

**ROYAL
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA**

Guide for Applicants



RPO at 75 gala concert © Ben Wright

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in working for the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO).

The RPO believes passionately that music has a timeless ability to inspire and fire our imagination, and that everyone should have the opportunity to experience and participate in orchestral music. The Orchestra has a committed team of musicians and staff who share this passion, and we hope, through our recruitment, to attract new talents from a diverse range of backgrounds to contribute further to fulfilling our mission.

2021 marked the RPO's 75th Anniversary and the arrival of our new Music Director Vasily Petrenko, which ushered in a new and exciting artistic chapter for the Orchestra. Since then, the RPO has continued to strengthen its position as a cultural anchor, serving local communities, most notably in Brent (London's most diverse Borough and to where the RPO moved in 2025) and in towns and cities across England where the RPO has, over many years, established a strong following.

This guide will provide you with key information about the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the job application process and how to seek further information about the organisation should you have any questions. The guide is designed to supplement the job description for a specific role, which will provide more detailed information on the skill sets and experience required for individual positions.



Roderick Cox conducts the RPO at Cadogan Hall with pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason © Tim Lutton/RPO

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

The RPO aspires to:

- be an orchestra for the modern world, unafraid to push boundaries;
- place orchestral music at the heart of contemporary society, deepening engagement with communities and creative partners;
- be a respected cultural ambassador locally, nationally and internationally.

Mission

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's mission is to enrich lives through orchestral experiences that are uncompromising in their excellence and inclusive in their appeal.

Values

- **Excellence** – we strive to achieve ambitious goals across every aspect of our organisation
- **Collaboration** – in partnership, we achieve more together
- **Inclusivity** – great orchestral experiences must be accessible to all
- **Resilience** – our versatility is key to our success
- **Responsibility** – the talents of our musicians and staff must be used for the benefit of everyone
- **Passion** – the driving force within the RPO



Sound Around, Lowestoft © Paul Coghlin

About the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Patron: **HM King Charles III**
President: **Aline Foriel-Destezet**
Music Director: **Vasily Petrenko**
Artist Laureate: **Sir John Rutter CBE**

Principal Associate Conductor: **Alexander Shelley**
Associate Conductor: **Emilia Hoving**
Composer-in-Association: **Joe Hisaishi**

'An orchestra on top form' *The Guardian* on the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO), with Music Director Vasily Petrenko, is on a mission to bring the thrill of live orchestral music to the widest possible audience. The RPO's musicians believe that music can – and should – be a part of everyone's life, and they aim to deliver on that belief through every note. Based in London and performing around 200 concerts per year worldwide, the RPO brings the same energy, commitment and excellence to everything it plays, be that the great symphonic repertoire, collaborations with pop stars, or TV, video game and movie soundtracks. Proud of its rich heritage yet always evolving, the RPO is regarded as the world's most versatile symphony orchestra, reaching a live and online audience of more than 70 million people each year.

Innovation is in the RPO's genes. Sir Thomas Beecham, who founded the RPO in 1946, was a force of musical nature: an entrepreneur, a wit and a conductor of great integrity, and he believed that great music-making belonged to everyone and that Britain needed an orchestra that was as adaptable as it was brilliant. This vision has remained integral to the RPO's approach. The RPO was one of the first orchestras to set up a community and education programme, RPO Resound, and the first orchestra to create its own record label, as well as the first to travel to America post-COVID-19.

Throughout its history, the RPO has performed with the world's most inspiring musicians, including André Previn, Yehudi Menuhin, Yuri Temirkanov and Vladimir Ashkenazy, as well as icons such as Kylie Minogue, Shirley Bassey, Deep Purple, Def Leppard and Rod Stewart. And not just musicians, either. From British movie classics such as *The Red Shoes* and *The Bridge on the River Kwai* to the anthem for the UEFA Champions League, the RPO has been part of the soundtrack to millions of lives, sometimes without people knowing it. The Orchestra has continued to embrace advances in digital technology and attracts a growing global audience for its streamed performances, artist interviews, 'behind-the-scenes' insights and other digital output. Each year, the RPO's recorded music is streamed over 50 million times, has 17 million views on YouTube, and the Orchestra welcomes around 200,000 audience members to its live performances.

