
Philharmonia

Head of Education & Community Engagement

Overview of the Organisation

The Philharmonia Orchestra is one of the world's great orchestras and has been creating thrilling performances for a global audience since 1945.

Artistic Leadership

Celebrated young Finn Santtu-Matias Rouvali is our Principal Conductor. Santtu follows in the footsteps of great artists including Herbert von Karajan, Otto Klemperer and Riccardo Muti. His immediate predecessor Esa-Pekka Salonen is our Conductor Laureate, and Christoph von Dohnányi is our Honorary Conductor for Life. In 2023, Marin Alsop joined the Philharmonia family as Principal Guest Conductor.

This inspirational artistic leadership is at the core of our work on the concert platform, which we then complement with a diverse range of titled artists which change season by season; in 2025/26 our Artists in Residence are choreographers Thick & Tight. Our Featured Artist is pianist Víkingur Ólafsson, and our Featured Composer is Gabriela Ortiz. Together with the orchestra, these artists help us shape a programme of performances, artistic and learning projects of the highest quality and distinctiveness.

Organisational Overview

The Philharmonia is a registered charity and as one of the four London self-governing symphony orchestras comprises 80 musicians from 16 countries. The Board is led by Lord King of Lothbury and includes a strong player voice through members of the orchestral committee headed up by President James Buckle. The management team of 40 administrative and backstage staff is led by CEO Thorben Dittes and an Executive Team of six.

Our artistic home is the Southbank Centre in the heart of London, where we give around 35 performances a year. We also have residencies in Bedford, Leicester, Canterbury, and Basingstoke, encompassing longstanding Learning & Engagement projects as well as regular concerts. Additionally, the orchestra is resident at Garsington Opera and the Three Choirs Festival. From our administrative base in Bankside, we create around 250 projects and performances annually and in 2023/24 around 160,000 experienced the Philharmonia sound live.

From LPs to Virtual Reality, we have always been pioneers in using technology to bring our music to the widest possible audience. We have 1 million listeners each month on Spotify, over 500,000 social media followers, and a vibrant YouTube channel with annual viewing figures of almost 3 million.

The future

Following the challenges of the Covid pandemic and a change in executive leadership the organisation has undertaken an extensive mission-vision-values exercise, involving musicians, staff, Board and external stakeholders. The resulting forward direction connects its illustrious musical history and artistic DNA of international excellence, with a firm focus on innovation and the future of the orchestral experience for audiences and participants, as well as musicians.

The next steps will be to create the detailed strategies, operational models and standouts defining artistic projects which enable us to move towards our vision of the future of a thriving, equitable society with orchestral music at the heart of cultural life, where musicians are celebrated for the work they do to make the world a better place.

Could you be part of that future?

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Job Title

Head of Education & Community Engagement

Position Summary

The Philharmonia is looking to appoint an experienced and inspiring Head of Education & Community Engagement to lead on the day to day running of learning projects, with a firm focus on developing and growing this work. With a proven track record of creative leadership, innovation and producing high quality music education and community projects, successful applicants will be led by a passionate belief in the power of orchestral music to transform lives, whether as audiences or participants.

Centred around our ambition to deepen our engagement in our residencies in and out of London, this role will be responsible for the creative and strategic development and execution of both our long-established programmes (like Hear and Now, and Orchestra Unwrapped), as well as co-creating and developing new, innovative projects addressing real needs in schools and community settings. The role will have a strong direct connection with our Community Boards, the advisory bodies in our residency areas, and the Music Hubs, as partners and co-creators. Candidates should have a progressive and well-informed approach to place-based and grassroots music-making and project creation, and a strong understanding of the latest developments in the music education landscape.

