

Candidate Information

Chair and Non-Executive Director of North East
Museums Limited and Independent Member of the
North East Museums Strategic Board



**NORTH EAST
MUSEUMS**

Our mission is to welcome and connect people to the past, present and future of the North East through stories, shared spaces and experiences.

We will help people understand and act on local and global challenges:



Equality - we will provide a warm welcome to everyone, break down barriers caused by inequality and discrimination and share diverse stories.



Wellbeing - we will use our spaces and services to support people’s physical and mental health.



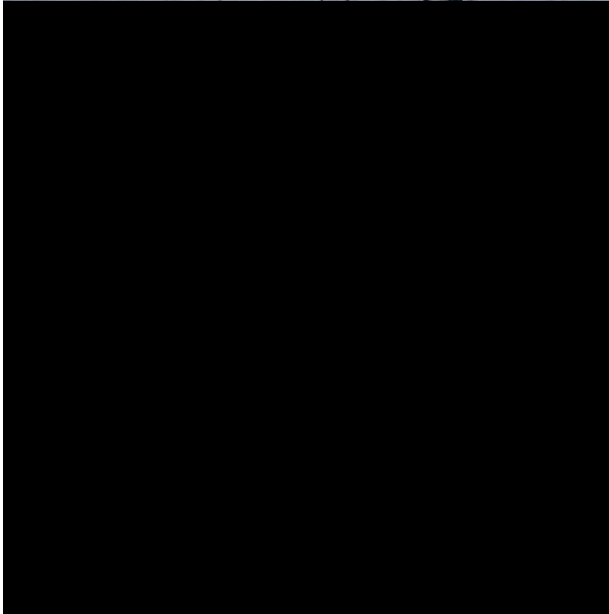
Social mobility - we will deliver learning experiences, volunteering opportunities and pathways for personal development for people of all ages and backgrounds.



Place - we will celebrate North East England, inspire local pride and use our resources to support research, innovation and economic regeneration.



Climate - we will raise awareness about the environment and encourage people to act for a sustainable future.



