



Learning & Participation Programme Manager Application Pack March 2026



National Centre for Writing, Dragon Hall (c) Hannah Hutchins

About the National Centre for Writing

National Centre for Writing (NCW) is a dynamic literature house for contemporary writing, rooted in Norwich and open to the world. Our home is the Grade-I listed medieval Dragon Hall located on the historic King Street on the banks of the Wensum River in the heart of Norwich, England's first UNESCO City of Literature. This landmark venue consists of a 120-seat venue for live events, workshop spaces, and accommodation for writers' residencies, as well as office space for our core team of 21 staff members.

NCW exists to inspire connection, resilience, and understanding through writing, literary translation, reading, and the exploration of ideas. We are a place for the exchange of stories. Founded as New Writing Partnership in 2003 and becoming Writers' Centre Norwich in 2008, the organisation has steadily grown to become a leading voice in the UK and international literature sector as well as a key member of Arts Council England's group of seven regional writer and literature development organisations.

In summer 2018, NCW was launched with the restoration of Dragon Hall following a significant capital redevelopment project. We are an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), for the period 2023-2028, and we are the Focal Office for Norwich's UNESCO City of Literature designation.

About the role

We are looking for an enthusiastic and highly effective project manager to maintain and grow our core learning and participation programmes, which include annual projects, creative workshops, and open days at Dragon Hall. Our Learning & Participation work is a priority programme area here at NCW, focussed on engaging and developing local and regional community audiences and participants. In addition to working alongside our dynamic and innovative programme team, this role involves a strong element of co-programming and project development with external stakeholders and partners.

About you

To be successful in the role, you will have at least five years' experience in delivering projects within educational, learning, or community settings, particularly in the arts or cultural sectors. The learning and participation programme specifically requires an individual with demonstrable experience in developing and managing collaborative delivery partnerships. Additionally, candidates should have a comprehensive understanding of regional and national trends related to youth literacy, the English Literature syllabus, creative writing initiatives in community settings, developments in live literature, and building programmes that are representative and inclusive. You will have excellent planning skills, along with the ability to engage effectively with a diverse range of individuals, demonstrating flexibility to meet the individual needs of artists, participants, and community and educational partners.

Equal opportunities

National Centre for Writing is committed to equality of opportunity. We actively encourage people from a variety of backgrounds with different experiences, skills, and stories to join us and influence and develop our working practice.

By taking positive action around diversity (as permitted in the Equality Act 2010) we aim to prioritise interviews for eligible candidates who demonstratively meet all the essential criteria as outlined in the person specification who identify as having one of the following protected characteristics:

- Black, Asian or Ethnically Diverse
- Disabled and/or Neurodiverse
- Candidates from diverse socio-economic backgrounds as defined by household main earner occupation aged 14 and secondary schooling aged 12-16

How to apply

To apply for the position of Learning & Participation Programme Manager please fill out our application form and equal opportunities monitoring form at nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/vacancies/ along with a Personal Statement (maximum 1,500 words) and send to Amanda Salmon, Head of Operations & Commercial at amanda@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk, who can also provide this information in an alternative format eg. Microsoft Word.

Closing date for applications: 10am, Monday 20 April

Interviews: Wednesday 6 May

If you have any queries about the job role, application process, or would prefer the application documentation in a different format please email Amanda Salmon, Head of Operations & Commercial at amanda@nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk.

When you submit your application, please ensure that you are available to participate between 10am – 6pm on the interview date.

Terms & conditions

Reports to: Head of Programmes & Creative Engagement.

Responsible for: Learning & Participation Producer and Learning & Participation Assistant.

Contract: Permanent.

Working hours: Four days per week/0.8 fte.

Standard working hours are 7.5 hours per day between 9am and 6pm but we are open to conversations around flexible hours during the interview process. Due to the nature of the role some evening and weekend work will be required, as well as some national and international travel. We operate a Time Off In Lieu policy for this.

Location: This role is based in our offices at Dragon Hall 115–123 King St, Norwich, NR1 1QE. This role is largely office-based, though there is currently the option to work from home for up to one day per week.

Benefits: Contributory Pension Scheme, Cycle to Work Scheme, equipment and support to work from home effectively, training and development tailored to your level of experience, mental wellbeing support.

Salary: £35,121 fte (£28,097 pro rata).

Annual leave: 25 days per annum plus eight public holidays. Up to five days of paid annual leave must be taken over the Christmas/New Year period.

Probation period: Six months.

Notice period: Two months.



Winners of the Young Norfolk Writing Prize 2025 (c) Andi Sapey

Job description

Purpose of the role

The Learning & Participation Programme Manager will manage and evaluate programmes that explore community learning, participation and engagement in creative writing and reading. This role will centralise and expand our range of community learning projects as well as our programme for young people and families, and schools.

