month Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Newcastle University to address gaps in our digital activity, seek expertise on innovative practice, and embed skills within the staff team to enable long-term and replicable benefits.

We are adapting our production of DR FRANKENSTEIN to film for digital distribution to non-traditional venues by Cinegi; if successful this will be replicated for future productions and become a major part of our digital strategy, increasing both audience numbers and reach.

Our online ticket sales increased from 38% to 51% over the past 3 years and traffic from mobile devices are 57% of interactions online. Our current website would benefit from significant enhancements to improve customer experience and we plan to redevelop this during 2017. In collaboration with TWAM we will pilot a cultural presence on Newcastle University's app to increase engagement from staff and students.

Our cloud ticketing system, Spektrix, is a powerful reporting tool and its integration with bulk email system Dotmailer gives us significant insight into audience behaviour. We tag customers using the Audience Spectrum segmentation model. Sign up to receive digital marketing is increasing (currently 25k) but there is scope to significantly improve this. Our presence on social media is popular and regularly updated but we will take a more strategic approach, linking closely with audience development aims, and we will improve access to archived digital content.

Our vision for use of digital in 2018-2022 is:

- Audiences: expanding the impact of creative work and encouraging audiences to take part in creative responses to our content
- Shifting organisational culture: encouraging experimentation with new digital approaches and embedding success in day to day activity

- Investing in long-term resource: investing in digital infrastructure that allows us to operate in more efficient and flexible ways

9. MONITORING & EVALUATION, DATA CAPTURE & SHARING

9.1 The Insider

Northern Stage is working as 1 of 9 cultural organisations on a digital big-data project developing new audiences and creating opportunities for more individuals to have enjoyable and enriching encounters with arts and culture. Developed by the NGCV network - Amy Fawdington, Director of Communications, sits on the steering group - THE INSIDER is a shared database that provides information by email to a current membership of around 13k subscribers. What's on information, news, events and offers are brought together from across 19 venues in Newcastle and Gateshead. The collaboration is exploring a new model of audience relationship building, using personalised, targeted communications and experiences to encourage people to engage with culture and try new things. It's underpinned by audience segmentation model Culture Segments, developed by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM). The project is funded until 2018 by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to generate increased visits and revenue for partner organisations and develop a new model of practice that it may be possible to replicate. The ambition is to engage 40k new subscribers by July 2018. The project will be evaluated by MHM in 2018. Subject to this evaluation the partners intend to further develop this approach as part of NPO 2018-22 and seek to engage a wider group of partner organisations in particular targeting organisations based outside the Tyneside conurbation.

9.2 Family Explorers

Northern Stage is also a partner in Family Explorers North East (familyexplorers.co.uk). Founded by NGCV it is a project funded by a partnership of 16 NE cultural venues encouraging families in the region to become more culturally confident and try new things. The project was the result of a robust action research pilot in 2013/14, which applied MHM's Culture Segments to understand what motivates families to take more risks and try new cultural experiences. It uses a Facebook group, e-newsletter and website to stimulate peer to peer recommendation between families, providing the practical information they need to make successful visits to cultural venues/events and curates suggested activities for them. Evidence from the Facebook interactions demonstrates that peer to peer recommendation is leading to greater participation and first time visits for the families involved. E.g. this recent feedback on JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH:

Parent 1: Look out for Aunt Sponge and the Earthworm (same person) who stole the show for me. Would highly recommend you all go!

Parent 2 [in response]: We were there last night and thought it was phenomenal...

The project has been promoted nationally by the Family Arts Campaign as a best practice example for digitally engaging families with culture, and Family Explorers NE is the region's recognised family arts network. There were 120 Family Explorers when the project was rolled out in 2014, and there are currently over 5,000 families subscribed. Based on current speed of expansion,

we expect to grow this to 15,000 by December 2020.

9.3 Data sharing

Northern Stage will continue to share data with visiting companies and artists through data sharing agreements; our data protection statements allow customers to opt in to hearing from visiting companies via email. At the end of a run companies and artists receive comprehensive reports on audience behaviour from Northern Stage; we contributed to the beta testing of the Audience Agency's Show Stats and actively encourage artists to access data using this tool. Amy Fawdington has contributed to the newly formed Audience Agency Think Tank.

9.4 Monitoring & evaluation

We participated in testing Quality Metrics during 2016. Self, peer and public assessment was used across 3 Northern Stage produced shows. These metrics sit alongside more detailed post-visit email audience surveys, which also collate information on customer service, our catering offer and (where given) the ethnicity of our audiences.

Northern Stage's customer database is segmented using Audience Spectrum segments allowing us monitor and evaluate the types of audiences engaging in our work and also crucially to target geographic areas of our region where certain segments are underrepresented or there is potential for more growth. Annually we have budgeted for at least 1 piece of substantial audience research.

Northern Stage productions go through a debriefing process after delivery to look at process, outcomes and how learning can be applied in the future. Comprehensive evaluation reports reviewing audience behaviour and feedback compare outputs with the targets; these reports go on to inform future target-setting. Our ambitions for audience growth between 2018 and 2022 are big but we are confident in our plans to achieve them.

Goal 3

**Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute towards Goal three.
No more than 20,000 characters.**

The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable.

1. RESILIENCE

Increasing our organisational and financial resilience continues to be a core objective over the next period. We have listened carefully to feedback from ACE and have made strategic efforts to address our resilience through our business model. Since 13/14 we have increased turnover from £2.7m to £3.1m, and we are projecting £3.4m in 17/18; as a result ACE income as a % of turnover has reduced from 58% to 50% to 45% respectively. We intend to accelerate this strategic approach to increasing income and achieve a turnover of £4m by 2022, of which 60% will come from non-ACE sources. Over the last 2 years we performed ahead of the targets agreed in our previous NPO agreement, giving us confidence that our targets are both ambitious and achievable.

1.1 Increasing box office income

In 15/16 box office income increased from £392k to £490k, the result of a number of strategic developments: we increased annual performances programmed from 248 to 289, and extended the season by moving our maintenance period. We increased ticket prices, introduced an integrated NVC (equivalent to a booking fee), streamlined concessions, and trialled the introduction of peak performances at weekends. We revised our heavily discounted multi-buy offer, which while popular impacted disproportionately on our ticket yield; this was replaced with a more easily accessible '3 for £45' ticket deal which retained the frequency offer at a greater yield.

This growth in earned income is welcome, but we know that to sustain our ambitions we need to do more. We have committed to a substantial strategic investment in US consultants TRG who will work across the organisation to implement integrated, data-driven approaches to patron loyalty and demand management in order to achieve a transformational change in audience retention, increased frequency, growth and income. With TRG's counsel, running Jan-17-Jun-18, we are anticipating an increase in box office income of 75% by 2022.

1.2 Increasing commercial income

Commercial business income, from external hires and events, retail sales and the restaurant franchise, have grown from £159k in 13/14 to £202k in 15/16. We host 50 nights of performance hires each year, generating hire income of £60k and additional box office income of £75k. Performance hires draw audiences from a wide demographic, and provide access to our stages and resources for a range of amateurs. We host 90 non-performance hires each year, including wedding receptions, conferences, meetings, and parties. Based on recent performance, we project a 5% growth in hire income per annum.

In collaboration with Mortal Fools, a Northumberland-based creative learning company, we have expanded our Skills Workshops: the programme now includes training in creative leadership, public speaking skills, personal resilience and away-day facilitation. Open courses are advertised in our brochure, and we deliver bespoke workshops for individual organisations, including Ryder Architecture, Newcastle University Business School and Newcastle University Staff Development Unit. This partnership enables us to increase our commercial income and capacity to deliver, and we anticipate the programme growing.

1.3 Increasing contributed income

The successful two-year campaign to raise funds for the capital redevelopment of Stage 3 has been a significant achievement, and we were pleased to deliver this without drawing upon ACE Small Capital funds: we secured £320k from national and local trusts and foundations, including from two (Fidelity UK and Wolfson) who were new supporters to Northern Stage. This campaign increased our understanding and confidence in working with major national funders, and as a result we have developed a number of successful multi-year grants: £140k/3yrs from Esme Fairbairn for NORTH (2014); £105k/3yrs from John Ellerman Foundation for Stage 2 Residencies (2015); and £150k/2yrs from Clothworkers' Foundation (2016). These projects demonstrate we have the capacity and ambition to develop strategic partnerships with major funders. We intend to use our refreshed strategy for talent development and participation to drive and maintain this growth in multi-year fundraising grants, achieving £250k+ per annum from T&Fs.

In autumn 15 we launched an individual giving scheme, attracting 37 supporters with gifts totalling over £5k; this was a new income stream to add to our Corporate Partners and Christmas Access Scheme. Strong networks and clear messaging have been key to the development of our fundraising; over the next period we intend to build on the foundations we have laid and grow our network of advocates.

