

Trustee recruitment pack

So much more  
than music



NORDOFF & ROBBINS  
MUSIC THERAPY

**"I can honestly say  
hand on my heart  
that discovering  
Nordoff and  
Robbins helped save  
our beautiful girl  
from what looked  
like a very difficult  
future.**

**That's even if she  
had a future."**

Bev, Ruby's mum

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***"When you are in crisis, it can feel impossible to face it alone. But we believe that everyone carries music within them – music that comes from the core of who a person is. Through the craft of music therapy, we can create a connection, so no one has to suffer in isolation"***

Nordoff and Robbins Music Therapist

**A message from our  
Chair of Trustees,  
Emma Banks**



**"We want to see music  
therapy firmly established  
as a recognised,  
integrated and accessible  
form of health care."**

Emma

## **Welcome and thank you for expressing your interest in Nordoff and Robbins.**

I've had the privilege of being Chair of Trustees here for a year now, having been on the board for four years previous. Witnessing the impact that our music therapists have and the people it helps, some of the UK's most vulnerable, is a massive honour for me. We are on an ambitious road and, although we have challenges ahead, it's genuinely an exciting time to be considering joining the Charity.

Music therapy can be transformational. I know sometimes these words get overused, but it's true. Music Therapy is not a nice to have. Our Therapists saved the life of Ruby, who at 14, was sectioned and suicidal. Patsy who was nonverbal at five years old said her first words to her mum in a music therapy session after a long and hard year working together. Ed, who after a horrific life threatening car accident was told he would never walk or talk again due to his brain injury, found a way to do both through working with one of our music therapists.

Music in the hands of a Nordoff and Robbins trained therapist can be the difference between surviving and thriving. Don't just take this from me, read on to Ruby's story and you'll read how it has impacted her and her family.

The research behind music and health is clear. Music can be, and should be, used as transformative tool for health and wellbeing for individuals and communities. We must make sure that music therapy is at the heart of this decision making, and we will add our voice wherever we can.

Our new strategy focuses on working with the wider music for health ecosystem. We want to see music therapy firmly established as a recognised, integrated and accessible form of health care.

To do all of this work, we need you. The Charity is recruiting a number of roles to our Board of Trustees including (but not limited to) specialisms in commissioning, the NHS, people and culture/HR, wider music ecosystem, education and research, philanthropy, and property and legal.

As a Board we work hard and are determined in answering our mission. We ask for a level of commitment for these roles which we will outline further along in this document.

If you like the sound of this challenge and this interests you, please read on and go to the application page in this document to find out next steps.

Thank you,

**Emma Banks**  
**Chair of Trustees, Nordoff and Robbins**

# To understand the impact of music therapy, just ask a mum

Bev, Ruby's mum



**“Ruby has an amazing sense of humour. She loves her piercings and colouring her hair. Ruby also lives with the diagnosis of autism, ADHD and complex mental health issues. In 2022 life became unbearable for Ruby, with self-harm and suicide attempts. She was only 14 years old.**

She was sectioned, and her life changed in a way you would never imagine. Your dreams for your child are taken away. Strangers suddenly make decisions on how to care for your child. I can't put into words how traumatic this was for Ruby.

She found some comfort in music with earphones blocking out the sounds of a very unpredictable environment. We bought her a bass and she began to teach herself how to play.

Life remained a roller coaster of self-harm and suicide attempts. Then my husband shared an article about Nordoff and Robbins that blew me away. Within no time I was talking to Joe who showed me such empathy and kindness. He assured me he would do everything in his power to help provide the nurturing environment that Ruby so desperately needed.

Nordoff and Robbins helped save our beautiful girl from what looked like a very difficult future.

**That's even if she had a future.**

Joe was true to his word, and we secured a weekly session with music therapist Jared; a safe space free from the pressures of a clinical environment. The sessions were magical and uplifting. Ruby was calmer and the happiest I'd seen her in a very long time.”