Main responsibilities

Programme development

- Maintain NCW's year-round core Learning & Participation programmes for families, young people, schools, and local communities, which includes annual projects, creative workshops, and open days.
- Manage and deliver a continually evolving range of additional, individually funded programmes for young people, schools, and local communities.
- Work with NCW's Head of Programmes to develop and expand innovative Learning & Participation programmes that align with the aims of NCW, both artistically and in terms of audience development.
- Respond to NCW's mission and aims, translating relevant parts of our central organisational strategy into a compelling and diverse community programme that is contemporary, relevant, and supported by a robust operational plan.
- Identify key areas of need and gaps in provision for target audiences, including children, young people, and community groups, to inform programme development and strategy.
- Ensure that the development and delivery of projects utilise NCW's home at Dragon Hall as a unique resource for engagement across various participant groups.
- Participate in the planning and feasibility work for NCW and Norwich UNESCO City of Literature, as well as

the delivery of flagship projects.

- Maintain and expand our regional schools database.
- Provide support to the Head of Programmes and Artistic Director & Chief Executive in managing and delivering associated projects.
- Generate a high level of collaboration across programmes through a close working relationship with other NCW Programme Managers.
- Establish and implement an evaluation framework for Learning & Participation programmes, applying the insights gained to enhance programme planning and delivery.
- Manage and monitor programme budgets.
- Contribute to funding opportunities and draft funding proposals in collaboration with the development team.
- Establish and nurture productive, positive relationships with existing and prospective clients and partners.
- Stay informed about current regional issues, national policies regarding formal and informal learning, and developments in contemporary literature and the literary syllabus.
- Maintain visibility within programmes and serve as a point of contact for participants by attending events, workshops, and public programmes as needed.

Team working

- Work collaboratively with team members and other colleagues in order to meet organisational objectives.
- Manage, delegate tasks to, and oversee the workflow of the Learning & Participation Assistant, Learning & Participation Producer, and any future staff recruited to support the Learning & Participation programme.
- Establish and maintain positive relationships with NCW's freelance facilitators, serving as the primary point of contact for freelance staff involved in Learning & Participation programmes, and provide line management as necessary for long-term contracts with freelance staff.
- Assist in the recruitment process and contribute to the onboarding of entry-level staff, including interns and apprentices, working alongside the Learning & Participation team.
- Fulfil all tasks necessary as NCW's joint designated safeguarding lead.

Compliance & financial management

- Prepare papers and reports in a timely fashion for the Senior Management Team, the Board, funders and stakeholders as required.
- Carry out duties in accordance with appropriate internal and statutory procedures.
- Adhere at all times to NCW employment policies and procedures with particular reference to Health & Safety, Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults, Equal Opportunities and Diversity, Confidentiality.
- Serve as the safeguarding contact within the team and undergo training to become NCW's joint safeguarding lead, ensuring that safeguarding policies and processes are updated as necessary.

General

- Act as an advocate for NCW - its vision, activities and values - at relevant associated cultural networks and meetings, including Norwich LCEP or its equivalent.
- Undertake training as identified and agreed to ensure the ongoing effective delivery of the post, and where applicable, to undertake required training relating to your professional qualification.
- Undertake any other duties assigned by the Artistic Director & Chief Executive which might reasonably be deemed to be within the status of the job and appropriate to the post.
- All duties must be carried out with due regard to confidentiality.

Person specification

Qualifications

Desirable

- Arts Award Advisor qualified
- Safeguarding training

Learning and participation

- At least five years' experience in delivering projects within educational, learning, or community settings, specifically in the arts or cultural sectors
- Proven ability to translate strategic objectives into a compelling and diverse programme of work, supported by a comprehensive operational and evaluation plan
- Demonstrable experience of identifying, developing, and managing delivery partnerships
- Awareness of regional and national trends related to young people's literacy, the English Literature syllabus, creative writing initiatives in community contexts, live literature developments, and diversity
- Familiarity with policies and trends concerning community engagement
- Excellent skills in budget management
- Well-connected within the industry, utilising contacts to enhance our Learning & Participation programmes
- Experience in identifying fundraising and earned income opportunities, as well as generating revenue from projects
- Proven experience in managing and implementing safeguarding policies and procedures for children and vulnerable adults

Desirable

- Experience in delivering projects that facilitate the achievement of the Arts Award
- A passion for literature, creative writing and reading
- Experience of working with volunteers
- Background in working within classroom settings
- Experience of delivering projects in community settings

Audience and participant engagement

- Demonstrates a clear understanding of prioritising audience engagement while maintaining artistic integrity
- Recognises various channels available for developing engagement programmes that cater to diverse target audiences, ensuring accessibility and equality of opportunity
- Utilises market research and analysis to inform artistic decision-making

Implementation and results focus

- Directs attention and resources towards meeting agreed organisational targets, priorities, and objectives.
- Utilises skill, effort, and sound judgement to complete tasks effectively.
- Accurately assesses the duration and complexity of tasks and projects, breaking them down into manageable steps to aid the team's success.
- Maintains a keen eye for detail.

Adaptability and flexibility

- Open to change and new information.
- Adapts behaviour and work methods in response to evolving circumstances or unforeseen challenges.
- Adjusts rapidly to new situations that require attention and resolution
- Demonstrates confidence and the ability to remain composed and resilient under pressure, exhibiting self-sufficiency while managing a diverse and rapidly changing portfolio of tasks



Audience at our storytelling session at the City of Literature strand of Norfolk & Norwich Festival (c) Luke Witcomb

National Centre for Writing is supported by:



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