1.4 Operational structures

A number of changes to internal structures have improved operational support for income generating activities. In 2016 we created a new Artistic Planning team of producers to coordinate the professional performance and talent development programmes; they are leading a more commercial approach to deals, and work closely with the Communications team to set budgets for each show. Over the next NPO the Artistic Planning team will be expanding our relationships with commercial producers, in order to contribute to capitalisation and future earnings.

We have improved the consistency of customer service provision by appointing two permanent p/t box office staff and reducing reliance on casuals; we have also introduced a regular programme of staff training for box office, FOH and bar staff from our franchisee, McKenna's, which has significantly improved relationships and increased staff confidence. We are investing in training throughout the next NPO as the team will be key to achieving our income targets.

2. INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

2.1 Maintaining & enhancing fixed assets

Over the life of the next NPO we intend to make strategic investments to maintain our assets, increase our income generation potential and reduce our environmental impact. We are introducing a rolling programme of investment in capital equipment and infrastructure – including energy efficient production equipment and renovation of spaces – to ensure we maintain and enhance our physical assets and minimise the potential for unexpected or unplanned capital

spend.

2.2 Digital expansion

Our investments in digital infrastructure and activity will contribute to our resilience by helping us to sell more tickets and reach more people: the KTP will give us new tools and competencies; the new website will increase functionality and customer experience; presence on the NUU app will put us in the palms of 18k staff and students daily; internal systems, such as Office 365, cloud computing and web conferencing, will promote flexible working and reduce the environmental impact of travelling.

2.3 Expanding our assets

In 2015 we began renting the former Raby Street Youth Centre in Byker to serve as a rehearsal space; for years we have struggled to find reasonably priced rehearsal space of an adequate size to house Stage 1 productions, and the large gymnasium on the first floor is ideal for our needs. The annual cost of managing this space is comparable to the ad hoc rental fees we were previously paying, with much greater flexibility of use. Having a base in Byker will also be a catalyst to strategic engagement with an area of significant economic, social and educational disadvantage.

We have undertaken a building condition report and options appraisal to assess the potential renovation costs, and plan to further investigate the feasibility of taking on this space as a long-term asset. With strategic investment to renovate the aging building, notably increasing its physical accessibility, the former Youth Centre could once more become a vibrant community resource and serve as a cultural shop-front for Northern Stage and partner organisations to deliver creative and participatory activity in a community setting. We believe that a clear community participation strategy built around Byker will be attractive to potential T&Fs; furthermore there is an opportunity to form partnerships with the corporate sector and offer positive ways for them to deliver their Corporate Citizenship programmes alongside meeting our creative case ambitions. We intend to pursue this capital redevelopment over the life of the next investment round.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Board of Directors

Northern Stage is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity. We are led Board of 10 people, who are both Members and Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity. The Board ensure that the company is run effectively and meets its charitable objectives, and are led by our Chair, Simon Elliott, appointed in September 2015. Simon is the HR Leader of Procter & Gamble Newcastle Innovation Centre, has served as a trustee and Chair of Tyneside Cinema and Chair of the North Tyneside Regeneration Partnership, and is currently also Chair of Newcastle Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Northern Stage Board Members serve up to 2 terms of 4 years each. Upon his appointment Simon led a Board skills audit and was involved in the recruitment of a number of new board members. Of the 10, 2 are based outside the region (one London, one Manchester) to ensure the Board see beyond our region and

are in touch with wider national conversations. The professional skills of the Board include Arts, Finance, HR, Law, Marketing and Education, as well as experience in the private and voluntary sectors. Board Members bring their appropriate diverse networks in service of Northern Stage as well as strategic connections to Newcastle University and both Newcastle and Gateshead City Councils.

Simon also introduced a new structure of Board sub-groups, which enable members to scrutinize, challenge and support the work of Northern Stage before making recommendations to the full Board, with whom overall governance responsibility and decision making authority resides. The current sub-groups are:

- Finance: scrutinizes the financial position of the Company, including management accounts, balance sheet and cashflow and compares the financial outlook with the goals of the Company
- Fundraising & Development: brings external perspectives, insight and networking opportunities to fundraising and development
- Concessions & Hires: oversees the commercial business of the Company, most significantly for the Bar/Restaurant, which is run on a franchise, and our commercial hire income
- Employment: ensures the necessary policies and procedures to comply with law and best practice are in place, and ensure we are managing and developing staff to a high standard
- Audience Engagement, Participation & Talent: oversees the development of plans for participation and talent

The scrutiny of the programme rests with the full Board and is not delegated to a specific sub-group. Board members sit on one or more sub-groups, and are joined by co-opted members of the sub-groups who provide additional expertise in specialist areas.

3.2 Diversity & succession planning

The Board presently has 30% female representation, and we were pleased in 16/17 to welcome Professor Julie Saunders, Pro Vice Chancellor Newcastle University, to the Board, as well as the return of Laura Collier, Independent Theatre Producer, from maternity leave. For an effective Board we need to manage turnover responsibly and achieve our goals in the medium term. Over the life of the NPO, we will target 50% female representation on the Board both through adding additional board members above the current 10 and through natural attrition at end of tenure. In addition, in spring 2017 we initiate the 'Affinity Group', which will serve as a talent pipeline for future Board membership. This will enable us to nurture future Board membership candidates from the whole breadth of the community, not just our usual civic and business circles, and will pay particular attention to including disadvantaged socio-economic groups as well as the BME and LGBTQ+ communities. Our vision is that over the life of the NPO award we are able to develop a Board which fully reflects the diversity of the region we serve.

3.3 Youth leadership

As we expand and embed our work with Young Company (YC) across the organisation we have ambitions to increase opportunities for young people to contribute to organisational governance. We will draw on best practices developed across the industry, such as at Contact and Company 3, to integrate a youth leadership programme into the structure of YC. Members of YC will be empowered to take responsibility for the planning and development of all activity; this will lead to the creation of a youth board and eventually representation on the Northern Stage Board. We will develop a programme of peer working with Newcastle University Students' Union, who have experience of supporting and training young people to serve on boards, to build confidence and competencies. This youth leadership model will grow to connect to all areas of Northern Stage's activities and will become a major driver of the evolving identity of our company; it will also address the lack of diversity on our Board at a grass roots level.

4. EVALUATION & MONITORING

Northern Stage has a comprehensive process of self-evaluation embedded across the organisation. All major projects go through a debriefing process after delivery to assess planning, process, delivery and impacts, as well as looking at how learning can be applied to future projects. Where appropriate, and with major projects such as NORTH, we will engage an external facilitator or expert to collaborate on evaluation and report writing to ensure a rigorous process and to provide fresh perspective.

Northern Stage participated in the beta testing of Quality Metrics during 2016. We will continue to use these metrics on samples of our audiences to monitor and evaluate the quality and depth of experience of our work.

5. SUPPORTING THE SECTOR

As the largest producing theatre in the North East, Northern Stage is a regional leader for our sector. We maintain a commitment to delivering a mixed model of produced and visiting programming, offering artists working on all scales the opportunity to present their work to new audiences. We recognise that we are custodians of the building and assets of Northern Stage, and it is the custom and practice of all staff, from SMT to creative, technical and front of house staff, to consistently give of their expertise to facilitate the work of others, using the infrastructure and resources of the company to support and empower the theatre sector in the region.

5.1 Residency

Our residency programme increases the productivity and standard of work produced by the artists involved. Residency artists are offered both in kind support, in the form of dramaturgical guidance and free space, and a cash contribution; this investment enables residency companies to leverage additional support from partner organisations, including the Arts Council through Grants for the Arts. The John Ellerman Foundation currently supports our residency programme, and we intend to deliver three residencies per year with an annual cash contribution of £12k during the life of the NPO.

5.2 NORTH

All our talent development programmes take a holistic approach to artists' professional development, not only investing in their creative talent but equipping artists with the necessary marketing, facilitation, tour booking and business planning skills to enable them to develop sustainable long-term careers. Our NORTH programme is an excellent example of this approach in action: the actors who formed our first NORTH cohort in 2013 went on to form their own company, The Letter Room, and were supported to tour their first production in 2014. Since then 2 members of the company have been employed as Assistant Directors, 5 have been employed as actors in professional productions; and 4 have worked as facilitators on our education and participation programmes. 27 individuals have been employed through NORTH to date; the next iteration of this Esmée Fairbairn-funded programme will broaden this offer to a greater number of individuals and companies, and we expect to work with 110 artists each year.

5.3 Associate Artists

Section 43 (2), Section 40 (2)

peer and established artists working in a range of creative forms and contexts; importantly, this formalised relationship will create the necessary space for peer exchange, and the Associates will be expected to contribute to the creative development of Northern Stage. We will also continue our productive relationship with RTYDS by hosting an 18-month part-time Associate Director.

