

Northern School of Contemporary Dance

INVITATION TO TENDER

for the provision of

Design of NSCD 40th Anniversary publication



July 2026

Northern School of Contemporary Dance

98, Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 4BH (0113 219 3000)

www.nscd.ac.uk

CALL TO TENDER

Project schedule	August to November 2026
Budget	£6,000 inclusive of VAT
Submission deadline	3 August 2026, 11am
Main Contact	Jade Aitchison, Kaleidoscope Project Lead
Email	Jade.Aitchison@nscd.ac.uk

Northern School of Contemporary Dance invites proposals from experienced graphic designers, design studios and creative agencies to design and produce the artwork for a commemorative publication celebrating the School's 40th Anniversary.

The publication will form part of NSCD's wider anniversary programme and will celebrate over four decades of artistic innovation, community impact, education, heritage and alumni achievement.

We are seeking a designer or design team to create a visually engaging, accessible and impactful publication that reflects NSCD's creativity, values and identity, while honouring its history and diverse communities.

Project overview

Founded in 1985, Northern School of Contemporary Dance is one of the UK's leading conservatoires for contemporary dance, and the only one based outside London. Located in Leeds, NSCD is celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2025/26 through a programme of heritage, community, artistic and celebratory activity.

The anniversary publication will form a key legacy output within this programme. It will act as both a commemorative document celebrating NSCD's history and achievements, and a creative archive capturing stories, memories, photography and voices from across the NSCD community.

The publication is expected to include newly commissioned written content, alumni and stakeholder contributions, archival and contemporary photography, and reflections on NSCD's impact locally, nationally and internationally.

The tone should feel celebratory, artistically ambitious, inclusive, and culturally rich. The visual approach should align with NSCD's brand identity.

Scope of commission

The appointed designer or design agency will be responsible for developing the overall visual identity and creative approach for the publication, in line with NSCD's brand identity and the aims of the 40th Anniversary programme.

This will include:

- developing initial creative concepts for the publication
- designing page layouts and typographic systems
- establishing visual consistency across the publication
- creating accessible, inclusive and reader-friendly designs
- designing and producing full publication artwork

- treating, placing and integrating archival and contemporary images
- working with a combination of written, photographic and archival content
- designing visual devices such as timelines, pull quotes, infographics or other graphic elements where appropriate
- working through draft, review and proof stages to final approval
- preparing final print-ready artwork files in line with printer specifications
- preparing a digital PDF version suitable for online distribution
- liaising with NSCD staff, the appointed writer/editor, contributors and production suppliers where required

Deliverables

The appointed designer or design agency will provide:

- initial creative concepts for review
- draft publication designs for feedback and approval
- final approved publication design
- print-ready artwork files prepared to agreed printer specifications
- a digital PDF version suitable for online distribution
- packaged design files and assets as agreed

Publication details

Please note that these specifications are indicative and may be refined during development.

- approximate length: 100 to 150 pages
- format: hardback bound publication/book
- mix of full colour and black and white throughout
- combination of text and image-led content
- print run: 500
- publication launch: 28 November 2026

Budget

The total budget available for this commission is **£6,000 inclusive of VAT**.

This budget should include:

- design fees
- meetings and consultation
- revisions/amendments
- artwork preparation
- any associated project management costs

Please clearly outline any additional costs not included within your proposal.

Printing costs are expected to be commissioned separately unless otherwise proposed.

Timeline

Indicative project timeline:

Stage	Date
Tender issued	17 July 2026
Deadline for submissions	3 August 2026 – 11am
Appointment confirmed	10 August 2026
Design development period	August to October 2026
Final artwork sign-off	12 October 2026
Printing process	October to November 2026
Publication launch	28 November 2026

Submission requirements

Please include the following within your proposal:

1. Company/designer information

- name and contact details
- company profile or designer biography

2. Relevant experience

Please include examples of previous work relevant to:

- publication design
- arts and cultural sector projects
- heritage/community storytelling projects
- editorial and image-led design

Please include links or PDFs where possible.

3. Creative approach

Please outline:

- your initial thoughts on the project
- how you would approach the design process
- how you would ensure the publication is visually engaging, accessible and representative of NSCD's identity and communities

4. Fee breakdown

Please provide:

- a clear cost breakdown
- VAT status
- confirmation that the proposal is within the available budget

5. Proposed timeline

Please provide an outline of how you would deliver the project within the proposed schedule.

Selection criteria

Submissions will be assessed against:

- quality and relevance of previous work
- creative approach and understanding of the brief
- experience working within arts, heritage or community contexts
- value for money
- ability to deliver within the proposed timeframe

Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion

NSCD is committed to equality, equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racist practice. We welcome proposals from designers and agencies from a wide range of backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences.

We particularly encourage proposals from individuals and organisations underrepresented within the cultural and creative industries.

Submission information and further enquiries

Please submit proposals electronically in PDF format to:

Jade Aitchison

Kaleidoscope Project Lead

Jade.Aitchison@nscd.ac.uk

Submission deadline: 3 August 2026, 11am

Late submissions may not be considered.

For any questions or to arrange an informal discussion about the commission, please contact Jade Aitchison using the details above.

Confidentiality

Tenderers shall treat all information provided by the Institution as confidential and use it solely for the purpose of preparing their tender response.

Reservation of Rights

NSCD:

- Does not undertake to accept the lowest priced tender.
- Reserves the right not to award a contract.
- Reserves the right to seek clarification on submissions.
- Shall not be liable for costs incurred in preparing tender responses.

Contract status

This is a call to tender for the provision of services and does not constitute an offer of employment. The successful designer or design agency will be engaged under an appropriate freelance, supplier or services agreement.

We look forward to receiving your proposal.