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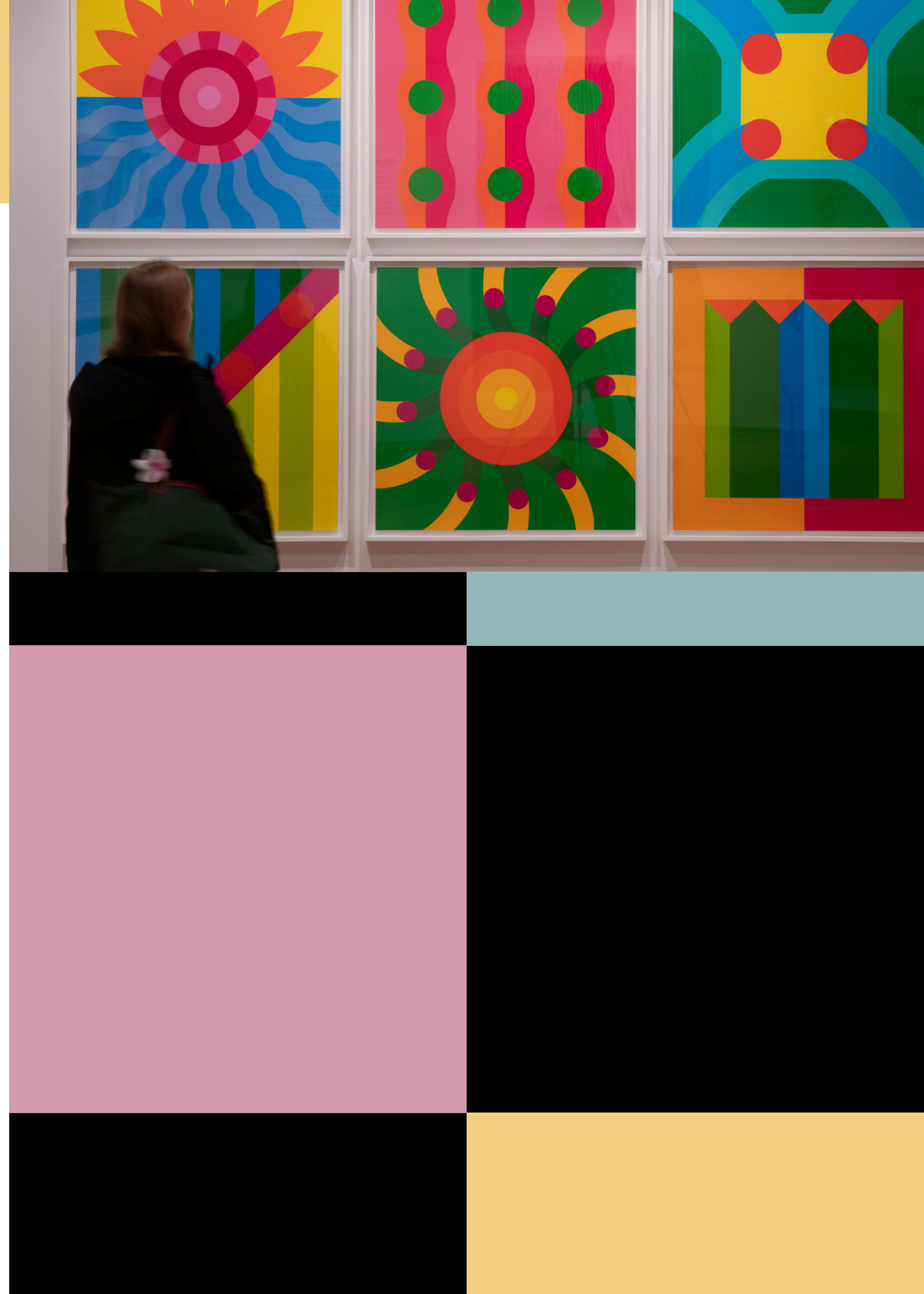
Strategic Board information

About North East Museums

North East Museums (NEM) is a major regional museum, art gallery and archives service. We manage a collection of twelve (soon to be thirteen) museums, galleries and heritage venues across North East England and the Archives for Tyne and Wear.

We are supported by five local authorities and Newcastle University and we are also a National Portfolio Organisation funded by Arts Council England.

We hold collections of international importance in archives, art, science and technology, archaeology, military and social history, fashion and natural sciences.



People

We believe everyone should have access to art, culture and heritage and we're committed to using our amazing museums and collections to support our communities and visitors.

We have a loyal regional audience – 79% of our visitors are from North East England and visitor satisfaction levels are high – 99% positively rate their visit and 67% are repeat visits.

We deliver targeted programming for audiences who do not traditionally engage with museums including socially isolated older people or those living with dementia, people in mental health recovery and people in addiction recovery. We are Museums of Sanctuary providing a safe and welcoming space for everyone and we have several programmes supporting refugees and asylum seekers.

We have an extensive learning programme for children and young people, including facilitated school workshops and family activities. In 2025-26 there were 151,378 engagements with children and young people through our learning programmes.