But live performance has always been at the heart of what the RPO does, and through its thriving artistic partnership with Vasily Petrenko, the RPO has reaffirmed its status as one of the world's most respected and in-demand orchestras. In London, that means flagship concert series at Cadogan Hall (where the RPO's residency is 21 years young this season), the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, and the iconic Royal Albert Hall, where the RPO is proud to be Associate Orchestra. The Orchestra is also thrilled to be resident in four areas of the UK, performing at The Hawth in Crawley, Hull City Hall, Northampton's Royal & Derngate and The Hexagon in Reading.

Recent concert highlights have included performances of all three of Mahler's epic choral symphonies at the Royal Albert Hall, appearances at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival, and concerts within leading European festivals, such as the George Enescu, Lucerne, Merano and Grafenegg festivals. Artistic partners have included Joe Hisaishi (RPO Composer-in-Association), Anne-Sophie Mutter,

Yunchan Lim, Julia Fischer, Eric Lu, Maxim Vengerov, Roderick Williams OBE and the RPO's 2024–25 Cadogan Hall Artist-in-Residence Johan Dalene, among many others. During the 2025–26 Season, the Orchestra looks forward to welcoming Ray Chen, Midori, Benjamin Grosvenor, Boris Giltburg, Artist Laureate Sir John Rutter, Principal Associate Conductor Alexander Shelley, Associate Conductor Emilia Hoving and Cadogan Hall Conductor-in-Residence Kevin John Edusei. And around the world, the RPO will be flying the flag for the best of British music-making, with tours to Japan and South Korea, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

The RPO remains true to its pioneering, accessible roots. Now in its fourth decade, the RPO Resound community and education programme continues to thrive as one of the UK's – and the world's – most innovative and respected initiatives of its kind. And in 2025, the RPO moved its headquarters to Wembley Park in the London Borough of Brent – the realisation of a long-held ambition to become part of the everyday life of a diverse community and audience that the Orchestra is seeking to serve.

Passionate, versatile and uncompromising in its pursuit of musical excellence, and with the patronage of His Majesty King Charles III and the artistic leadership of Vasily Petrenko, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to build on an enviable heritage to scale new heights. The Orchestra looks to the future with a determination to explore, to share and to reaffirm its reputation as an orchestra with a difference: open-minded, forward-thinking and accessible to all. Sir Thomas Beecham would have approved.

FIND OUT MORE

About the Orchestra: rpo.co.uk

About RPO Resound: rpo.co.uk/resound



Music Director Vasily Petrenko conducts the RPO at Southbank Centre © Ben Wright

Inclusion and Diversity

The RPO aims to be a truly inclusive and relevant organisation for the audiences and communities it serves, promoting the value of music as a pursuit open to all. To achieve this, we require a diverse group of staff and musicians who can contribute fresh perspectives and who wish to be supported in realising their own potential. An ambitious Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Action Plan is embedded across the organisation's work to bring to life the RPO's I&D Policy; as part of this the RPO will continually review its recruitment processes to reflect best practice.

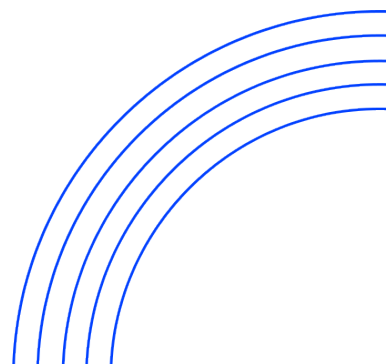
The organisation will provide assistance to disabled applicants requiring reasonable adjustments during the recruitment and appointment process. Please contact Ann Firth (firtha@rpo.co.uk) if you require any adjustments during the job application process. Once a job offer has been made, the RPO will undertake a workplace assessment and work with the employee to identify and implement appropriate adjustments.