5.4 Edinburgh Festival

Our Edinburgh Festival programme has pioneered a methodology of large building-based organisations carrying the financial risk for independent artists, enabling them to effect creative and organisational change that has proven transformational for many. Following five successful years of running this programme independently, we are excited to begin a partnership with Northern building-based partners including the Royal Exchange, Manchester, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Hull Truck and HOME; this consortium approach will bring together a wider base of expertise from which artists can draw and establish a post-Edinburgh touring network to further enhance this vital showcasing opportunity. It will also provide learning opportunities for venue staff from partner venues to experience running a festival venue.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

6.1 Reducing consumption

Northern Stage has been ahead of the industry in adopting and implementing environmental measures that have resulted in us reducing our energy and water consumption, increasing our recycling, reducing waste and changing hearts and minds both within and outside our organisation. We operate a 'make do and mend' way of working and recycle and reuse everything we can within our organisation. By February 2016 we had reduced our gas consumption by 115,000 kwh; over 12 months we have also reduced emissions from energy, water, sewerage and waste per performance per seat by 25% in relation to

actual usage of the building.

6.2 Increasing usage of the building

Over the life of the next NPO we will significantly increase usage of our spaces, making more efficient use of the asset and reducing the environmental impact per user. We recently completed refurbishment of Stage 3, which has repurposed the former foyer into a fully-resourced fringe venue with break out space for conference users, and converted an under-used dressing room into a dedicated participation space. In 2017 we will install two meeting-room pods in the ground-floor stairwells, which will be available for hire. We introduced event booking software Artifax v4 in 2015 to more accurately manage space usage; in 2018 we will introduce Agora, which will enable members of our Spare Room scheme to book unused space online.

6.3 Edinburgh Festival

We are one of the Festival's green venues during our Edinburgh residency. Our partnership with Summerhall has re-purposed an unused space within their building complex, eliminating the need for a stand-alone venue and the environmental impact that comes with that. We continue to work with the NGCV Green Campaign initiatives. The annual Audience Travel Survey is a key collaborative initiative, designed with the support of Julie's Bicycle; we engage in Earth Hour, Green Office Week, Recycling Week, Green Transport Week, National Bike Week and No Car Day. These opportunities galvanise the staff and public and engage them in thinking more about greener behaviours.

Goal 4

**Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute towards Goal four.
No more than 20,000 characters.**

The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled.

1. WORKFORCE SKILLS & TRAINING

Northern Stage benefits from a number of highly skilled staff in senior leadership positions, balancing institutional knowledge from staff with a long history with the company alongside new ideas and experiences brought by staff who have joined more recently.

The company is led by joint-Chief Executives Lorne Campbell (Artistic Director) and Kate Denby (Executive Director) who together have significant experience of leadership roles in regional buildings, of small and mid-scale touring and in the independent sector. Prior to joining Northern Stage in January 2013, Lorne set up independent touring company Greyscale and established the MA Directing programme at Drama Centre; this followed 7 years as Associate Director of the Traverse Theatre. Kate, a native of Newcastle, joined in April 2015 from Hull Truck Theatre, where she had been Head of Programming & Talent Development, prior to which she was the Executive Producer at the Gate Theatre, London. Kate and Lorne have successfully established an executive partnership that is overseeing the implementation of a new artistic vision, a strategy for audience growth and increased support for the independent sector in the region.

The Executive are supported by a Senior Team who have significant experience in the sector and region. The skills and experience of the staff team are monitored through an annual Performance Development Review (PDR), which was reviewed in 2016 to create a more robust dialogue and link delivery to the job description and organisation mission. The process enables an explicit discussion about career aspiration and opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD), and allows the Executive and Senior Team to review roles and responsibilities to ensure departmental structures remain fit for purpose.

We place considerable value and investment in the CPD of staff throughout the organisation, and as a result of the PDR process each member of staff has a personal training plan that is reviewed annually. Recent CPD training has included:

- 2 staff have undertaken the CLORE SHORT COURSE, a 2-week residential course providing intensive training in cultural leadership
- 1 staff has undertaken the CLORE EMERGING LEADERS COURSE, a 5-day residential course providing intensive training for people at the early stages of their careers
- 1 staff is undertaking the CIPD Level 3 Diploma in Personnel Development, which will lead to a recognised professional qualification
- 2 staff are being supported through their ABTT Bronze Certificated Award, a recognised professional qualification for theatre stage technicians
- All senior staff have had training in contractual and staff management 'soft' skills, led by our freelance HR advisor

2. RECRUITMENT & PROGRESSION

We operate a robust recruitment process that places equality of opportunity at the heart of our decision-making. Job descriptions are prepared with considerable thought given to the person specification to ensure 'essential' and 'desirable' characteristics are fair to the role. Job application forms are 'name blind', with personal information removed before applications are circulated for shortlisting to remove the potential for unconscious bias, and the shortlisting

panel complete a selection matrix cross referenced with the person specification.

Northern Stage is committed to offering opportunity for progression within the organisation when vacancies arise and we have appropriately skilled and experienced staff who could fill the roles; vacancies are offered internally in the first instance, to both permanent and casual workforce, before being advertised more widely. We believe that this encourages the company and staff to invest in each other, and we succeed in retaining valued, experienced staff.

Where roles are advertised externally we consider a wide range of publications regionally (NGCV, Equality North East, Community Foundation, local press) and nationally (Arts Jobs, UK Theatre, ITC, StageJobsPro, Guardian, Arts Professional) and we are increasingly looking at non-traditional outlets or community anchors to help circulate notice of opportunities. We encourage applications from underrepresented groups, with specific training opportunities, such as the RTYDS Associate Directorship, expressly inviting applications from BME and economically disadvantaged applicants.

We have hosted a number of creative apprenticeships in recent years, and have had particular success in training new technicians through a relationship with Gateshead College; 2 recent apprentices continue to work with us on a freelance basis, and 1 was recently appointed to a permanent post. We have also offered apprenticeships via the job centre, which have led to candidates being offered further employment opportunities in Northern Stage and other cultural venues in the North East. We plan to increase the number of entry level positions offered via apprenticeships and paid internships, such as Creative Access.

We work closely with local colleges to make performing arts students aware of the opportunities to both experience work and participate in the life of the theatre. For the last two years a number of Newcastle College students have performed in our Christmas production as supernumeraries, gaining vital professional experience.

Since 2012 we have taken over 100 volunteers to the Edinburgh Festival to staff our Northern Stage @ Summerhall venue as FOH and Technical Volunteers; we pay volunteers accommodation and a small stipend to cover expenses. This programme has been one of the unexpected successes of the Edinburgh programme, and has become an important part of the programme plans. These volunteers are often students or young theatre-makers in their own right, and the experience is vital to their career development.

"I...ended up with a job as a stage manager and ended up on tour (no sooner after Edinburgh). I'll also add a thanks as if it wasn't for Northern Stage, and the experience in Edinburgh, I would have never have got the job."
Christopher Barton, Technical volunteer, 2014

Many of our volunteers have since gone on to gain employment at Northern Stage as FOH or technical staff, as theatre administrators or creative practitioners.

3. SECTOR SUPPORT

As the largest producing theatre in the North East, Northern Stage is a regional leader for our sector: we have the largest stages, most performance opportunities and a wealth of expertise within our staff and Board. We use this infrastructure and the resources of Northern Stage to support and empower the theatre sector in the North East.

Following on from the experience gained with TONIC theatre's advance programme the Executive and Senior teams regularly meet, formally and informally, and with the leaders of companies from the independent sector to share strategic planning and goals and crucially to better understand how partnership working can be effectively shaped to suit the fast shifting paradigms faced by project funded organisations.

3.1 Mentoring & practical support

We deliver informal mentoring and practical support for artists and companies in the region on matters of business, employment and contracts to complement our creative offer. In 2017 we will develop a more formal programme of business support in partnership with Newcastle University.

We are an ITC Hub member enabling small and emerging companies in the region to access vital professional development training at reduced cost.

We offer shadowing opportunities to people from different organisations to develop their skills. Sometimes this is in partnership, e.g. with JMK Trust we invite local emerging theatre directors to shadow productions. We have worked in partnership with Thomas Bewick School to support a placement for a creative arts student with ASD to gain an understanding of a professional theatre, and we are supporting a member of Lawnmowers to shadow the technical team to upskill his knowledge.

"A couple of weeks ago I had the pleasure of working at Northern Stage in Newcastle...I met lots of brilliant, talented people. Actors, directors, writers, stage managers – if you get a chance to work at Northern Stage, do it. You're in for a treat."

Alice Lacey, NT Connections Director

3.2 Employment & CPD

We are committed to creating the conditions that enable theatre makers to have successful careers with national impact and reach while being based in the North East. To this end, we make the employment of actors and creatives from the region a significant priority.

Emerging and established artists are regularly employed as casual staff, facilitators, practitioners and creatives in the delivery of Northern Stage activity, and are a vital contributor to our workforce. Early career practitioners who have come through training programmes such as NORTH are invited to be workshop assistants on learning and participation projects, gaining additional skills in facilitation from working alongside more experienced workshop leaders and progressing to lead their own projects. Examples include Hannah Goudie and Bob Nicholson (NORTH 14) who have run our Open Stages project gaining creative facilitation skills working with young children and went on to form their own company 'Kitchen Zoo' creating work for young audiences in County

Durham. Sian Armstrong (NORTH 15) and Zoe Murtagh (former Participation Administrator) have been developing their own work as independent artists and have also curated our Young Person's First in Three scratch night, assisted on Summer School and Young Company. This investment in developing complementary skills contributes to theatre makers being able to build sustainable portfolio careers in the arts in the North East.