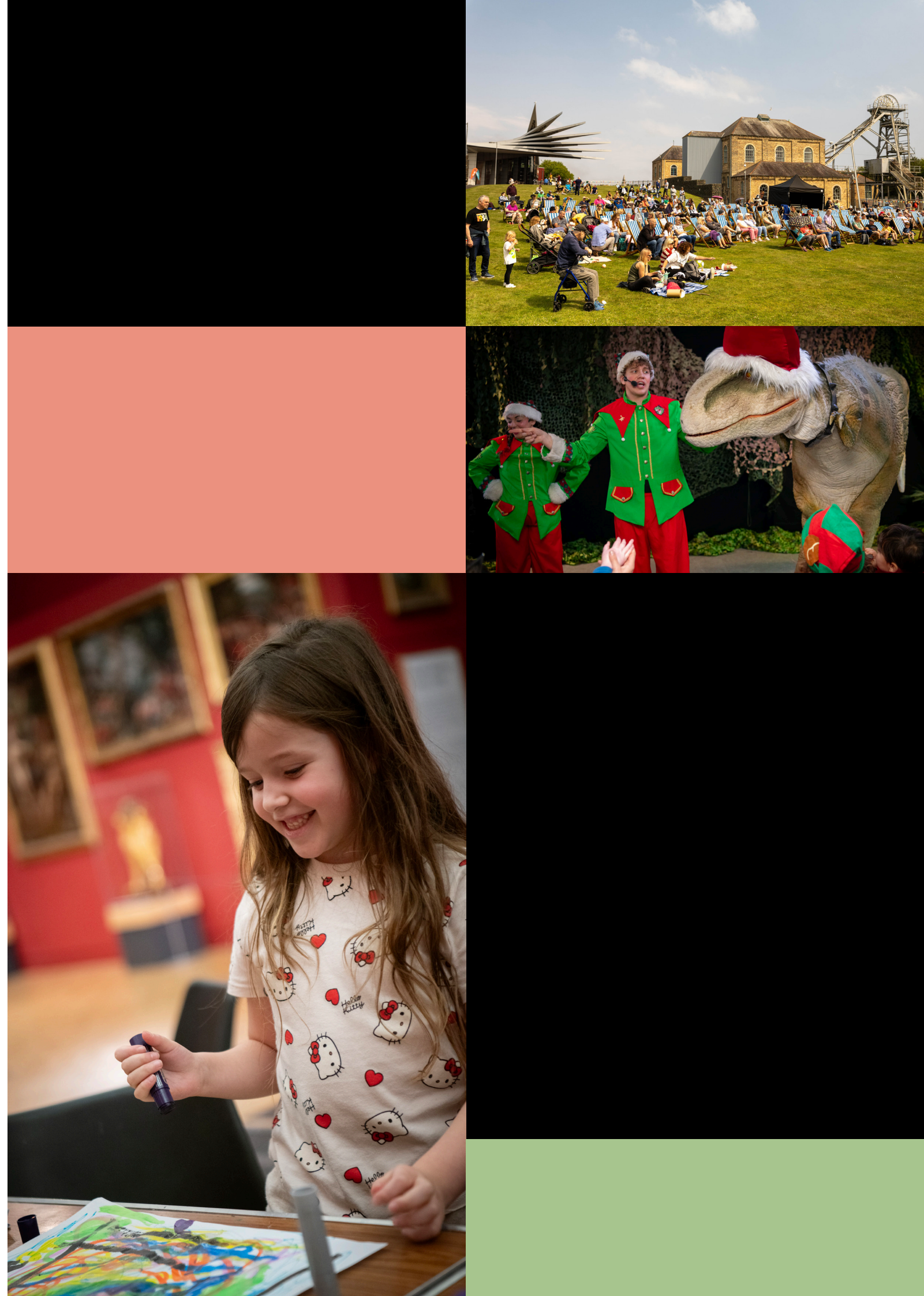
We also have a dedicated team of volunteers who deliver over 30,000 volunteer hours to support our work.

Partnerships

As an organisation forged on partnerships, collaborative working is in our DNA. On a regional level we work closely with our cultural colleagues, local authorities, universities, community groups, North East Mayoral Strategic Authority and local businesses.

At a national level we work with national museums as part of the National Museum Directors Council (NMDC), liaise closely with the English Civic Museums Network and have roles on numerous subject specialist networks.

Internationally, we are part of the British Museum International Training Programme and host curators from across the world. We are members of the international *Bridging the North Sea* network which is exploring the role of the North Sea as a highway in the Roman period and we are working with colleagues from Newcastle University on the *Wall to Wall* initiative, linking the Great Wall of China and Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Sites.

