

Job Description

Principal Conductor, St Albans Symphony Orchestra

The Principal Conductor is responsible for the overall artistic vision of the orchestra and the preparation and performance of all the orchestra's concerts in conjunction with the orchestra's committee. In collaboration with the orchestra's leader, she or he will also oversee the orchestra's musical and technical development, seeking to maintain and enhance a high standard of performance.

Specific duties are to:

- Rehearse and conduct a season of up to five concerts a year, including New Year (1st or 2nd January) in St Albans Cathedral. SASO's season runs from September to mid-July.
- Rehearse and conduct the orchestra's children's concerts (currently held on a Sunday in November), an annual orchestral workshop (Friday evening / Saturday) and an informal, end of season, 'Concerto Evening'.
- Rehearse the orchestra weekly on a Wednesday evening (7.30pm to 10pm) in St Albans – unless alternative arrangements have been agreed, such as for school holidays, sectional rehearsals, and occasional repertoire evenings with a guest conductor.
- Rehearse the orchestra for a biennial choral concert organised by the St Albans St Cecilia Festival Society, of which SASO is a member. Responsibility for conducting the concert (and some choral rehearsals) rotates between four member organisations.
- Propose repertoire, advise on concert planning and all other matters relating to the administration of the orchestra.
- Attend four meetings (or as required) of the SASO committee each season (normally held on Sundays).
- Attend SASO's Annual General Meeting in the autumn of each year (usually incorporated into a rehearsal) and present a formal report on its musical progress.
- Participate in auditioning and the appointment of the orchestra's section principals when vacancies occur.
- Contribute to occasional 'open rehearsals' for the Friends of SASO and other regular supporters by not only conducting, but also introducing some of the music being performed.

Job requirements

Essential

- Evidence of qualified musicianship and significant previous experience of conducting orchestral repertoire to a high standard.
- Ability to motivate and inspire non-professional players to achieve a high standard of performance and enjoyment of music-making.
- A wide-ranging knowledge of orchestral repertoire and its technical and musical requirements, including symphonic, chamber and choral works.
- Previous experience working with reputable amateur and semi-professional orchestras.
- Excellent communication skills and a willingness to engage with orchestra members.
- An excellent ear for intonation and balance.
- Excellent speaking skills, including the ability to address audiences when required (for example, at New Year) and communicate entertainingly and successfully with (primary-age) children.
- Imaginative and creative programming that is both exciting and appropriate for our members and our community.
- Good contacts with professional musicians, including singers, that the orchestra may wish to engage as soloists, and composers that the orchestra may wish to work with.

Desirable:

- Significant experience as an orchestral instrumentalist.
- A knowledge of external funding sources and experience of making grant applications.

Terms and remuneration

Following her or his appointment, the Principal Conductor's contract will be subject to review and confirmation in September 2023 following a probationary period commencing in April 2023.

SASO's payment terms for the 2022/2023 season are:

- £125 per weekly rehearsal (prior to concert day)
- £500 per concert (including rehearsal on the day).

All fees are subject to annual review.

Statement on equal opportunities

St Albans Symphony Orchestra welcomes applications from suitably qualified musicians regardless of age, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual identity or disability.