Ruby continues to shine and now rehearses weekly in a band. This is all down to the support and nurture that she received.

How does Ruby describe her experience?

“Music therapy gave me a space where I could laugh and be myself without fear or judgements. Playing my bass is so special to me. It gives me space to forget everything and uplift my mood. Like my mum said, music saved my life.”

**“Music therapy gave me a space where I could laugh and be myself without fear or judgements. Playing my bass is so special to me. It gives me space to forget everything and uplift my mood. Like my mum said, music saved my life.”**

Ruby

# Our purpose, strategy and values

## Our purpose:

To break through barriers with the power of music, creating space for people to express themselves and find connection in society.

## Our strategy:

Our strategy outlines a transformative path to make sure high-quality music therapy becomes an integral part of health and social care pathways where Nordoff and Robbins Music Therapy (NRMT) has been proven to improve people's quality of life.

## Who we are:

Nordoff and Robbins music therapy has a rightful place in social change, which was born out of the recognition of injustice for children with profound disabilities. By constantly **aiming our focus on the sharpest end of need**, and through 60 years of ongoing deep academic study, we can evidence how our work **now supports and improves lives in a vast range of conditions (illnesses and limiting life circumstances)**. Key to our approach is acknowledging the ability and potential of those we work with rather than them being defined only by their disabilities and what they cannot do by their care workers, carers and then larger networks of society.

# Key focus areas:

## 1. Who we will work with:

- The sharpest end of need, supporting people (children and adults) through illnesses and life limiting circumstances
- Contexts we work within: Mental health, education, hospices, hospitals, neuro-rehab, dementia care homes, learning disabilities, refugee support, homelessness support, domestic abuse, rape crisis centres

## 2. What we will do:

- Long-term goal: Position music therapy as an essential health and social care service across the UK.
- Expand our impact without increasing our infrastructure
- Develop a sustainable ecosystem of music therapists and quality services for future generations.
- Educate the future Nordoff and Robbins music therapists
- Research music therapy to inform our work
- Deliver music therapy nationwide
- Get our services into the places that need us most.
- Employ a percentage of our graduates

## 3. Where we will do it:

- Nationwide

## 4. How:

- By being trusted and recognised by institutions and the public so that music therapy is established as a necessary health & social care intervention
- **Influencing Policy:** Use research to advocate for policy changes integrating music therapy into health and social care pathways
- **Increasing our impact:** Growing delivery of music therapy outside of our organisation without increasing our infrastructure
- **Increasing Income:** Ensure financial sustainability, and explore new income streams
- **Workforce development:** Develop the next generation of Nordoff and Robbins music therapists
- **Quality assurance development:** External quality assurance & accreditation, and investment in alumni.

## Our values

- **Focusing on people and music:** People and music are at the heart of everything we do. We work creatively with music to make a positive change to people's lives.
- **Striving for quality:** We strive for quality in all we do – with our clients, students, donors and partners.
- **Always improving:** Following the example of our founders Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins, we continuously learn from our work, always looking to improve, and embrace new opportunities to bring music to people who will benefit from it.

# The impact of our work

We are the UK's largest music therapy charity, with a unique approach shaped by more than 60 years of practice. We work across the UK in our own centres as well as schools, hospitals, care homes and more.

The transformational power of music therapy can inspire tears, joy, and moments of transcendent human connection.

To each unique encounter between a music therapist and the person they work with, we bring humanity, deep academic study, years of professional practice, vulnerability, courage, sensitivity, a determination to reach people who are isolated and in need, continuous learning, creative thinking, improvisation, compassion, visionary supporters, and, yes, music.

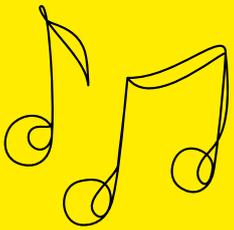
To do all of this, and to reach many more people, we need the support of people who value music and who value humanity, people like you.

