

# Programme Governance Lead

Candidate Pack June 2026



# Welcome from our CEO

## Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the National Youth Agency (NYA).

**The NYA is both the steward and champion for youth work** and young lives are increasingly complex, as they transition from child to adulthood in a society shaped by rapid technological advancements, social change, climate change and unprecedented global challenges. The digital era has transformed communication, education, and employment, presenting boundless possibilities, yet also giving rise to concerns about screen time, online safety, and digital wellbeing. Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic has underscored the significance of resilience, adaptability, and mental health support for young people.

**In these ever-changing times, the NYA remains adaptable, innovative, and responsive to the evolving needs of our young people** and the extraordinary youth workers who support them. We believe in the power of youth work to help shape the future of young lives.

**We are looking for candidates like you**, who are passionate about the work we do. As part of the NYA team, you'll have the opportunity to help imagine and realise a stronger and more positive future for young people. You'll be committed to our mission and values and expand the range of skills and experiences within the organisation. We particularly welcome applications from candidates who will help NYA better reflect the diversity of the youth sector.

**If you believe you possess the attributes, skills, and knowledge** that would benefit our development we are excited to hear from you. We're committed to help you with your development, and the successful candidate will receive a full induction programme on all aspects of the NYA.

Join us and help us to continue transforming the lives of young people through youth work.

Yours faithfully,

**Leigh Middleton**  
CEO



# About Us

**All young people deserve a productive, fulfilling future.** Society needs the spark and energy of young people to make it tick, yet somehow thousands of young people feel blocked by the complex, sometimes disheartening challenges the modern world throws at them.

**Youth work is the best methodology to unlock young people's potential** by providing high quality support and opportunities. Skilled youth workers build relationships that support young people to explore their personal, social, and educational development. Youth work enables young people to develop their voice, influence, and place within society.

**As the national body for youth work, NYA has a dual function.** We are the professional, statutory, and regulatory body (PSRB) responsible for qualifications, quality standards and safeguarding for youth work and services in England. In line with our charity mission and aims, we also champion youth work through research, advocacy, campaigns, and programmes.

We work in partnership and believe in collaborative leadership, listening to youth workers and the youth work sector so that we can understand their needs and respond to the challenges they face. **We are ambitious for youth work and for young people** and integrate youth voice and influence across our work

NYA continues to work closely with government to inform policies with young people, and in support of regional youth work units, local authorities, and voluntary services across communities. We lead on workforce development for qualified youth workers, volunteers, and related professions.

**The NYA places young people at the heart of all we do.** That is why today 34% of our employees are young people collaborating to help make the big decisions that affect them.



## OUR VISION

A world where every young person can access youth work



## OUR MISSION

Enable more people to deliver great youth work



## OUR PURPOSE

Enable great youth work to happen by setting the standards, growing the capacity and building the case to improve the quality and quantity of youth work in England

## Our values



### COLLABORATIVE

We connect to share, learn and grow. We know that together we are greater than the sum of our parts.



### DETERMINED

We are ambitious for youth work and for young people and push ourselves to overcome barriers and open up new opportunities.



### INCLUSIVE

We embrace, respect and value diversity in all its forms and act in a way that demonstrates this in all we do.



### AUTHENTIC

We say what we believe and follow it up with action.



### BOLD

We are evidence-informed and innovate to push boundaries.

# Operations Directorate Overview

The **Operations Directorate** at the National Youth Agency (NYA) ensures the seamless daily function of the organisation. The Directorate oversees our core internal teams such as Business and Administrative Support, Human Resources and also provides strategic oversight of NYA's national programme portfolio, ensuring that our programme activity is well governed, properly resourced and aligned with the organisation's mission and funding commitments.

The Operations Directorate plays a key role in maintaining operational efficiency, supporting good governance and managing organisational risk. Together these functions underpin the broader mission of the NYA, enabling its strategic goals and long-term objectives to be met.

**We work hard and at pace as we are committed to doing our best for youth work and young people at all times.**

**We create the conditions for great youth work to happen.**

# About the role and responsibilities

## Role purpose

To manage and oversee the successful delivery of all programmes/projects within the Programmes Directorate by establishing and leading consistent governance and assurance. The postholder will strengthen programme governance, reporting and risk management ensuring programmes are delivered by agreed methodologies and in a consistent manner.