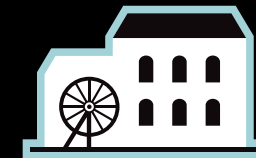


Our venues

We manage some of the most popular museums, galleries and heritage venues in North East England.



Morpeth Chantry
Bagpipe Museum



Woodhorn Museum



Northumberland



Hatton Gallery



Great North Museum: Hancock



Stephenson
Steam Railway



Discovery Museum
and Tyne & Wear Archives



Laing Art Gallery



Segedunum Roman Fort

North Tyneside



Newcastle upon Tyne

River Tyne



Northumberland



Hexham Old Gaol



Gateshead



Shipley Art Gallery



South Shields Museum
& Art Gallery



Arbeia, South Shields
Roman Fort



South Tyneside



In 2025-26 we achieved

32,836

volunteer hours
from 481
volunteers

780,081

visits to our venues



862,326

visits to our website



26,370

visits to **The Late Shows**
across 73 venues

151,378

engagements with children
and young people in our
learning programmes

9,410

engagements via our
community programmes



Organisational Overview

Strategic Board

Policy and decision making is undertaken by the Strategic Board. Membership is made up of elected local authority members, a nominee from Newcastle University and independent appointments, with an independent Chair, currently Sir Chris Mullin.

North East Museums Development Trust

The Trust was established on 1 December 2010 and is a registered charity which raises funds to support North East Museums activities and objectives.