"I wouldn't have got the jobs I have in the sector if it wasn't for NORTH and Northern Stage"
North participant

3.3 Governance & Leadership

Staff at all levels of the organisation are encouraged and supported to contribute to the wider cultural sector by sitting on Boards and steering committees. Staff are given time off from work to attend meetings, and are able to draw on the wider expertise within the company to contribute to the organisations they lead. Current supported organisations include:

- Lorne Campbell is Chair of Company 3, a theatre company for young people aged 11-19 in Islington, and sits on the advisory board for Alphabetti Theatre Company
- Kate Denby sits on the board of Freedom Festival Arts Trust, Hull's annual outdoor multi-arts, a major partner in Hull's City of Culture programme
- Kylie Lloyd sits on the board of Lawnmowers, the leading North East theatre company for people with learning disabilities, on a creativity steering group at Lobley Hill Primary School and has been appointed to the steering group of Newcastle Cultural Education Partnership
- Amy Fawdington sits on the board of Dance Touring Partnership and is on the steering group for The Insider

3.4 National / sector advocacy

The company regularly participates in national and sector research, in order to further best practice for the benefit of the wider industry. In 2016 we took part in Tonic Theatre's ADVANCE programme, an innovative and intensive programme to address gender equality within the performing arts. The programme brought together a cohort of leading performing arts organisations, including Northern Ballet, Sadler's Wells, National Theatre and CAST, to look at different areas of our operations; we chose to address the support we could offer to independent artists in relation to sustainability and growth. The learning from this programme has directly informed our programme of sector support.

During 2017 Northern Stage will be working with Parents in Performing Arts on their ACE and Creative Scotland-funded Best Practice Research Project, conducted in collaboration with Royal Central School of Speech & Drama. The research will be investigating the barriers facing parents and carers working in the theatre industry, to identify their needs as well as existing supportive practices that can be shared, developed and trialed with theatre organisations across the UK. This is a major piece of work, involving 18 organisations from across the country, including The Old Vic, National Theatre of Scotland,

Dundee Rep, Donmar Warehouse, Birmingham Rep, UK Theatre and Equity.

Northern Stage is part of the informal 'Big 12' network of regional producing theatres; membership is defined as those theatre companies in receipt of £1 million or more in annual ACE funding. Through this network peers across each organisation meet 3-4 times a year to share experience, knowledge and best practices; current sub-groups include Executive, Finance, Learning & Participation and HR. Theatres within the network act as sector leaders both individually and collectively, making representations to senior leaders at ACE and local & national government on behalf of the industry.

Northern Stage works with the Bridge organisation, supporting their events as guest speakers (Arts Award conference) and promoting both Artsmark and Arts Award to our partner schools.

3.5 International

We believe in the importance of having an International perspective to the work we make and present. A vital part of the investment we make in staff is to offer opportunities to experience different cultures and to share skills with peers in other organisations and in other places. International partnerships give us the opportunity to see work and for staff to actively advocate for Northern Stage as part of a global community. We have a proud tradition of international partnership work, including Swallows Partnership (South Africa), creative exchange work with Netherlands and Sweden, and British Council supported delegate trips. In the last three years Lorne Campbell has been invited by the British Council to visit Cairo, Moscow and South Korea; Katie Catling (Producer) has visited South Korea; Amy Fawdington (Director of Communications) has travelled to Brussels, Paris and Amiens with Dance Touring Partnership; Jo Blackett (Communications Officer) has been to Lyon; and Kylie Lloyd (Director of Participation) and Katie Catling have been to Ireland with two members of Young Company as part of a youth leadership symposium.

4. PARTNERSHIPS

Northern Stage is a key partner organisation within the city, the region and the national arts industry, and partnerships are vital to our growth

4.2 Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venues

We are a founder member of Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venues (NGCV), the major strategic group of organisations delivering culture in Newcastle and Gateshead. Being members of this group adds to Northern Stage's ability to deliver in our conurbation and regionally, brings a high level of discourse to the organisation and supports the work of theatre artists through the enhanced knowledge of partner activities and opportunities available across us all.

4.3 Major civic projects

We work in collaboration with local partners to deliver projects of strategic civic importance. We are currently working with Freedom City to contribute to the programme of Martin Luther King commemorations in autumn 2017, both in the performance programme and through the creative output of Young Company. In 2018 we will work with Newcastle Gateshead Initiative on the Great Exhibition

of the North, as one of the venues through which the walking circuits will pass.

4.4 Strategic Touring Partnerships

We contribute to the growth and development of national touring of diverse work through partnership in strategic touring projects. In spring 2017 we present Mind The Gap's CONTAINED alongside a series of workshops; in autumn 2017 we present the Market Theatre, Johannesburg's production of THE SUITCASE on their first tour in decade, linking the Hull City of Culture with Newcastle's own Freedom City celebrations. We are also committed to presenting a show each season for PMLD audiences.

We are developing a major strategic touring project with a network of festivals and producing theatres – Birmingham REP, Brighton Festival and Dome, Hall for Cornwall, HOME, LIFT, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse, Norfolk and Norwich Festival and West Yorkshire Playhouse – to increase the work being toured into and out of the UK. The collaboration will involve a significant programme of skills development and capacity building with staff across our organisations, from Artistic Directors to Programming, Marketing and Technical teams, to enable increased and improved international working.

5. CO-PRODUCTION

Northern Stage co-produces in a number of ways and models, all with the impulse of trying to produce or facilitate the production of more theatre, of better theatre, of a broader range of styles for a broader range of audiences and, through touring and partnership, for audiences nationwide. There are two key types of co-production partnership:

Stage 1 co-productions typically work with similar regional producing theatres to share capitalisation costs and carry our own running costs, enabling us to produce more work or produce work on a larger scale. Over the next NPO we intend to develop viable models for co-production with commercial partners, with the aim of leveraging additional funds for the creation of work or possible financial return.

We have experimented in co-production with smaller touring companies funded through NPO (Pilot, Improbable) or Grants for the Arts (Greyscale). In each of these cases we have carried the larger share of the capitalisation, but the partner investment has enabled us to make larger/more work and has involved a significant creative input from the partner, for example as a director and concept. These partnerships have added considerably to our partner's own operations, but crucially have also served Northern Stage's strategic objectives and have been work that we believe will attract a sufficient audience to justify a longer run.

The Stage 2 Residency model exists to facilitate the production, producing, funding and developmental processes of a range of companies. Residencies fall into three brackets:

- the already excellent, such as Gecko, RashDash, Ballet Lorent and Chris Thorpe, whereby we are contributing time and money to make world-class theatre as part of our role as key national producing infrastructure

- Established companies in the region, such as Unlimited, Curious Monkey and The Letter Room, contributing space and money to enable those companies to leverage Grants for the Arts funding
- Small scale, early career development residencies help emerging artists in the region to get their first projects underway, and typically attract investment of around £500 plus rehearsal space and creative or dramaturgical support

6. PROJECT DELIVERY

We also work in partnership with creative organisations in the city to expand the work we are able to offer. Since 2015 we have worked with creative learning company Mortal Fools to deliver our programme of Communications Training, which was first established in 2007 and expanded in 2016 to become DROP THE ACT. This programme of skill workshops utilises practices from the creative sector to support participants to identify and build on their individual strengths and attributes, develop new practical skills and aid professional and personal development. By working in partnership with Mortal Fools on project delivery we have been able to increase our capacity for delivery, provide more opportunities for employment of creative practitioners, and engage more corporate organisations in creative practice.

Goal 5

**Tell us how you plan to use our funding to contribute towards Goal five.
No more than 20,000 characters.**

Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries.

1. INSPIRING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

"I was really nervous to come because I don't act much but everyone was so accepting and fun and we all just enjoyed ourselves. I was only asked to do what I'm comfortable with and I'm proud of what we made."

Summer School participant, age 14

Children, young people (CYP) and their families are at the heart of Northern Stage, as audiences, participants and as the next generation of new artists; in 16/17 over 22k CYP attended performances at Northern Stage. Participation is 1 of the 4 core strands of activity that we deliver: activity is targeted at CYP in the North East and aims to engage with over 12k participants in 18/19, increased from 8k in 15/16.

We introduce, promote and facilitate access to theatre and to creative practice. The cornerstone of our work is the belief that everyone has the capacity for creativity and everyone has the right to develop and explore that capacity. We deliver high quality creative participation projects and embed the 7 quality principles across our programmes. We work with highly trained artists to enable the CYP we work with to experience and create excellent art.

Our building, our work and our artistic community are central to this offer, with participation as the fundamental tool for promoting access to and interaction with those resources. We recently invested in the creation of a dedicated participation room, PLAY SPACE, which will enable us to increase the activity that takes place regularly at Northern Stage.

