



National Rural
Touring Forum

Director Job Information Pack

September 2025



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Welcome Note

Thank you for your interest in the National Rural Touring Forum.

Rural touring is incredibly special—it's a rich and ever-changing stream of arts activity happening in extraordinary places across the country. There is an electric energy when a community comes together to share a cultural experience; they have chosen and helped to host. For artists, performing for an audience that knows each other is a unique and unforgettable highlight. That special spirit is at the heart of the NRTF.

Our network knows the pressures of the current moment, but we also see the energy, imagination, and expertise in this sector. Rural touring has repeatedly proven that high-quality culture can thrive anywhere when people are given the chance to take part.

This is not a new scene; it has grown over 40 years and is packed with experience, yet it is also hungry for new ideas. In that spirit, we are now looking for a **Director** to build on our strong foundations, provide quiet and thoughtful leadership, and advocate for the vital role of rural touring on the national stage; this person will support our schemes, members, and talented team while helping us grow our visibility, resilience, and impact.

If this sounds like you, we would love to hear from you.

Matthew Linley

Chair of the Board, NRTF



Credit: Vipul Sangoi

About NRTF

National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF) is a charity and Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO) within Arts Council England's National Portfolio that develops and supports the ecosystem that delivers high-quality creative experiences across communities and rural areas in the UK.

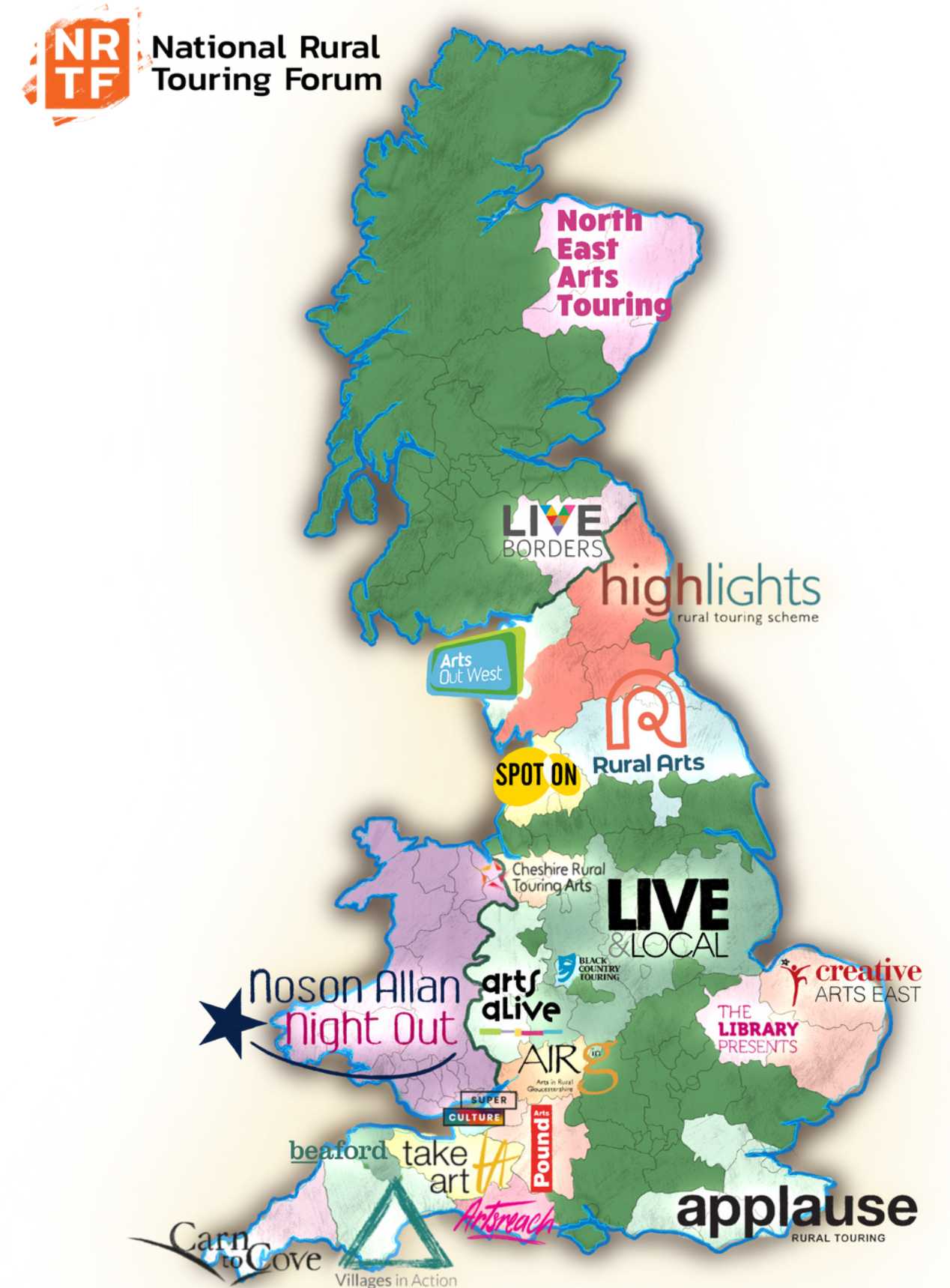
We unite and champion the diverse parts of the rural touring sector by:

