

CHAIR OF BOARD RECRUITMENT PACK

APRIL 2023



ELIOT
SMITH
DANCE

Hello

Thank you for your interest in applying for the Chair of Eliot Smith Company Limited trading as Eliot Smith Dance (ESD).

This small contemporary dance company has rapidly grown in reach and size since we were established in 2011 and incorporated in 2015. The Company has recently recruited four Directors. We are now seeking to appoint a Chair to work alongside Directors and our Founder and Creative Director, Eliot Smith, to help lead ESD through the next stages of ESD's ambitious and exciting development.

We are looking for a Chair who can bring knowledge and experience in various skills with a broad range of viewpoints and experiences; you might have already have worked with Boards (either as a Chair, Director, Trustee or as an Executive), or this might be the first time. The potential Chair do not necessarily need to be from a dance or arts background.

At ESD we believe in diversity in the widest sense and we want the new Chair to reflect that. We are therefore encourage applications from across the spectrum of age, disability, gender, socio-economic background, location, and cultural heritage.

If you are not sure about whether this is the right opportunity for you, we would encourage you to get in touch. Please read through this pack to find out more about us, the role that we have available, and how to apply. We are all looking forward to hearing from you. Please note that the deadline for sending us your application is Midday, Monday 31 July 2023.

**Board of Directors
April 2023**



About Eliot Smith Dance

"The enterprising company..." ★★★ THE GUARDIAN

Eliot Smith Dance (ESD) is one of the North East's leading dance companies, creating unforgettable contemporary dance experiences that inspire.

ESD is led by its Founder and Creative Director, Eliot Smith.

We commission, develop, produce and present new work by Eliot Smith and guest choreographers in partnerships with collaborators - aiming to create works that are dynamic, diverse, and relevant. ESD prides itself on bringing new audiences to contemporary dance with its accessible dance programmes alongside its Education and Beyond programme in both urban and rural settings.

We believe dance can support people in helping them to understand themselves and each other, and to inspire lives.

We are a proud Gateshead based company with a regional profile; we tour our work across North East England and other parts of the UK, and have performed by invitation in Paris, Rome, and New York.

ESD works has produced numerous nominations for awards: Winner of the 'Green Dance Award' at One Dance UK Awards 2022, including 'Performing Artist of the Year' and 'People's Choice' finalist at One Dance UK Awards; Awarded Dance City's 'Associate Artist'; The Bowes Museum 'Artist in Residence'; and Finalist at The Journal Culture Awards 'Performing Artist of the Year'.

In light of the pandemic in early 2020, ESD created a new virtual space, VIRTUAL ESD, tailored to allow people to continue engaging in and benefiting from dance and culture.

ESD returned to live performances in July 2021 and celebrated their 10th anniversary.

"In the era of Black Lives Matter, and the tragic loss of many BAME NHS workers, it is apt to reclaim Seacole's legacy." ★★★★★ iNews on Seacole + Nightingale



Finance

Eliot Smith Company Ltd is a private company, limited by guarantee without share capital. The Company trading name is Eliot Smith Dance (ESD) and is a not-for-profit company.

Arts Council England (ACE) is ESD's principal funder and the Company reports to ACE through mandatory National Lottery Project Grants interim and final project reports. The Company receives other funds from trusts, foundations, local authority, public donations, Friends of ESD subscriptions, and earned income, including box office income.

Our latest **accounts** for the financial year ending 28 February 2022, demonstrates consistent financial management which has enabled the Company to come through the industry's challenges due to the Covid pandemic. Our accounts are maintained on Sage software, with regular management accounts available during the year.

The Chair with the Board are expected to rebuild and re-evaluate the Company profile and income, and strengthen our presence and our relationships with audiences and communities at a local, regional, and national level, as well as sowing the seeds for future work on an international platform.

We hope to consolidate existing relationships and begin to build new strategic partnerships that will help grow the Company reach and impact in the community.



Dancers Jennifer Handley, Imogen Mansfield,
Gemma Paganelli, and Laurian Nabet
Eliot Smith's PITMAN at Woodhorn Museum (2016)
Photo courtesy of Woodhorn Museum

Role Specification

The new Chair will be responsible for working with Board Members and the Creative Director to meet the challenges of this new world and ensure that ESD continues to play an important and growing role in the communities - both local and those of choice - it serves.