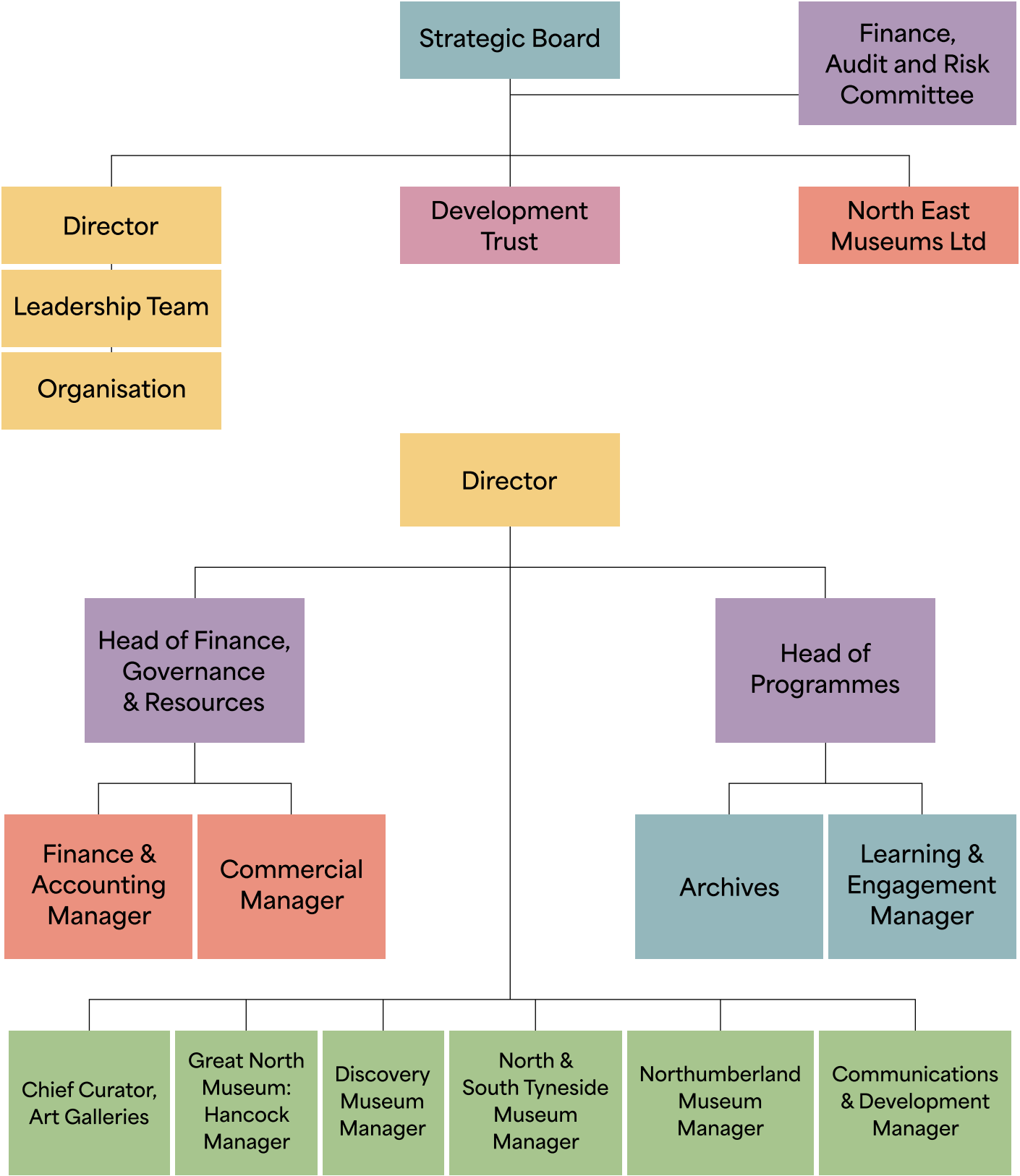
North East Museums Ltd

North East Museums Limited's purpose, as a trading company, is to enable North East Museums to capitalise on its commercial and exhibitions activity. This includes retail operations, venue hire and catering and satisfying the requirements of the Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR) scheme.

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee includes an independent chair and vice-chair to challenge, monitor and scrutinise in relation to governance and internal control issues.

Structure and governance



North East Museums Ltd

North East Museums Limited ("the Company") has been established following a major review of North East Museums' governance structures. Its purpose, as a trading company, is to enable North East Museums to capitalise on the expertise it has already developed in relation to commercial and exhibitions activity which has resulted in a significant increase in self-generated income and is seeing North East Museums recognised nationally for its entrepreneurial work.

Purpose

- The Company will build on North East Museums' success and create further growth. In the first instance it will assume responsibility for activities which we previously delivered through TWAM Enterprises Limited ("TWAMe") including retail operations, venue hire and catering. It also incorporates the activities previously undertaken by Exhibitions by TWAM Limited ("EBT") in order to leverage and satisfy the requirements of the Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief (MGETR) scheme.
- The Company is wholly owned by Newcastle City Council, as the host Authority for the North East Museums partnership, but represents the interests of all partners who together contribute to, and benefit from, the activities of North East Museums, its trading company, charitable Development Trust and associated governance forums.
- Any profits from the Company will be gifted to North East Museums Development Trust. The Trustees of the North East Museums Development Trust are then discharged with utilising this funding to support North East Museums, in line with its charitable purpose.
- The Company's activities include ensuring its resources are used exclusively in pursuance of its objectives and for the benefit of North East Museums, as well as working independently and collaboratively with North East Museums' Strategic Board and the North East Museums Development Trust to ensure North East Museums' continuing financial viability and long-term sustainability.

Chair role specification

The Chair of North East Museums Limited is a dual role, primarily as a Director responsible for ensuring that the Company Board delivers its obligations, combined with fulfilling the role as an Independent Member of the North East Museums Strategic Board (further information on the North East Museums Strategic Board can be found on page 26.) It should be noted that as an Independent Member of the Strategic Board you will have a strategic/advisory role, but some decisions of the Strategic Board, which amount to the discharge of a statutory function, known as 'Reserved Matters', are for elected councillor members only.