FIND OUT MORE

Read our Inclusion and Diversity Policy: rpo.co.uk/inclusion-and-diversity-policy



The Lullaby Project © Tracey Anderson



Governance and Staffing Structure

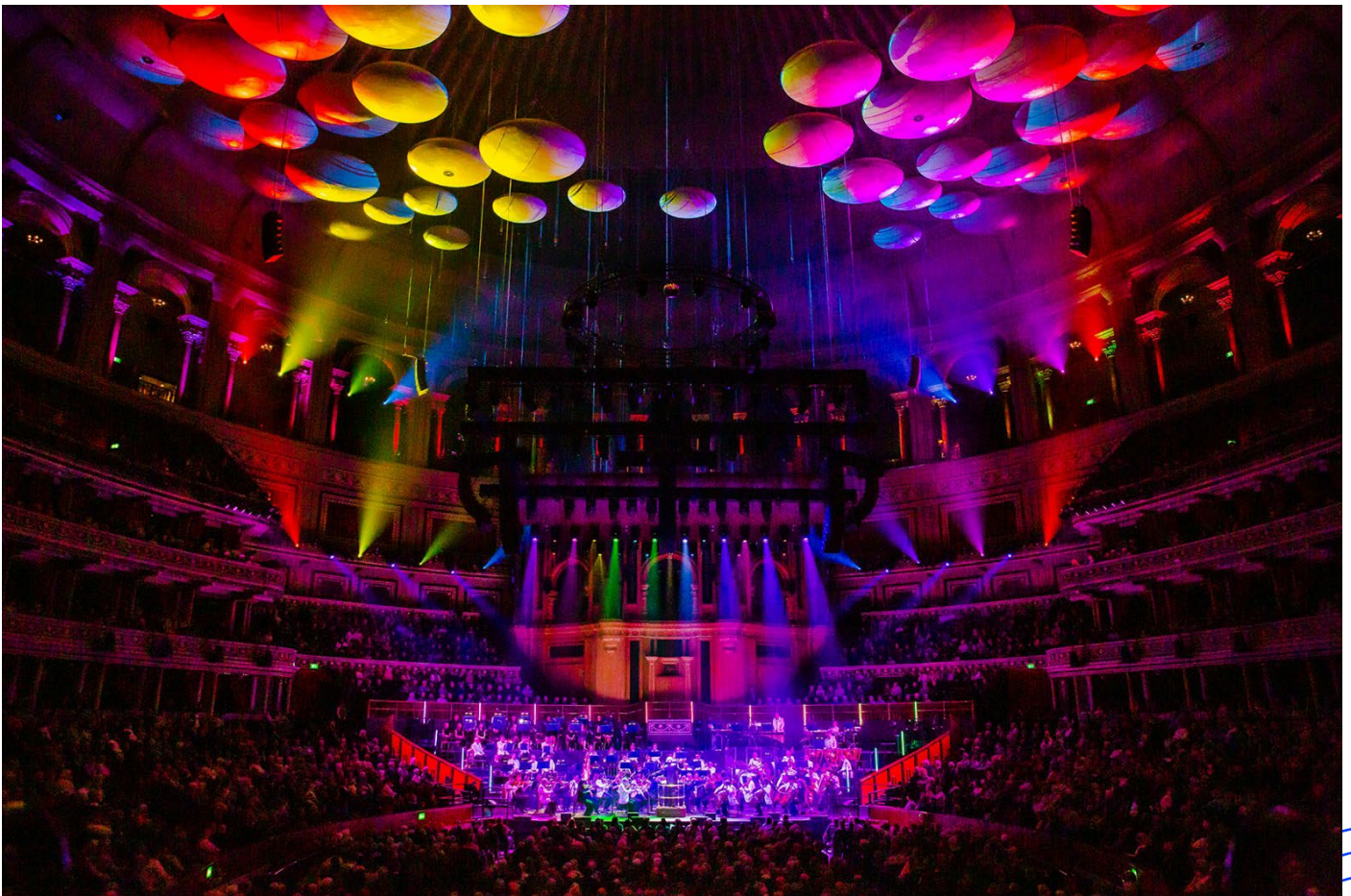
The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is a Registered Charity (number 244533) and also a company limited by shares (number 763836), requiring musicians who are members of the RPO to be shareholders. Seven musicians of the RPO are elected by their peers to sit on the Board of Directors, joined by six Non-Executive Directors from a diverse range of professional backgrounds.