Our participation offer targets 3 key user groups:

- CYP aged 0-25 in non-curricular settings
- CYP in formal education settings
- disadvantaged communities (all ages)

Our strategic priorities are:

- to work with under-represented and/or socially disadvantaged groups of CYP
- to develop a strategic regional presence to target geographic cold spots

Our work supports the delivery of the Creative Case by targeting work with people with protected characteristics (e.g. BME CYP) and by working intensively in geographical areas of socio economic deprivation (e.g. Byker). In order to achieve these aims we are adapting our business model to include strategic targets, including free activity, increased partnership work and specific geographical focus.

CYP form 22% of the UK population and the cultural spend currently allocated nationally is 12%. We want to redress the balance over the next 4 years to ensure that we are engaging with more CYP, both as participants and as audiences.

By 2022 we will be:

- programming regular offers with a clear connection to the artistic programme
- extending our reach through digital initiatives
- using robust data collection processes so that we are able to map the journeys of participants more effectively across the whole organisation

Our Participation programme is open to everyone, with events and projects running throughout the year, at the theatre and across the region. Our programme is divided into 4 strands of activities: Participate, Learn, Train and Discover.

2. PARTICPATE

Participate is an inclusive programme of work and performance projects that invite CYP to make theatre with us:

- **FIRST STEPS** is a regular creative play session for babies, toddlers (0-3 years) and their families
- **OPEN STAGES** is a 10-week programme of devising workshops culminating in a performance; due to growing demand we now cater for ages 5-15, and will increase the workshop programme to run 3 times a year
- **SUMMER SCHOOL** is an annual event that invites up to 50 young people aged 11-18 to create a play in a week and present it on stage; due to demand we plan to add an additional week to the Summer School programme from 2018
- **YOUNG PERSONS FIRST-IN-3** is a regular scratch night curated by young people for young people to perform their work in Stage 3 and receive critical feedback
- **DRAMA CONNECT**, set to launch in 2017, is a new partnership with artist Lynn Campbell and will pilot inclusive drama activity for young people with and without learning disabilities
- **OPEN HOUSE** is a new participatory performance project taking place in different locations across the region each summer; we are developing project proposals with Slung Low and Commonwealth Theatre

Open access weekly classes and summer school activities have fees attached, charged on a sliding scale with subsidised bursary places offered to ensure finance is not a barrier to participation. Bespoke and targeted participation activities aimed at increasing engagement by underrepresented groups are often fully subsidised.

We monitor and evaluate our projects against the 7 quality principles, with both participants and their parents, teachers and carers.

"The teachers were very approachable and friendly. Also the theme was interesting and exciting. Finally the parts were equal which was encouraging. It helped my shy sons self-confidence and my outgoing daughter to be themselves but both perform in their way equally – how good is that?! Perfect I think." Open Stages parent

2.1 City of Dreams

NewcastleGateshead Cultural Venues (NGCV), as a partnership of 10 leading cultural organisations operating 20 venues across the area, are making a decade-long commitment to improving the life chances of the most vulnerable CYP in NewcastleGateshead. We want NewcastleGateshead to become a 'City of Dreams', a place where all CYP are inspired and engaged by the arts, culture and heritage, where they dream big and have influence over and access to

opportunities and experiences that are genuinely life changing.

We envisage the development of an ambitious year-round, decade-long cultural programme providing at the very least one cultural experience for each of Newcastle and Gateshead's 165k CYP under 25 every year for the next 10 years, and will develop a strategy during 2017. We believe in the long term City of Dreams will impact on their lives, on families, communities, on our own organisations and audiences, the wider cultural sector and the city itself.

3. LEARN

Learn introduces CYP to theatre and skills training in a formal education context.

3.1 Schools

Our objectives for schools are that:

- Pupils are given the skills to explore their creativity, enhance their learning and are inspired to make their own work
- Schools in areas of least engagement come to Northern Stage for the first time and go on to become regular attenders
- Schools already attending come more often and engage in the participatory offer
- More schools achieve Arts Mark status and more pupils achieve Arts Award
- Senior Management Teams in schools and local education trusts champion the importance of the arts in the curriculum and support Northern Stage to deliver creative project work

Education projects and activities can be delivered in school, at the theatre or digitally. In addition to our regular offer for workshops and skills training we create bespoke projects that support the delivery of creativity in the curriculum: taking themes in a production and creating a response with young people (James & the Giant Peach with Heworth and Kingsmeadow Schools); using drama to increase confidence/PSHE skills (Beech Hill Primary School); or developing a strategic approach to creative practice (Sacred Heart 'Big and Small' theatre project). Our KTP with Newcastle University will have digital resource for schools as a key component allowing us to increase our digital outputs over the NPO period.

"I recently enjoyed a show called "Big and Small" at the Northern Stage in Newcastle. It was produced as a collaboration between a local high school and feeder primary schools. The younger children were selected on the basis that they were a little bit shy. The high school students had an interest in drama, and they worked with the children—from creating the ideas to the script, the production and the costumes—to produce their own show, all in a matter of seven weeks. It was clear from seeing the show and meeting the children what a difference that experience made to both the older students and the young children in terms of their confidence, team building, creativity and self-belief. For me, that was a very practical but powerful example of the difference that the arts can bring to CYP's broader educational experience."

Catherine McKinnell, MP for Newcastle North,
House of Commons Debate on EBACC: Expressive Arts Subjects 04/07/16

In addition to bespoke participation projects we will also increase and expand our programmes of work aimed at school audiences. Northern Stage productions are regularly drawn from set texts and/or canonical authors. Christmas productions attract 10,000+ schools audiences, and our Christmas access scheme enables local businesses to pay for local schools from disadvantaged areas to attend. Visiting company/residency opportunities are identified throughout the academic year. From 2018 we will also tour small-scale productions of set texts to schools, particularly in rural areas.

We support teachers with Teach Meet sessions at Northern Stage and teacher training INSET days. We create a regular teachers newsletter to communicate the upcoming programme of work and related participation opportunities.

As part of our strategic ambitions to work in Byker we have developed a partnership with Byker Primary, engaging the whole school in the process of creating a show and developing ideas with their youth board about projects we will deliver over the next few years. During the next period we will work in partnership with Theatre Hullabaloo to support our on-going ambition to train highly skilled specialists in making work for Early Years. We are currently developing an application for the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to deliver a 3-year targeted intervention, working with looked-after families in Byker nursery and Borough Road Nursery, Darlington.

3.2 Arts Mark

We are working with Culture Bridge and The Forge to be an active advocate for Arts Mark. We work in partnership with schools to support their Arts Mark activity, providing visits, tours, workshops and resource packs. Our 10-year partnership with Sacred Heart School formed a critical part of their obtaining Arts Mark Platinum, the first secondary school in the region to do so. Each year we will work with 10 schools on Artsmark supported activities.

3.3 Arts Award

Arts Award enhances our offer to young people and provides us with evidence of impact. We are an accredited Arts Award welcome centre, and 3 core members of staff and 3 associate artist facilitators are trained to deliver Arts Award at Discover and Explore, Bronze and Silver levels. We advocate for Arts Award by building the opportunity for schools into project proposals, and deliver Arts Award at Discover level through our Play in a Day programme. Candidates undertaking Bronze and Silver levels are offered access to our creative and core staff. We intend to deliver the award with members of Young Company and we aim to deliver a gold award in the next 4 years.

3.4 Newcastle Cultural Education Partnership (NCEP)

Northern Stage is a key delivery partner in the NCEP, working with 7 trusts across the city that represent 53 primary schools, middle schools and SEND schools. Director of Participation Kylie Lloyd sits on the NCEP steering group, which is currently formulating a cultural strategy for Newcastle and looking at ways in which we can work with National NCEP's to ensure the legacy of

Culture Bridge is embedded within the partnership by 2022.

3.5 Further & Higher Education

For 3 years we have delivered the core curriculum for the BTEC Performing Arts course at Gateshead College. We introduce the Year 1 students to a variety of skills and practitioners, and in Year 2 we develop this practice into a performance module, working with a local director to create a show that is presented at Northern Stage. We are in conversation with the college and our production teams about including technical student placements and backstage opportunities in future revisions of the curriculum.

We have excellent relationships with the teaching staff at Newcastle College, Sunderland College, Northumbria University and Newcastle University and work with students from all 4 institutions. For 6 years we have auditioned and recruited students from Newcastle College to be the chorus during our Stage 1 Christmas productions. Northumbria University present their final year showcase at Northern Stage and we often provide a Director to work on this project.

“so many theatres go on about a commitment to supporting local emerging artists but the experience you are giving them is fantastic (also thanks for keeping them here so that we can also work with them in future!)”