The role is for a three-year term and is eligible for re-appointment for one further term.

The role is responsible for meeting the following key objectives:

Strategic Leadership

- To provide leadership and strategic vision for the Company Board
- Ensuring that the Company complies with its governing documents, company law, and any other relevant legislation and regulations
- Ensuring all Company Board members are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best long-term interests of North East Museums
- Ensuring the Company Board is kept up to date with relevant matters arising from the North East Museums Strategic Board, through the combined role as Independent Member on the Strategic Board
- Utilising the role as Independent Member to ensure that North East Museums Strategic Board is kept up to date with relevant matters arising from the activities and governance of the Company
- Liaising with the Chair of North East Museums Development Trust to ensure effective strategic and practical partnership working across North East Museums' governance structure

- To ensure that the Company maximises opportunities for commercial development, exhibitions, that it trades efficiently, maximises profit, and leverages other financial incentives/schemes available to the sector
- To ensure the Board has an independent objective and authoritative identity
- Ensuring decisions are taken in the best long-term interests of North East Museums
- Ensuring the Board effectively deals with relevant matters associated with its purpose, objects, and remit
- Liaising with members of other North East Museums governance forums to ensure effective strategic and practical partnership working across North East Museums' governance structure
- Acting as an ambassador and spokesperson for North East Museums where appropriate

Governance

- Chairing the meetings of the Company Board to ensure effective and efficient decision-making, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the process
- Working closely with the Director and other relevant staff of North East Museums to ensure that meetings are well planned, that agendas cover the necessary areas for consideration and that discussions are supported by appropriate and informative papers and reports
- Ensuring all Board members of the Company understand their roles and responsibilities
- Reviewing membership of the Company Board to ensure its diversity and that it incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience required to deliver its role

Management

- Working closely with the other Directors and other relevant staff from North East Museums to explore approaches to and opportunities for the Company to support North East Museums in its income generation activity, whether through trading or exhibition activity
- Ensuring the Company plans strategically for the long-term benefit and sustainability of North East Museums

Specific responsibilities:

- To ensure the Company establishes key objectives to deliver the agreed plans, identifies and assesses the risk of achieving them and regularly monitors performance to ensure appropriate corrective action can be taken, if necessary, in a timely manner
- To ensure the Company remains financially sustainable
- To use professional and personal knowledge, experience and relationships constructively to inform and challenge the Company's strategies and plans
- To provide mentoring and support professional development opportunities for other members of the Company Board
- To ensure that robust and comprehensive controls and information systems are in place to provide reliable and timely information to the Board
- To support the Board ensuring that it:
 - Reviews the budget and business plan for each year's trading
 - Monitors and controls the Company's use of working capital
 - Controls the expenditure of the Company to ensure that it is all strictly necessary for the continuance and development of the business
 - Trades efficiently, maximises profit, and leverages relevant funding/tax relief opportunities
 - Challenges, holds to account and supports the management team of the Company
 - Ensures that the Company's organisational structure and capability are appropriate for implementing the chosen strategies
 - Ensures appropriate resources (financial and human) are available and a robust risk management framework is in place which identifies, assesses and manages strategic risks and that it is monitored and reviewed annually for continuous improvement
- Defines, negotiates and oversees policies and practice in relation to the working relationship between the Company and North East Museums' venues

Skills and experience

We are seeking an individual who has an interest in and enthusiasm for museums and archives in the North East and is committed to the contribution they can deliver to making a difference in people's lives.