Combining a keen grasp of participant needs, with sound understanding of commissioner and funder requirements, as well as a can-do, entrepreneurial attitude, this is a great opportunity for a senior manager to progress to the next level of leadership within the sector and shape the education and community engagement programmes of a leading orchestra.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Planning:

- Undertake research and mapping as required to ensure that projects and programmes respond to local and regional needs and is distinctive and complementary in the context of other providers.
- Keep abreast of educational policy and practice at national and regional governmental level, ensuring that project development is aligned with current thinking and strategy.
- Develop new bespoke and innovative education and community projects in strategic partnership with local and national bodies, allied to the core work of the Orchestra.

Leadership and Management:

- Provide creative leadership and direction for the Learning and Engagement Department, reflecting and clearly articulating the Philharmonia's vision, mission and values
- Develop and motivate the members of the Learning and Engagement Team, and as required, manage the Learning & Engagement team's support staff, such as freelance Project Managers, animateurs and musicians
- Sustain and strengthen existing partnerships for funding and delivery with key stakeholders including other NPOs, Local Authorities, Music Education Hubs, community groups, arts organisations and venues, private and public development agencies and schools, colleges and universities.
- Represent the Orchestra on the Strategic Boards of appropriate bodies in London and residencies (for example, music hubs)
- Ensure that key national and regional stakeholders have a detailed understanding of the Orchestra's Learning and Engagement work, as well as ensuring effective and constructive communication with artists and musicians engaged in the Philharmonia Orchestra's Learning and Engagement Programme
- Represent the Philharmonia Orchestra at external meetings and conferences, as required, acting as an advocate and ambassador for the Orchestra.
- Lead and manage the Safeguarding for the Orchestra, ensure that the Philharmonia Orchestra's safeguarding policy and procedure is up to date and effectively implemented, including taking responsibility as the Philharmonia's Designated Safeguarding Officer; ensure that all relevant staff and freelance practitioners have current DBS checks.

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Programme Management and Delivery:

- Oversee evaluations of all projects to share outcomes with stakeholders and partners and to learn lessons for developing and delivering future projects.
- Agree and manage budgets for the Learning and Engagement Department
- Commission and oversee production of project-specific marketing materials.
- Help to develop and support the Orchestra's Audience Development Strategy, in close partnership with the Marketing Director.
- Oversee all aspects of project management, planning and production of the various projects and workshops which make up the Philharmonia's Learning Programme
- Deputise for the Director of L&E as required

Skills and Qualifications

Essential:

- Minimum five years' experience in a relevant role
- Knowledge of the education and community learning landscape
- Experience with managing and monitoring budgets
- Experience with producing and devising large scale, education, community or participation projects
- Excellent communication skills, with a personable and approachable style
- Experience of reporting tools and data visualisation, ideally for funders
- Passion and interest for music and the arts, with an excellent understanding of orchestras and classical music repertoire
- Ability to read music and orchestral scores
- Ability to lead, mentor and train a team
- Willingness to have a hands-on attitude
- Willingness to work unsocial hours, including evenings and weekends – must want to attend concerts and learning projects

Desirable:

- An education or community learning qualification or degree
- Experience of creating external reports and evaluations

Reporting Structure

Director of Learning and Engagement

Employment Type

- Full time

Salary and Benefits

- £40-45k depending on experience
- Pension contribution of 6% of salary to a qualifying scheme.

Location

London Southwark head office with travel to various UK locations as required.

Application Process

- Email CV and cover letter to: team@theHRhub.co.uk
- Subject: Philharmonia – Head of Education & Community Engagement
- Closing Date: 29 September 2025
- First interviews: Week commencing 6 October 2025

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Equal Employment Opportunity Statement

The Philharmonia Orchestra is committed to ensuring equitable opportunities and a welcoming environment for all those that engage in our work. We strive for a more representative workforce and encourage applications from under-represented groups in the UK arts workforce, particularly those from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds, from lower socio-economic statuses, d/Deaf and Disabled applicants, and those from the LGBTQIA+ community. We are a Disability Confident Employer. If you require any adjustments to apply for this position or attend an interview, email team@theHRhub.co.uk with 'Reasonable Adjustments - Philharmonia' in the subject line.