Rachel Briscoe, Creative Director Fanshen Theatre, on Newcastle College students performing in JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

Our relationship with Newcastle University is particularly strong and we are involved in many different areas of the institution, from delivery of skills development workshops, tours and insight events to programming work by student societies and departments. Over the next 4 years the relationship with Newcastle University is expected to expand, as we develop a highly integrated approach to being a campus-based theatre. Our relationship with the Newcastle Institute for Creative Practice will see shared implementation of action-practice research and evaluation of creative projects; resources and skill sharing to develop training models and pedagogy for diverse participants; and the creation of new pathways to tertiary education.

Kylie Lloyd is currently a joint supervisor of a Newcastle University PhD student looking at the impact of participation at Northern Stage. One of the findings of this research is that participants develop a strong sense of belonging to Northern Stage and the legacy of this is a loyal connection to the theatre.

“Participants repeatedly say that they feel that Northern Stage values and listens to them more than any other organisation they're involved with. They talk about the confidence, life skills and performance techniques they gain. These are valuable to whatever route they pursue after leaving school however, several young people have recently gone on to pursue careers in the arts as a result of their positive association with or long engagement with Northern Stage. Participants appear to develop a loyalty to the theatre which indicates it has a distinct value to offer them.”

Amelia Joicey, PhD researcher

3.6 Work based learning

Work experience and shadowing opportunities are offered to school pupils in Year 10 and for students in FE/HE across all departments. We take work experience twice a year and we have an open application process for work placements. We aim to deliver 10 placements throughout the year, which are intense training opportunities with staff across the company. In the next 4 years we will build on our experience of delivering technical apprenticeships and will create 4 more opportunities for apprenticeships (1 per year).

4. TRAIN

Train identifies and nurtures talent in order to increase opportunities for young people from the region to be empowered by their creativity and to support the development of the next generation of young artists.

4.1 Young Company

Young Company will drive a strategic step-change in the way we work with young people aged 16-21 from disadvantaged backgrounds. It will create opportunity, provide training, develop confidence, skills, aspiration and pathways to achievement for a range of vulnerable young people who might otherwise be denied opportunities to realise their creative and cultural potential. The programme is supported by a £150k grant from the Clothworkers' Foundation, awarded to Northern Stage at the UK Theatre Awards 2016.

Young Company will offer a range of activity, from performance outcomes to practical or technical training and the development of leadership skills. Members of Young Company will be given the opportunities, support and agency to shape the purpose, practice and intent of this project, with Northern Stage staff helping them to develop their voices and empowering them to make those voices heard. Building on the legacy of A SONG FOR ELLA GREY, a major participatory performance project in 2017, we will establish a framework to facilitate a year round programme, consisting of:

- Weekly skills workshops, building skills in voice, movement, acting, devising and ensemble work
- Public performance projects, supporting participants to make work about the subjects that concern them, in the styles that excite them, in locations that are important for them and for audiences that matter to them. We envisage the integration of digital technologies, presentations and dissemination to be included in all performance outcomes
- Professional development opportunities, such as work experience, shadowing and workshops covering technical, producing, marketing and other theatre disciplines, participants will be supported to transition into artist development and professional practice opportunities at Northern Stage and externally within universities and colleges
- Short projects delivered in collaboration with community-based organisations to continually refresh and increase membership, with activity taking place in venues with which young people are familiar

Young Company will be underpinned by a research project delivered in collaboration with Newcastle University to critically examine the potential for creative engagement of young people aged 16-21 from areas of economic

disadvantage, and to pilot and evaluate creative practice training models between higher educational institutions and cultural organisations. This research methodology will produce complex longitudinal data sourced through digital processes designed to be highly accessible and attractive to young participants.

5. DISCOVER

Discover is our regular programme of public enhancement activities around productions. We will evolve this programme by creating a complementary package of activities that exist alongside our productions and co-productions, from post-show discussions, workshops and specialist events through to a digital offer that will include interviews with creative teams and educational resource packs.

Our Discover programme forms part of our welcome to Northern Stage and is an easy and fun way to engage with the work we put on our stages. After that first engagement we seek to minimise barriers and maximise opportunity for individuals to shape their own experience of theatre, which may be a journey towards on-going participation or regular attendance. Our aim is to welcome, inspire and challenge our audiences, and our Discover activities are designed to enable people to be more actively involved with the theatre and the productions.

6. YOUTH LEADERSHIP

We encourage youth leadership skills throughout our participation programmes, from encouraging 5yr olds to create their own show (Open Stages) to supporting young people to curate and produce events (Young Person's First in 3). We find ways to promote different experience on projects, in order to actively engage CYP and to support learning across the ages. For example, on large-scale projects we attach assistant facilitators who are emerging artists and are there to support young participants and the artists. We will build on this approach and empower young company to take responsibility for the planning and development of their activity; this will lead to the creation of a youth board and eventually representation on the Northern Stage Board.

7. MONITORING & EVALUATION

The principles behind our participatory creative practice are about providing access to high quality cultural experiences that empower CYP to feel confident in their own creativity. We measure the success of a project by getting feedback from participants, in age appropriate ways. In addition to this we evaluate projects internally during and after completion and with key stakeholders.

Organisation profile

How will you effectively lead and manage the programme of work that you propose?

(Please use no more than 14,000 characters)

1. STRATEGY PLANNING & RISK MANAGEMENT

The strategic planning framework that underpins this application was developed over 6-months in 2016; consultant Mark Robinson from Thinking Practice facilitated a series of workshops with Board, Executive, Senior Team and staff to look at adaptive resilience and business model. The work led to a renewed statement of vision, mission, values and strategic priorities which has informed the development and testing of a business model.

The targets we have set are ambitious but achievable. To mitigate the risk of achieving growth in earned income we are making a number of strategic investments:

- Employing US arts consultants TRG Arts for 18 months to implement data-driven approaches to patron loyalty and demand management to achieve a transformational change in audience retention, growth and income. Similar UK theatres who have worked with TRG have seen box office increases of £100k+ a year
- Increasing press support, core marketing staff and budgets to deliver increased activity, including a regional corporate communications strategy
- Investing in IT and digital expertise and infrastructure, including new website, Spectrix fundraising module, Office 365, and a digital KTP with Newcastle University

The improved understanding and confidence in working with major national funders, achieved through the Stage 3 capital fundraising campaign, has resulted in our developing a number of successful multi-year grants including Esmée Fairbairn, John Ellerman and the Clothworkers' Foundation. These projects have demonstrated we have the capacity and ambition to develop strategic partnerships with major funders. With 85% of the 17/18 fundraising target already secured or expected, we have the capacity to begin working a year ahead of future projects to develop strategic, robust applications that have a greater chance of success. Project budgets are structured to be scalable to the fundraising income received.

2. GOVERNANCE

Northern Stage is a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity. Simon Elliott is the Chair of a Board of 10 people (7 men/3 women; 9 white British/1 white other; 10 non-disabled) who are both Members and Directors of the Company and Trustees of the Charity. Board Members serve up to two terms of 4-years each. We are aware that our Board lacks diversity and have retained two vacant places to enable proactive cultivation of candidates who will help ensure our Board reflects our wider community.

The Board meet 4 times each year, plus an annual away day for strategic planning and review, and five sub-groups meet 2-4 times each per year to scrutinise areas of activity in detail and report to the full Board. Members sit on one or more sub-groups, and are joined by co-opted members who provide additional expertise in specialist areas; co-opting members allows the Chair to cultivate potential new members of the Board, so there is an on-going process of succession planning. We are expanding opportunities for youth leadership and by 2022 intend to have established a youth board with formal

representation on the Northern Stage Board.

The Board are actively engaged in the strategic leadership of the organisation and ensuring delivery of the Creative Case. Chair Simon Elliott meets regularly with our ACE Relationship Manager and attends Chair briefings as invited; Vice Chair Jo Darby, accompanied the Executive to the Power in Diversity Conference at Contact Manchester.

In addition to the Board, we have recently established an 'Affinity Group' which meets 3 times a year. Convened by former Board member Tim Bailey, the group has no legal standing or decision making power but exists to enable the Artistic and Executive Directors to develop external insights, connections and networks, and to nurture a sense of affinity with Northern Stage amongst a community made up of diverse seniority, skill and background. Membership of the affinity group will be reviewed and refreshed annually.

3. MANAGEMENT

The Board delegate day-to-day management of the company to the joint-Chief Executives: Artistic Director Lorne Campbell and Executive Director Kate Denby. Lorne and Kate have credible reputations for achieving success in other organisations and have built a strong partnership in the 18 months they have been working together. This model of joint leadership benefits the company by keeping the artistic, operational and financial demands and aspirations of the company in positive tension, leading to strong decision-making. Both Kate and Lorne intend to remain with the company for the duration of the NPO.

The Executive Team are supported by an experienced Senior Team who bring a range of skill and diversity of voices to the strategic and operational leadership of the organisation. The 11-strong team meet fortnightly for an operational review of the organisation, with information cascaded out to all staff through departmental meetings. A sub-group of department leaders who have responsibility for setting strategy and policy within their roles form a monthly strategic planning group. All staff gather for monthly Company Meetings led by the Executive, where information about strategic plans, programming, HR, finance and H&S is shared. The Executive hold fortnightly 1-to-1s with direct reports, and all managers are encouraged to adopt this process with staff they manage.