That's because the state of our nation, in parts, is nothing short of a crisis. Waiting lists for young people with mental health challenges are at an all time high. The numbers of people living with dementia are increasing and support for children with autism or learning difficulties is becoming inadequate. With millions of people impacted, we know music, as a health intervention, can help.

As we look towards our new strategy from 2025, through partnering with organisations and working in the music for health and wellbeing ecosystem, we are committed towards making music therapy as accessible as possible, using music to improve people's health and wellbeing, working to integrate our work in to the health and care pathways of those we work with.



**In 2024**



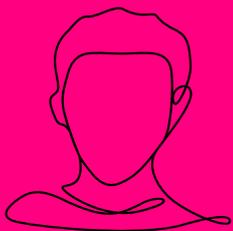
Reached **16,979** people with our music therapy



Held **54,654** music therapy sessions



We worked in **391** partner organisation worked with



**104** music therapists providing music therapy across the UK

## What our clients say

**93%**

said we improved their  
quality of life

**92%**

said we improved the quality  
of their communication and  
relationships

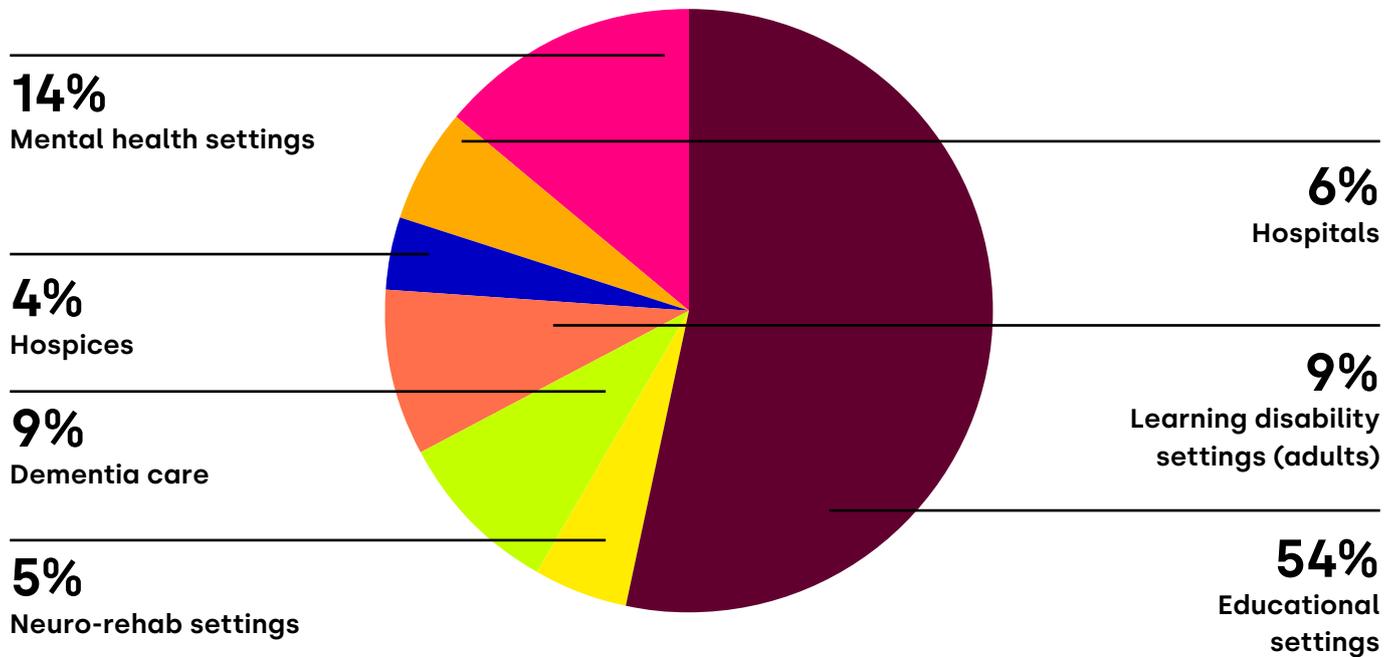
**97%**

said we had a positive  
impact within their  
whole organisation

**91%**

would recommend  
our work to others

## What type of services we worked at in 2024



# Governance and structure

We are a registered Charity and are governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees. Our Trustees reflect the skills and attributes needed to best achieve our values and goals and are an eclectic mix of those who have known our organisation for many years and those who are in their first term with us.