All Board members are expected to demonstrate:

- A love of art, culture and heritage and a commitment to North East Museums' strategic plan
- An understanding of the importance of income generation, to support the delivery of North East Museums' objectives
- Excellent judgement, ability to contribute to Board discussions, good communication skills and be able to represent and advocate for North East Museums
- The ability to work collaboratively with other Board members and key members of North East Museums staff
- A shared commitment to North East Museums' diversity and equality objectives

We welcome applications from any skilled professional with expert knowledge in their field but we are particularly interested in hearing from applicants who can help develop North East Museums' financial resilience and support us in our challenges of increasing income from commercial sources and have one or more of the following areas of experience:

- Hospitality, Conferencing & events
- Legal, governance, or compliance, ideally within commercial organisations
- Retail
- Digital
- Business development and finance
- Project management

We know that great candidates do not always tick every box. At North East Museums, we welcome applications from people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. If you are interested in the role but are unsure whether you meet every requirement, you are welcome to reach out to us for an informal discussion before applying.

Most importantly as a prospective member of our governance structure you will have an absolute commitment to delivering fantastic museum and archive services which not only reach but engage all the people and communities of the North East and encourage them to help shape museum and archive services to meet their needs.



Experience	
Strong commercial and financial management experience at a senior level and a track record of entrepreneurial achievement in a business focused environment	Essential
A commitment to the aims and objectives of North East Museums, and a proactive interest and enthusiasm in shaping and advising on the future of the Company	Essential
Working at a senior / influential level with multiple stakeholders	Essential
Working to high standard of behaviour, demonstrating honesty, probity and the highest level of integrity in conduct	Essential

Skills	
Chairing skills: ability to organise, coordinate and follow through on key decisions; manage competing or differing views, and positively challenge to achieve the desired outcome	Essential
Strong interpersonal skills with exceptional tact and diplomacy and capable of effective conflict resolution	Essential
An ability to work effectively as a member of a team while remaining objective, independent and impartial	Essential
Excellent communication skills, and able to represent North East Museums Limited effectively in the public arena	Essential
Ability to support and encourage the trading and exhibitions teams in their roles, whilst constructively challenging their advice and decisions, and act as a critical friend as required	Essential
An ability to discharge non-executive responsibilities (such as audit, governance and risk management skills) whether through charitable/voluntary or business experience	Essential
Strong strategic awareness and ability to identify emerging external factors that may impact on strategy, implementation of plans, or reputation with key stakeholders	Essential
Analytical skills including the ability to weigh / sort complex evidence and reach rational conclusions, incorporating appropriate advice	Essential
Strong networking skills and ability to identify new income opportunities and ‘open doors’ which are beneficial to the aims of North East Museums Limited	Desirable

Knowledge	
An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of directorship and the role of the Board	Essential
Resource management and prioritisation - understanding the delivery of multi-disciplinary services	Essential
Knowledge of the North East’s cultural, public, political and business infrastructure with an ability to command respect amongst regional stakeholders and national decision makers in the public arena	Essential
Risk management, performance management and corporate governance and controls	Essential
Financial management expertise in multi £m organisations	Desirable
Familiarity with Creative industry tax reliefs for Corporation Tax, especially Museums and Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief	Desirable
Knowledge of the major functions of North East Museums and / or similar public sector funded cultural service providers	Desirable
Knowledge of emerging digital technologies, including AI	Desirable

Other	
High level of personal credibility and leadership	Essential
Demonstrate a strong passion and commitment to the vision and objectives of North East Museums	Essential
Able and willing to spend time on Board meetings, including preparation, attendance and follow up as necessary	Essential
A commitment to Nolan’s seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership	Essential
Commitment to abide by the company’s policies, including those on confidentiality, health and safety, equal opportunities and safeguarding	Essential

Diversity

- North East Museums is committed to working with as wide a range of people in the North East and beyond as possible.
- We believe that we need diverse Board membership to ensure that our activity and our audiences are as diverse as they can be.
- We will seek to ensure diversity on our Boards by advertising and sharing these vacancies widely and not relying on word of mouth so we can try and reach communities not already represented on our Boards.
- We will also monitor and review the diversity of both our applicants and our Boards.
- We welcome and encourage applications from people of all backgrounds and with a range of skills and will provide appointed Board members with the necessary support to fulfil their role.
- We also seek to create an environment where divergent views are welcomed, and individuals feel confident sharing their ideas.
- We organise Board meetings so they are accessible and convenient for our members and will reimburse the reasonable cost of travel but also childcare, or care of other dependants (for example, an elderly parent) if needed to attend trustee meetings.
- We strive to encourage inclusive decision making within a respectful environment so all Board members can fully participate and contribute working effectively with both each other and our executive team.