The Executive Director leads the HR function within the company, with an external HR consultant retained for specialist support, and all company policies and procedures are contained within the company handbook which is updated in line with legislation changes. Health and Safety is monitored by a monthly committee comprising the Executive Director, Director of Operations, Theatre Manager and Production Manager, plus co-opted members as required; an external H&S consultant is also retained for specialist support.

4. EVALUATION & MONITORING

Northern Stage has a comprehensive process of self-evaluation embedded across the organisation, informed by the Arts Council's self-evaluation toolkit. The annual strategic review process allows the Board to assess activity and progress against the organisations goals. Detailed reports of artistic and operational activity are prepared by the Executive for Board meetings, including

real-time monitoring of sales figures against individual performance budgets, analysis of audience behaviour and trends, and reflections on the creative process and output. These reports enable Board members to have an informed dialogue about artistic and operational practices of the organisation.

How will you ensure financial viability?

(Please use no more than 14,000 characters)

1. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

Northern Stage has an outstanding track record of robust and effective financial and risk management; in each of the last 10 years we have delivered a balanced or surplus budget. Over the last two years we have performed ahead of the ACE-agreed targets set out in the 2015-18 strategic plan, increasing total earned income by 38% and box office income by 46%. As a result our ACE income as a percentage of turnover has reduced from 57% in 14/15 to 50% in 16/17. We intend to accelerate this growth of earned and contributed income over the life of the next NPO, increasing turnover from £3.1m in 15/16 to £4m by 21/22, by which time 60% of income will come from non-ACE sources.

2. REVENUE FUNDING

We are currently in receipt of £50k funding from the Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund, and will reapply for a similar level in 2018. The Community Foundation (CF) have confirmed they will continue with this fund, with levels of support dependent on income received from Newcastle City Council (NCC). We will continue to work with CF to advocate to NCC to continue this funding, which demonstrates vital match funding to other partners.

Newcastle University contribute an annual grant of £40k to offset rent of the building, and we expect this to continue for the duration of the NPO. The strength of the relationship with the University is increasing, as evidenced by the joint application for a KTP, and we receive occasional project funding from departments: recent examples include £8k for an archive cataloguing project and £5k to fund the staging of a series of forgotten plays by women.

3. BUILDING EARNED INCOME

3.1 Box Office Income

From 2014-17 we are budgeting to increase annual box office income from £392k to £573k – a 46% increase that exceeded the 25% target we set ourselves for this period. This has been achieved by increasing annual performance numbers, extending seasons, and reviewing ticket prices and offers.

We are implementing a number of initiatives to maintain this momentum over the next NPO period:

- Increasing the number of annual performances from 319 in 16/17 to 372 in 21/22
- Increasing the seating capacity of our annual Christmas production from 420 in 16/17 to 520 in 17/18 and 600 in 20/21 in line with our fastest growing audiences
- Introducing the Open House participatory performance programme to increase public profile in the summer months
- Employing TRG Arts consultants to support a transformational change in audience retention and growth, with an integrated, data-driven approach to audience communications and pricing; similar UK theatres who have worked with TRG have seen box office increases of £100k+ a year

- Implementing a new dynamic pricing model with increased ticket prices during 2017
- Increasing core marketing spend by £15k year on year, from £145k in 15/16 to £220k in 21/22
- Enhancing corporate communications activity to promote Northern Stage as a regional cultural asset
- Appointing an additional member of Communications staff in 2018 to support increased activity
- Implementing a regular programme of training for box office and FOH staff to increase their sales skills and confidence

In this context, and reflecting on recent performance, the targets we have set are ambitious but achievable. Based on current ticket pricing, the increased annual performances and profile activity should result in a basic annual growth of 10-15% on average box office receipts, with a further 12% growth as a result of changes we will implement through the TRG counsel and dynamic pricing. By 21/22 box office receipts will form 28% of annual turnover, and the combined performance programme (produced, visiting, hires & Edinburgh) will make up 39% of turnover.

3.2 Commercial business income

Income from hires and events, retail sales and the restaurant franchise have grown from £159k in 13/14 to £202k in 15/16. We have expanded our skills workshop programme DROP THE ACT to include corporate training in creative leadership, public speaking and personal resilience; this work is delivered in partnership with creative learning company Mortal Fools, enabling us to increase our capacity to deliver and therefore commercial income we can generate. From 2019 we will resume offering set building services from our new workshop. We anticipate commercial business income growing 5% each year.

4. BUILDING CONTRIBUTED INCOME

Targets for trusts and foundation (T&F) income are linked to strategic project activity, to enable longer-term planning and multi-year grant applications to be developed. We have demonstrated that we have the capability to attract major grants: we raised £320k from T&Fs to fund our capital redevelopment of Stage 3, and 85% of 17/18s £242k T&F target has been secured or is expected before the start of the financial year.

Our strategy over the NPO period will be to maintain and further increase this level of major grant funding. Fundraising targets have been directly set and linked to project activity, and anticipate grants contributing to both direct cost and core salary and overhead costs. We have structured our annual fundraising cycle to run 6-months counter to the financial year, so we are always looking ahead to future funding periods and have appropriate time to develop robust, strategic applications. This long-term view of funding allows us time to develop relationships and pilot ideas with major grant funders to improve the chance of success. It also allows us to develop overlapping multi-year applications to

minimise the impact of grants coming to an end at the same time, and to focus on funding for one or two major projects each year: 17/18 will focus on talent development and the Byker project; 18/19 on Young Company and Creative Residencies. Strategic projects are structured to be scalable to the level of funding received, minimising the risk to the bottom line of funding targets not being reached.

We have a number of corporate donors who give each year through our corporate supporters scheme and Christmas Access Scheme. Income from individuals comes from ticket top-up donations and our annual supporter scheme, introduced in 2015 and currently attracting 37 individual donors. As our community and youth activity expands we will closely connect this work to fundraising messages to achieve an increase in support of both corporate and individuals. We produce print and promotion of all fundraising schemes, and from 17/18 plan to create an annual report to act as an additional advocacy tool. In 2018 we will appoint an additional post to the development team to support the anticipated growth of work in the department.

Targets for individual and corporate donations demonstrate ambitions for growth each year, but prudently reflect the challenges faced in this region around philanthropic giving. The North East has only a handful of listed companies with headquarters in the region, and while there are regional offices of many major corporations based here, most have only small budgets for local corporate giving or sponsorship, with decisions on larger grants being made in London. Given the rich cultural infrastructure in the region, competition for these small amounts of money is therefore considerable. By focusing on SMEs we are likely to achieve a greater number of corporate donors but at a smaller value.

5. COLLABORATION & GROWTH

Northern Stage has a strong reputation for collaborative working with artists and companies at all scales to promote mutual growth and resilience.

We have successfully run a venue at the Edinburgh Festival since 2012, providing a showcase for independent artists from the greater North. The programme is an innovative model of a regional building absorbing the financial risk of independent artists taking work to the Festival, which is vital to their ability to increase profile and secure touring dates. We have found creative solutions to maintaining this programme through changing political and economic circumstances: the project was established with strategic investment from ACE and was then supported solely by Northern Stage for several years; ACE are now supporting the transition of the programme to become a regional partnership with the major Northern buildings, in an evolution that will see a commissioning and touring network built on either side of the festival programme. This new iteration of the Edinburgh programme will ensure the programme can continue with costs shared between the partner organisations.

We co-produce in a variety of ways to produce or facilitate the production of more theatre, better theatre, of a broader range of styles and for a broader range of audiences in the North East and, through touring and partnership, audiences nationwide. Models include:

- Co-production with regional producing theatres, to share capitalisation costs on larger scale or larger-cast productions

- Co-production with smaller NPOs or GfTA funded organisations, where we take on a larger share of capitalisation costs but the partner investment enables us to make more or bigger work, and partners are significant creative contributors
- In association with established national and regional companies making new work through residency at Northern Stage

All of these models allow us to make work that would be challenging for one company alone to deliver, and increase the resilience of the organisations involved by sharing risk.

6. PAYMENT OF ARTISTS, PRACTITIONERS & STAFF

As a member of UK Theatre we pay the union-negotiated rates as agreed with Equity, BECTU, the Writers Guild etc; we are an MRSL 1 organisation and therefore pay at the highest level.

Fees for Creatives and freelance practitioners are benchmarked against other Big 12 organisations and UK Theatre guidelines at regular intervals, to ensure that we are inline with industry norms. For the next NPO period we have set out our minimum budgeted fees for each creative position, taking into account elevations for co-productions and tours, and an annual 3% increase (based on current OBR projections for RPI) (see 2018-22 budget document).