## Responsibilities will include

- **Governance framework and standards:** Define, implement and maintain an agreed methodology for programme/project lifecycle governance.
- **Programme/project boards:** Chair programme/project boards and ensuring decisions, and actions are documented and actioned.
- **Risk, issues and dependencies:** Identify risks, issues and dependencies which are not captured by Programme Portfolio Leads. Ensure consistent risk management across projects and programmes. Proactively identify cross-programme/project risks and issues (including those not visible to project/programme leads), implement mitigations, and escalate risks/issues to the Director of Programmes and COO as required. Assess programme/project risks against the NYA risk register and update the register accordingly.
- **Portfolio reporting and insight:** Produce and present monthly programme governance reports at the Directorate Programme Board, providing clear portfolio-level insight (milestones, deliverables, RAG status, KPIs, benefits, and financial/resource assumptions) to enable effective senior decision-making and assurance.
- **Governance cadence and facilitation:** Design and run governance routines (e.g., project start-up, weekly/monthly reviews, decision logs, change control) and support high-quality papers and actions for directorate governance forums; ensure timely escalation of material risks, issues and decisions to the COO.
- **Compliance and audit readiness:** Support teams to evidence compliance with funder/contractual requirements; ensure appropriate documentation, approvals and version control are in place and accessible.
- **Lessons learned and continuous improvement:** Implement and maintain a robust lessons-learned process (during and post-delivery) and ensure findings are integrated into future programmes/projects through updated standards, templates, training and assurance checkpoints.

**No two days are the same in the NYA. We are creative, responsive and flexible, and work together to achieve our goals set out in the 10 Year Vision for Youth Work.**

# Key Relationships

## Team and reporting lines

The Project Governance Lead will work across several internal programme teams and report to the COO. The postholder will line-manage the Project Support Officer (and/or other project support capacity) and will work closely with Programme Portfolio Leads and Programme Director to embed consistent governance and assurance across their portfolios.

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Key relationships</b>           | COO, Director of Programmes; Programme Portfolio Leads; Programme Managers/Officers; Strategic Youth Work Lead (for assurance on quality/safeguarding interfaces); Finance and People teams (for budgeting/resourcing processes); organisational governance and risk colleagues.  |
| <b>Decision-making / authority</b> | Defines governance standards, templates and reporting requirements for the Directorate; sets expectations for project documentation and cadence; recommends escalation and corrective actions; can require projects to meet agreed quality assurance standards before proceeding before proceeding; supports leaders to make decisions within agreed thresholds.  |
| <b>Measures of success</b>         | <p>Programmes/projects are delivered on time;<br/>Programmes/projects are suitably resourced;<br/>Programmes/projects are delivered within budget and clearly demonstrate value for money;</p> <p>Consistent governance adopted across the Directorate with earlier identification and escalation of risks/issues; high-quality, timely reporting to COO; improved audit readiness and compliance evidence; clear decision-making and escalation routes used effectively.</p> |

# About You

## Our Programme Governance Lead should have the following:

### Essential:

- **Professional qualification:** Project/programme management qualification (e.g., PRINCE2, MSP, Agile) or equivalent experience.
- **Governance and programme support expertise:** Significant experience establishing and running programme and project governance, including chairing boards, clear delivery frameworks, shared standards and templates, structured review points, and quality assurance.
- **Portfolio reporting and insight:** Strong experience producing and presenting monthly programme portfolio reporting to senior stakeholders (e.g., ELT/Directorate boards), covering milestones, RAG, KPIs, risks/issues, benefits and key assumptions, and turning information into clear decisions and actions.
- **Risk, issues and dependencies:** Proven ability to implement effective risk/issue/dependency management processes, including proactively identifying cross-programme/project risks and issues, operating escalation routes, maintaining decision/action logs, and assessing/updating risks against the NYA risk register.
- **Process design, lessons learned and continuous improvement:** Ability to design practical, user-centred governance processes that reduce administrative burden and improve delivery predictability; experience implementing a robust lessons learned approach and ensuring learning is embedded into future programmes/projects.
- **Stakeholder management:** Able to build effective working relationships across teams, influence without formal authority and support Programme Portfolio Leads and Programme Managers to adopt consistent ways of working.
- **Communication:** Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including drafting clear papers, templates and guidance and facilitating effective meetings.
- **Systems and data literacy:** Confident working with planning and reporting tools (e.g., Monday.com), ensuring appropriate version control and accessible documentation.
- **Values and behaviours:** Demonstrates integrity, accountability, collaboration and a commitment to equity and improving outcomes for young people and communities.