The Board and Nordoff and Robbins work together effectively and are committed to the work of constant improvements essential to good governance.

Each Board member sits on at least one sub-committee. We currently have three delegated authority sub-committees which are: Finance and Risk, Music Services and People and Culture.

Our Board of Trustees is visible, active, approachable and a valued part of the organisation.

We have a code of conduct and ask all Board members to adhere to the **Nolan principles**.





Photo: Ed Hill

# What is expected of you as a Trustee

This role is your opportunity to help us achieve our ambitious goals of transforming more lives through music. You will be at the heart of real change for not just the Charity, but the people it serves and exists for. As a Trustee you will make sure we fulfil our duties to our clients, students, colleagues and our research community.

**Previous experience as a Trustee is not necessary**, and we will support all candidates if this is their first Trustee role. Potential and passion are important to us, and we are committed to investing in Trustee training for all board members. Experience gained in your professional life, as well as your everyday life are of equal importance.

We particularly encourage people with lived experience of some of the settings our music therapy services are delivered in.

Alongside your knowledge and expertise in your area, Trustees must read and scrutinise the Board and committee papers; attend and actively contribute to the meetings; provide advice, guidance, oversight and any relevant specialist expertise; lead and contribute to discussions, make decisions and provide support in other ways including being part of committees, chairing events, sharing tools and template documents and/or providing training, mentoring or coaching to colleagues. You will also draw on your networks to support our work.

We will also be asking for:

### **Leadership and strategy**

Trustees ensure that Nordoff and Robbins fulfils its charitable purpose and help develop, agree and steer our long term strategy and goals. Trustees help us make sure that we clearly define our goals and objectives and support us to meet our targets and evaluate our performance. Identify and balance both risk and opportunity when decision making.

### **Governance and due diligence**

Compliance with the Charity Commission and all governing policies, legislations, regulations and charity law, including articles of association. Trustees also make sure we have the right internal policies in place and that our administration is effective and deal appropriately with conflicts of interest.

### **Resource, property and finance management**

Oversee internal policies, financial procedures and make sure that Nordoff and Robbins only uses its resources and finances for its charitable purpose. Trustees ensure the financial stability of the organisation; make sure that the charities funds are properly invested; put in place the proper controls and measures; ensure the remuneration of colleagues is fair and protect and manage the charity's property and assets.

### **Representing Nordoff and Robbins and our work**

Trustees uphold our values, our reputation and our credibility with their words and actions, helping to support and advocate for our work, our safeguarding practices, our fundraising and our engagement with all our stakeholders and the public.

### **Qualities and attributes**

Qualities and attributes we value within our Board members:

- Strategic, long term vision
- Good judgement skills
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Collaborative
- Strong communication skills
- Creative thinker
- Courageous
- Curious
- Passionate
- Agile
- Innovative, independent thinker
- Strong empathy
- Understanding of the value of music and music therapy
- Commitment to the Charity and it's vision

### Time commitment

Total approximate time = 30 hours over a year

All board and sub-committee meetings will have a hybrid option.

- Four board meetings per year (3 hours each)
- Four sub-committee meetings per year (2 hours each)
- Annual away day 6 hours, in person
- Optional fundraising events attendance where applicable
- Correspondence by email to make decisions in between meetings.

The term is minimum one x three year term, up to three terms by invitation and re-election by the Board.

### Salary

This is a voluntary, unremunerated role. We will pay for reasonable travel and childcare expenses to cover meetings.

This role is subject to an enhanced DBS check as standard.