Permanent staff salaries are benchmarked against Big 12 and NGCV organisations to ensure they remain competitive, and we offer annual increases in line with RPI as set out by the OBR. Where we are able to commit to regular hours staff are offered permanent part-time positions. Where work is less regular we offer zero-hours contracts which, regardless of age, are paid at the National Living Wage or above (£7.20ph, versus NMW at £6.95ph for ages 21-24, or £5.55ph for ages 18-20).

7. MAINTAINING & BUILDING RESERVES

Northern Stage has built up healthy reserves; since 2004 we have grown our reserves from £328 to over £300k in 16/17. In 2014 we established a designated capital reserves fund from contingency underspend, and in 2016 this allowed the Board to commit £50k of the previous years' surplus to the redevelopment of Stage 3, without impacting the underlying reserves. We intend to maintain this level of reserves for the remainder of the NPO.

8. FINANCIAL CONTROL, MONITORING & REPORTING

The company's finances are managed by Executive Director Kate Denby and Finance Director Helen Graham, and closely overseen by Chair of the Finance Committee Keith Proudfoot. Helen was appointed in October 2016 and has an 18-year track record of driving sales growth at commercial entertainment venue Metro Arena. Together they lead an entrepreneurial approach to developing the organisations financial health: encouraging staff to identify opportunities for growth; managing risk, rather than avoiding it; and promoting personal responsibility for company finances throughout the organisation.

Robust controls are in place to monitor finances and performance. Budgets are

built in consultation with department heads to empower staff and ensure ownership of spending limits and income targets. Budget responsibility is clearly assigned to individual staff members, and Executive or Board Members are required to authorise spending over certain limits. Budget holders meet with the Executive and Finance Directors on a quarterly basis to review spending and project forecasts for the remainder of the year. Management accounts are presented to the Finance Sub-Committee and Board quarterly, and the annual accounts are audited by an independent firm of accountants.

A risk register is in place and is regularly reviewed by Senior Team, Finance Committee and Trustees. It monitors financial, strategic, operational, external and governance risk, and measures risk impact, severity or probability, controls and preventative actions, and gives named responsibility. Trends are monitored to highlight any weakness in the organisation that needs addressing.

Budgets are structured with a number of in-built checks and balances to enable us to manage financial risk in-year:

- We monitor both production costs and the net cost of each production, i.e. total income minus expenditure, in order to manage risk across the whole season; this allows for flexibility to increase or decrease income targets or production spend in response to the success of productions as the year progresses
- Participation and talent development project costs are matched to receipt of fees or fundraised income: we commit to investing in a small amount of pilot activity to demonstrate the potential impact, following which projects can be scaled to the income received
- We budget £50k contingency each year, which is released in the forecast as the year progresses; with effective management of costs in place, this is now being used as contingency against our ambitious income targets

Beneficiaries

On this screen we ask you to give us some more details about the beneficiaries your activity is aimed at, if any.

By 'beneficiaries' we mean people who are actively involved in your activity (other than the artists or others leading the activity) by devising, creating, making, presenting or performing.

Tick here if your activity is specifically aimed at any particular age group of beneficiaries.

☐

Tick here if your activity is specifically aimed at any identified ethnic groups as beneficiaries.

☐

Tick here if your activity is specifically aimed at disabled people as beneficiaries.

☐

Tick here if your activity is specifically aimed at individuals or groups with a particular sexual orientation identity as beneficiary.

☐

Tick here if your activity is specifically aimed at either male, female or 'trans* beneficiaries.

☐

Activity location

Location details

Please tell us where your work during the period 2018-22 will mainly take place.

- If your work happens mostly within the area local to your organisation, please enter your organisation's own location details here.
- If your work happens mostly in a specific place that is not local to your organisation, please enter the details of the space or venue here.
- If you work in a consortium with another organisation(s), please enter your organisation's own location details and those of the consortium members.
- If your work has a national remit (for example, digital work or publishing), please enter your organisation's own location details.
- If your work involves touring, please enter your organisation's own location details and the details of any venues for tour dates that are confirmed or pencilled during the period 2018-22.

Using the tool below, please enter the location(s) where your activity is happening. To add a location, click the 'Add new item' icon on the left of the screen. To add more than one location, use the 'Save and Add another' button.

Name of the venue	Local authority	Booking status
Northern Stage	Newcastle upon Tyne	Confirmed
Section 43 (2)		Not discussed
		Not discussed
		Not discussed
		Not discussed
		Not discussed
		Not discussed
		Not discussed

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre): Northern Stage

Enter postcode: NE1 7RH

No postcode available: ☐

Local authority: Newcastle upon Tyne

Status of booking: Confirmed

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre):

Enter postcode:

No postcode available:

Local authority:

Status of booking: Not discussed

Section 43 (2)

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre):

Enter postcode:

No postcode available:

Local authority:

Status of booking: Not discussed

Section 43 (2)

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre):

Section 43 (2)

Enter postcode: Section 43 (2)
No postcode available:
Local authority:
Status of booking: Not discussed

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre): Section 43 (2)
Enter postcode:
No postcode available:
Local authority:
Status of booking: Not discussed

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre): Section 43 (2)
Enter postcode:
No postcode available:
Local authority:
Status of booking: Not discussed

Activity location details

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No postcode available:
Local authority:

Status of booking: Not discussed

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Section 43 (2)

Enter postcode:

No postcode available:

Local authority:

Status of booking: Not discussed

Activity location details

Name of the venue or place (e.g. Oneplace Arts Centre):

Section 43 (2)

Enter postcode:

No postcode available:

Local authority:

Status of booking:

Attachment details

Description: Doc 1 - Northern Stage Financial Statement YE 31.3.16

Financial attachment type: Most recent financial statements

Attachment details

Description: Doc 2 - Northern Stage Management Accounts - Q3 (31 Dec 2016)

Financial attachment type: Most recent management accounts

Attachment details

Description: Doc 3 - Northern Stage Budget 2017-18 with Notes

Financial attachment type: Detailed budget for next financial year

Attachment details

Description: Doc 4 - Northern Stage Budget 2018-22 with Notes

Financial attachment type: Budget for the funding period

Attachment details

Document description: Northern Stage Mem & Arts ORIGINAL

Other attachment type: Governance document

Declaration

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

We are committed to being as open as possible. This includes being clear about how we assess and make decisions on National portfolio organisations and how we will use your application form and other documents you give us. We are happy to provide you with copies of the information we hold about you, including our assessment of your application.

We comply with all aspects of the Data Protection Act 1998 – to find out more about how we use your information please read our data protection policy which is available from our website.

As a public organisation we also have to follow the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We also have an information sheet about freedom of information. You must read the 'How we treat your application under the Freedom of Information Act' section of 'How to apply' before you sign your application. This information is also available from our website.

By signing this application form, you agree to the following:

1. We will use this application form and the other information you give us, including any personal information, for the following purposes.

- a) To decide whether to give you a grant.
- b) To provide copies to other individuals or organisations who are helping us assess and monitor grants, including local authorities, other lottery distributors and organisations that award grants. After we reach a decision, we may also tell them the outcome of your application and, if appropriate, why we did not offer you a grant.
- c) To hold in our database and use for statistical purposes.
- d) If we offer you a grant, we will publish information about you relating to the activity we have funded, including the amount of the grant and the activity it was for. This information may appear in our press releases, in our print and online publications, and in the publications or websites of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and any partner organisations who have funded the activity with us.
- e) If we offer you a grant, you will support our work to campaign for the arts, contributing (when asked) to important publicity activities during the period we provide funding for. You will also give us, when asked, case studies, images and audio-visual materials that we can use to celebrate artistic excellence.

I confirm that, as far as I know, the information in this application is true and correct.

X

Name: Kate Denby

2. You have read and understood the section 'How we treat your application under the Freedom of Information Act'. You accept how we generally plan to treat your application and other related information if someone asks to see it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You accept that the information sheet does not cover all cases, as we have to consider each request for information based on the situation when we get the request.

Tick this box if you consider your application or any supporting documentation to be confidential information and would expect us to treat as such on receipt of a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

X

Please be aware that if we do receive a request for information we will contact you in the first instance to obtain your views on disclosing the information relating to your application and whilst we will take on board your response above, we cannot guarantee that information will not be provided in response to a request as we are required to approach each case individually and ultimately meet our legal obligations.

3. Tick this box to confirm you meet our bank account requirements as set out in our Bank Details guidance.

X

4. Tick this box if you or any individual involved in the delivery of this activity- has worked for Arts Council England in the last three years- is an Arts Council (area or National) council member- is related to a current member of staff or council member

Submission summary

Page	Last Updated
Introduction	No Input Required
Organisation details	21/11/2016
Contact information	21/11/2016
Basic details	27/01/2017
Contributing to our goals	21/11/2016
Goal 1	27/01/2017
Goal 2	27/01/2017
Goal 3	27/01/2017
Goal 4	27/01/2017
Goal 5	30/01/2017
Organisation profile	31/01/2017
Beneficiaries	No Input Required
Activity location	27/01/2017

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Financial attachments	31/01/2017
Other attachments	21/11/2016
Declaration	27/01/2017