- Advocating on behalf of our members
- Sharing news, stories, and opportunities
- Providing professional development and networking
- Supporting rural touring-focused projects and initiatives
- Hosting the Annual National Rural Touring Conference

NRTF comprises a national network of Rural Touring Schemes and members including artists, venues, promoters, producers, and festivals, all working to deliver professional performances and events in rural settings.

We provide members with training, networking opportunities, research, and advocacy to foster rural arts. Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, NRTF develops projects that connect rural audiences and artistic talent nationwide and internationally.

NRTF is driven by a talented, passionate team who work closely together, even while remote, to deliver our mission and values. As we look ahead, we welcome a leader who will champion rural voices, strengthen and guide our talented team, and help secure a vibrant future for rural arts nationwide.



Role Summary

The Director is the strategic and operational lead of NRTF, responsible for the organisation's vision, management, performance, and long-term sustainability.

They ensure delivery against NRTF's mission and business plan, champion rural touring at a national level. They act as the primary liaison with Arts Council England, stakeholders, and the wider sector.

Working closely with a proactive Board of Trustees, the Director provides leadership on governance and compliance in line with UK Charity Law and NRTF's Articles of Association. This ensures the organisation operates with transparency, accountability and good practice.

The Director is a visible ambassador for rural touring, building strong relationships across the cultural sector. They advocate for members and promote the role of rural touring in ensuring that creativity and culture thrive in every community.



Credit: Roland Tarr

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Lead and implement NRTF's Business Plan and strategic objectives.
- Oversee the delivery and evaluation of all funded programmes and initiatives.
- Develop and sustain relationships with our members, including the rural touring schemes, national and regional stakeholders, funders, and policy-makers.
- Ensure alignment with ACE's Investment Principles and "Let's Create" strategy.
- Ensure long-term sustainability through innovation, partnerships, and appropriate diversification, ensuring the organisation remains relevant and forward-thinking.

Finance and Fundraising

- Lead financial planning, budgeting, and reporting in collaboration with the Finance Officer and Treasurer.
- Ensure ACE and funder reporting is accurate and timely.
- Lead on developing new funding opportunities, working with colleagues and freelance support to secure income from trusts, foundations and diversification streams.

Membership and Sector Support

- Foster strong relationships with membership, particularly scheme members.
- Understand and respond to member needs, ensuring services and benefits are relevant.
- Foster a strong member community through events, forums, and networking opportunities.
- Together with the NRTF team, design and deliver initiatives to grow, engage, and retain members.
- Represent NRTF and advocate for member interests at national and international events, conferences, and sector forums.



Credit: James Dodd

Key Responsibilities continued

Project and Event Delivery

- Provide strategic oversight of all NRTF projects, ensuring they are well-managed, impactful and aligned with the business plan.
- Lead and represent NRTF at the Annual National Rural Touring Conference and other national events.
- Foster partnerships with schemes and sector organisations to co-create and deliver events and projects that serve members and raise the profile of rural touring.