# How to apply

We hope that you will consider becoming a Trustee with us. If this sounds like the role for you, please send us your expression of interest to **[recruitment@nordoff-robbins.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@nordoff-robbins.org.uk)**

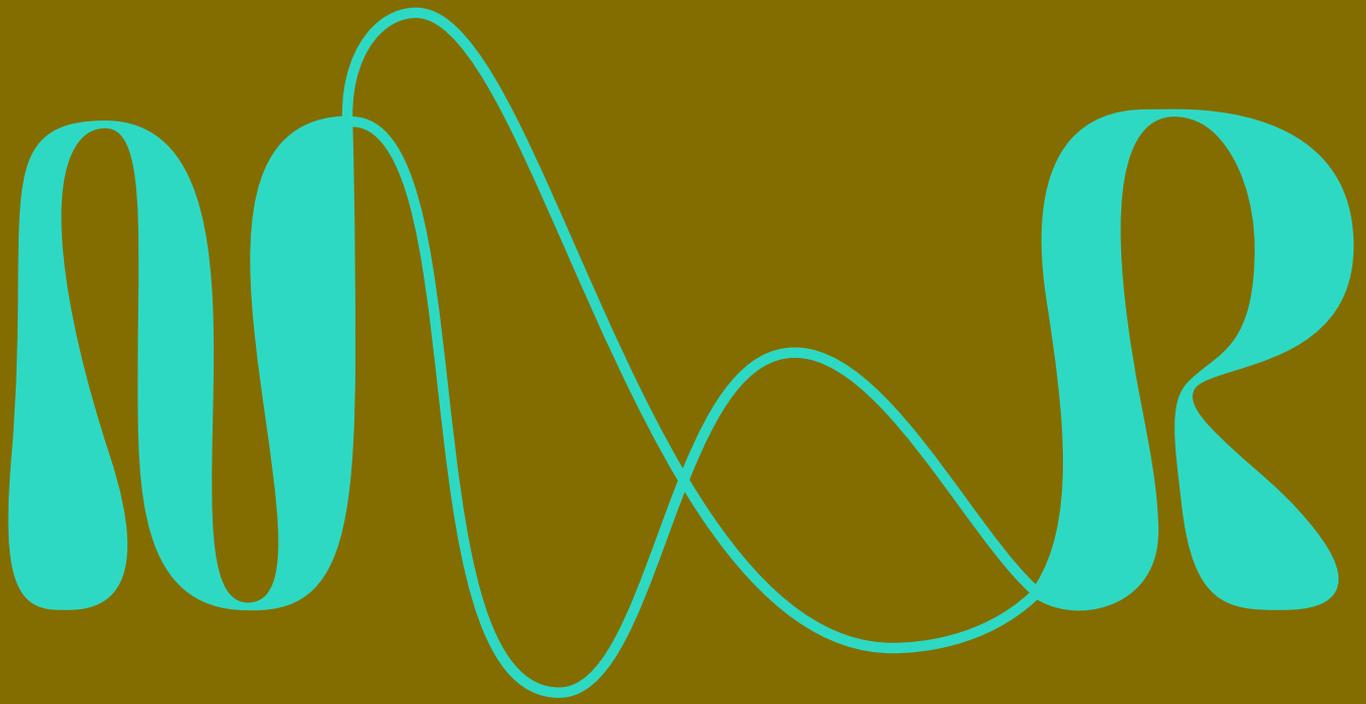
In your expression of interest, please detail which Trustee role you are applying for and include:

- A brief introduction about yourself and your current role(s)
- Why you are interested in becoming a Trustee
- What you would be able to bring to the role (including any relevant experience)
- Your interest in Nordoff and Robbins.

The next step will then be an informal conversation with a senior member of the Nordoff and Robbins team, which will be within two weeks of receipt of your expression of interest.

If this is successful, you will then have a meeting with a current Trustee.





# NORDOFF & ROBBINS

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