The Chair will:

- Support the aim, mission, vision and commitments of ESD.
- Act in the best interests of ESD, operating within the law and according to the governing documents of the organisation, as well as abiding by its policies and procedures.
- Be an active leader of and spokesperson for the Board, as well as a champion and representative of the organisation with stakeholders, mentor for the creative director, and a liaison and support for workers within the organisation.
- Support the community-led nature of ESD.

The Chair's key responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that the necessary structures are in place to deliver on ESD's aim, mission, vision and strategic direction, and lead the Board in providing oversight of the management of the business.

- Hold the creative director and any workers at senior level to account for the performance of ESD.
- Ensure that ESD complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure that the organisation's governance is of the highest possible standard.
- Engage with external stakeholders and draw on their larger network as needed.

"I felt the artistic representation was incredibly creative and thought-provoking."

Audience Response, November 2021

"LIFE - Dance was very well choreographed. Dancers amazing - competent, skilled, enthusiastic. Theatrically brilliant."

Audience Response, November 2021



Role Profile

We're looking for a dynamic, collaborative and generous leader to be our next Chair.

We expect the new Chair to have leadership experience in a professional organisation and a demonstrable understanding of the key role of strong governance in a successful organisation. We expect that you have prior experience in working closely with Directors and/or Trustees, with previous Chair experience desirable - but not essential.

We expect the new Chair to be a compelling and credible ambassador for the organisation locally, regionally and nationally.

Ideally the new Chair will be North East based, and be able to demonstrate commitment to, and understanding of, the North East region.

In addition to the responsibilities shared by all Directors, the Chair has a particular leadership role, which may be summarised as follows:

Inspiring and leading the Board: ensuring that Directors have accurate information, chairing meetings and ensuring that open, respectful dialogue leads to clear decision making.

Working with the Creative Director, Accountant and Secretary to the Board to ensure the financial stability and resilience of the company. Supporting the Directors in mutual respect and wellbeing. Acting as their critical peer by providing guidance and regular appraisals. Ensuring strong governance and full compliance with the governing document and Companies House requirements.

Leading on external relations on behalf of the Board; acting as ambassador and spokesperson as appropriate.

Time commitment:

There are three formal Meetings of the Board each year in-person and a Committee Meeting the evening of the second Wednesday of every month online, as well as having regular meetings with the Creative Director online, in-person, or on the phone. The Chair is an active and visible advocate for the Company, attending ESD events, as well as key external events and meeting with potential funders.



Other information

Board of Directors

Heather Corlett
Stephanie Edusei
Angela Reay
Anthony Robinson
Eliot Smith (Founder & Creative Director)

Terms of Appointment

This role is unremunerated, but reasonable, pre-agreed travel expenses could potentially be reimbursed. The Chair is appointed for a three-year term, which is renewable.

Location

ESD hires a small office space in the centre of Gateshead Town Centre. Board meetings are currently held at the office.

Process

The organisation will view the applications without edits. We therefore advise applicants to avoid using 'please call me to discuss further' in your application as it may restrict your chances of progressing to the next round.

Connected parties

Please do not contact the Company directly. Instead, if you know someone at the Company, please mention it in your cover letter. Should potential applicants wish to have an informal discussion with someone from the Company about the role, please contact info@eliotsmithdance.com



Next steps

Next steps:

If you'd like an informal chat about the Chair role, please contact us to arrange a time, via: info@eliotsmithdance.com

Application Process:

To start the conversation, we are asking you to send us an expression of interest. You can send us a letter of no more than two pages with a CV; you are also welcome to send a video or audio of no more than 5 minutes (preferred format MP4).

Please make sure you tell us:

- Why you would like to be the Chair.
- What you think you would bring to the Company and how your skills could support the Board and Creative Director in achieving its vision.
- A bit about yourself; the work you do and your previous experience.

You need to send your expression of interest to info@eliotsmithdance.com by Midday on 31 July 2023 along with a completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

Please mark your email as confidential and include 'Chair Application' in the subject line.

We are planning to interview from August 2023 onwards, when you contact us, please let us know any dates you are not available.

We want everyone who believes they can contribute to the ESD Board to feel welcome to apply. It is our responsibility to make the application process accessible, and to give you the information you need to decide whether you might be suitable. If you require the pack or any further information in a different format, or have questions before you apply, please get in touch with info@eliotsmithdance.com

Dancer Adam Davies
Eliot Smith's TROY (2021)
Photographer Darren Irwin

Front page image credit:
Dancer Yamit Salazar (2023)
Photographer Darren Irwin
February 2023



ELIOT SMITH DANCE

Eliot Smith Dance is a trading name of Eliot Smith Company Limited.
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