Communications and Advocacy

- Provide strategic leadership for NRTF's communications and advocacy, ensuring consistency of voice and alignment with the business plan.
- Lead sector advocacy and act as spokesperson and ambassador for rural touring.
- With NRTF's press agency, maintain and develop national visibility for rural touring through partnerships, media opportunities and press engagement.
- Oversee delivery of marketing and communications, working with the Marketing & Digital Coordinator to manage campaigns, content and social media.
- Build strategic partnerships with other organisations, funders, and influencers.

HR and Operations

- Lead on recruitment, contracting, staff management, and HR policy implementation.
- Line-manage employed staff, ensuring fair and effective working conditions.
- Manage Contracts for Services for freelance teams and contractors
- Maintain organisational infrastructure, including IT, office resources.

Governance and Legal

- Support and develop the Board of Trustees, ensuring sound governance practices.
- Organise and service Board meetings, the AGM, and working groups.
- Act as Company Secretary: ensure compliance with charity and company law, maintain registers, and submit returns.



Person Specification

Essential

- Proven senior leadership within arts or cultural organisations.
- Commitment to rural/community engagement
- Strong understanding of the UK arts funding landscape, especially ACE.
- Demonstrable experience in finance, HR, governance, and fundraising.
- Experience in project delivery.
- Strategic thinker with exceptional communication skills.
- Experience of working and engaging with key stakeholders
- Experience working with or supporting a Board of Trustees.
- Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Evidence of original thinking, idea making and bold ambition.
- Caring and positive leadership style.

Desirable

- Awareness of the ethos, principles and practice of rural touring.
- Knowledge of community arts and engagement, and/or cultural networks.
- Experience in legal compliance and company secretary responsibilities.
- Understanding of contemporary cultural policy and advocacy.
- Experience in digital communications, social media, and PR.
- Experience in event management and programming.

If you are excited by this role but are not sure if you fully meet the person specification, we encourage you to reach out to our Interim Head of Operations, Jo Purseglove on director@nrtf.org.uk to discuss further.

Practical Information

- **Reports to:** NRTF Board of Trustees
- **Responsible for:** Employed staff, external contractors, Board management, Company Secretary
- **Location:** Remote working, some occasional travel and evening and weekend work may be required
- **Salary Range:** £42,000 - £46,000, with potential flexibility for exceptional candidates
- **Terms:** Full-time, permanent contract - 40 hours per week, flexible working patterns available

We invite applicants who want to learn more about NRTF, both the organisation and the team, to attend an informal conversation with current Interim Head of Operations, Jo Purseglove. These conversations will have no impact on shortlisting decisions and an appointment can be made by emailing director@nrtf.org.uk with a preferred timeslot during the following sessions:

- **Tuesday 16th September - 12.30pm to 4.30pm**
- **Monday 22nd September - 10am to 2pm**



How to Apply

Applications should be emailed to **director@nrtf.org.uk** with the title '**Director Application**' and should contain:

- CV
- Cover letter up to 2 pages of A4 or video entry up to 4 minutes - *The cover letter/video will be looked at during shortlisting in relation to the person specification.*
- Contacts for two relevant references - *One must be your most recent employer/client and neither will be contacted until a position is offered and we have consent.*
- Please also fill in our anonymous [equal opportunities form here](#)

If you require any access support to apply for the role, please reach out to us.

Timeline:

Application Deadline: Monday 29th September

First Interviews via Zoom: Thursday 9th October

In-person Second Interview: Thursday 23rd October

In-person interview location tbc, travel to be expensed to NRTF.



Credit: Vipul Sangoi

Thank you for your interest in applying with NRTF

Equal Opportunities Employer Statement

NRTF is an equal opportunities employer committed to equality, diversity, anti-racism, and anti-ableism and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Equal opportunities mean that everyone should have an equal chance to apply and be selected for posts, to be trained or promoted equally and fairly. NRTF will only judge performance on the grounds of ability, experience, or potential. All employment decisions will be taken on an individual's ability to undertake the role in question. If you would like to discuss access needs for the application form or the interview, please contact director@nrtf.org.uk

To enable us to monitor the success of our EDI policy and inclusivity aims, each applicant, employee, volunteer, partner, and the contractor will be asked to fill out an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