Minimum Time Commitment

The Company Board will meet a minimum of 4 times per year with each meeting lasting approximately two hours. Where appropriate, additional meetings will be called to address specific issues outside of the expected schedule, although these meetings will be called under exceptional circumstances.

The North East Museums Strategic Board meets at least 4 times per year, with each meeting lasting approximately 2.5 hours. In addition, members will be expected to contribute to ad hoc working groups and to support North East Museums based on using their own specific skills and knowledge.

The Chair of North East Museums Limited will be expected to devote adequate time to preparation for both Boards, related meetings, and appropriate research and planning.

Remuneration

There is no remuneration for this post but reasonable expenses for travel will be paid.

Eligibility criteria

In order to be eligible for the role, you must not:

- Be under 16 years old
- Have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- Be disqualified from being a company director
- Have previously been removed as a trustee by either the commission or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement
- Be currently declared bankrupt (or is subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order) or have an individual voluntary agreement (IVA) with creditors

Application process

Please apply for this post by sending a CV, 2 page covering letter and Diversity Monitoring Form to CorpGov@northeastmuseums.org.uk.

Please be advised interviews for this position are scheduled to take place w/c 9th November 2026.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, have any questions, or require this information in another format such as in Braille or in large print, please contact us at above email address.

North East Museums Strategic Board

Purpose of the Strategic Board

The purpose of the Board is to provide scrutiny and leadership, democratic accountability, and enterprise support and challenge. All members of the Strategic Board should act within a 'Nolan' type framework, representing the best interests of North East Museums and no outside interest.

More specifically, the Strategic Board is responsible for:

- (a) developing a strategic focus to drive growth;
- (b) providing scrutiny and leadership, democratic accountability, and support and challenge to North East Museums and its executive team;
- (c) overseeing the overall governance and strategic leadership of North East Museums in accordance with North East Museums' mission and objectives;
- (d) ensuring North East Museums' continuing financial viability and long-term sustainability including by supporting North East Museums to take advantage of new opportunities (notably in relation to generating income from commercial and philanthropic sources);
- (e) ensuring North East Museums is making effective use of its assets, services and resources to support its museum and archive activities;
- (f) ensuring North East Museums is delivering against Constituent Council and University priorities; and
- (g) ensuring North East Museums is recognising the diversity, and meeting the needs, of its users and communities.

The members of the Strategic Board are jointly responsible for carrying out the following functions:

- (a) approving the Strategic / Corporate Plan for North East Museums;
- (b) approving North East Museums policies;
- (c) monitoring and reviewing the work of North East Museums;
- (d) determining the budget and staffing of North East Museums;
- (e) commenting on matters affecting museums, archives and records regionally, nationally and internationally insofar as they affect North East Museums;
- (f) providing practical support and challenge to North East Museums' senior management team;
- (g) ensuring effective working relationships with North East Museums' key stakeholders/partners including North East Museums Limited and North East Museums Development Trust and with its funders, including Arts Council England;
- (h) contributing actively to formulating and regularly reviewing the strategic aims of the organisation by agreeing the Business Plan and evaluating performance against agreed targets.

It should be noted that Independent Members of the Strategic Board have a strategic/ advisory role, but do not act in the capacity as a Trustee/Director for this particular Board. Some decisions of the Strategic Board, which amount to the discharge of a statutory function, are known as 'Reserved Matters'. Only elected councillor members of the Strategic Board are entitled to vote on such matters.



northeastmuseums.org.uk