**The National Youth Agency is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people. We expect all our staff and associates to share this commitment and to adhere to our safeguarding policies, procedures and practice at all times.**

### Desirable:

- **Change management:** Experience implementing new standards and ways of working across multiple teams, including training/coaching and managing.
- **Third Sector or Public Service experience:** Understanding of programme delivery in public or third sector environments and the operating realities of frontline services.

# Our Commitment to Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The National Youth Agency is an equal opportunities employer. Committed to equal opportunities policies. We welcome applications from all backgrounds so that our team mirrors the community we serve. We welcome applications from anyone regardless of disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic background and political beliefs.

We are committed to providing an inclusive experience for all those who want to apply, and we are committed to removing any barriers in our recruitment processes. So, during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for childcare whilst you are at interviews where these take place in person.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring sign language interpreter organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Providing this document in a word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a guaranteed first stage interview with for disabled candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the role.

## Why work for us?

Our team members rated NYA **9 out of 10** as an employer **90%** would recommend working at NYA to their friends and family.

### What our team say about working at NYA\*:

'A great environment to work, with colleagues who I care for & who care about me'

'I feel INCREDIBLY supported & grateful to work for this fantastic organisation'

'Always willing to listen, providing trust & freedom as an employer'

\*Source: NYA staff survey November 2023

- NYA operates as a people-first organisation, prioritising the well-being and needs of its employees.
- NYA offers an exceptional flexible working approach which encourages our team to balance professional responsibilities with their personal life.
- Predominantly a remotely based team, spread across England, fostering inclusivity and diverse talent. Despite geographical distances between team members, NYA maintains a highly motivated and connected team through the optimisation of digital tools.
- At NYA we have a shared vision and objectives and our team often express how our supportive work culture increases motivation and promotes teamwork and productivity.
- NYA is committed to supporting the continual personal and professional development of our team and helping them achieve their ambitions.
- We provide 25 days leave plus 8 days, life assurance scheme, 5% employer pension contribution and a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme with unlimited specialist support.

# Additional Information & How to Apply

## Location – Home based/remote working

NYA has its home in Leicester which is available for staff to work or host meetings. The whole team come together throughout the year for relationship and team-building events. This role may require travel to meetings, events and conferences at times.

## Remuneration

**£55,000-£65,000** per annum (dependant on experience and qualifications).

## Terms of Appointment – Permanent Contract

An offer of appointment will be made once candidates have been interviewed and will be subject to satisfactory completion of eligibility checks, including references, UK Right to Work and DBS checks. If you are offered an appointment, you will receive a detailed summary of your main terms and conditions within your contract of employment. All roles have a six-month probationary period.

## Hours

Full-Time 37 hours per week.

## Safeguarding

This role is subject to the provision of all child protection legislation, and all policies governing staff that work with children and vulnerable adults.

## Our Support for You

We will provide a full induction and supported journey into the role.

## If you wish to apply for this position

Please apply by completing this [application form](#) which will ask you to:

- Answer several questions to help highlight your suitability for the role and how you meet the requirements in the **About You** section. **Please note that these questions must be answered for your application to be considered.**
- Upload a detailed CV outlining your career history, roles, responsibilities and achievements.
- Complete a diversity monitoring – This is optional, and your data will at no time be connected to you or your application.

If you experience any difficulties applying via our online application process, please send the above documents via email to [recruitment@nya.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@nya.org.uk)

**Closing date:** 23:59 July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2026. We would encourage you to apply as soon as possible as we may close the vacancy early if we receive a sufficient number of suitable applications.

**Interviews:** W/C 13<sup>th</sup> July OR W/C 20<sup>th</sup> July

## More about us

Discover more about the National Youth Agency and our work at: [nya.org.uk](http://nya.org.uk)