The RPO has a committed team of 35 full-time and part-time staff working across four departments:

- **Concerts** – responsible for all artistic programming, scheduling and production of performances, recordings and tours.
- **RPO Resound** – leading on the planning and delivery for all the RPO's community and education programmes.
- **Business Development** – encompassing the marketing, communications, PR and fundraising functions of the organisation.
- **Finance and HR** – responsible for financial management and planning, office management and HR.

FIND OUT MORE

About the RPO's staff team: rpo.co.uk/about/our-people/directors-trustees-administration



Let's Face the Music at the Royal Albert Hall © Danny Kaan

How Do I Apply?

Please check the job description and advert for details of how to submit your application. You will either be asked to submit via our online portal or to email a CV and covering letter to recruitment@rpo.co.uk putting the job title of the role for which you are applying in the subject field. The closing date for applications will be clearly marked on the job description, which will also state the person in the RPO to whom you should address your application, covering letter and email. Your CV should include:

- Contact email and telephone/mobile number
- Details of your employment history, including relevant roles and experience
- Relevant skills, achievement, education and training

There is no need to include details of referees at the application stage; we will request these from you only if a job offer is made. Referees should include your most recent employer where relevant.

Your covering letter should demonstrate your passion and support for the work and aims of the RPO and how you would seek to use your skills and experience to contribute towards these through the role for which you are applying.

AI Guidance for Job Applicants

The use of AI tools is becoming more common, and we understand that some people may use them when preparing for job applications. However, it is important that your application is your own and relying on AI, especially to write your covering letter, could reduce your chance of being shortlisted. Here is a short guide to our expectations regarding the use of AI in job applications:

Acceptable use:

- As a tool to check spelling or grammar if you find that useful
- As an editor to help you structure your own ideas in a clear way

Remember to make sure that everything you write is true and personal to you.

Unacceptable use:

- copying and pasting answers straight from AI without personalising or editing them
- using AI to try and “sound” perfect. We’d rather hear your voice and understand your real strengths
- inflating or creating skills or experiences you don’t have. We’re interested in your real-life experience
- inputting sensitive data into AI tools, even if you believe it strengthens your example

AI can be a useful tool, but the best applications are honest, personal, and authentic. We want to get to know the real you. It’s normally clear when parts, or all, of an application aren't genuine, and this usually becomes even more obvious during interviews.

After Submitting Your Application

After submitting your application, you will be asked to complete an anonymous equalities, inclusion and diversity survey that will help the RPO continue to improve upon its recruitment processes. The survey will be sent to you once your CV and application letter have been received.

On receipt of your application, you will receive an acknowledgement from the RPO, and you will be contacted, either by phone or email, if you are successful in securing an interview. It may not be possible to provide feedback if you are not called for an interview.

Further Questions

You will be able to find out more information about the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra by visiting rpo.co.uk, via the Orchestra's social media channels, and on the Charity Commission and Companies House websites.

If you would like to speak to someone informally about an advertised role before making an application, please send an email to recruitment@rpo.co.uk, include the job title in the subject line, your request and contact details, and we shall arrange for a member of staff to contact you.

Thank you for your interest in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. We really hope we have inspired you to want to develop your career with us, and to helping us towards a vibrant future.



Mahogany Carnival Arts leads a public procession for *Wemba's Dream: Join the Journey* in Wembley Park © Chris Winter

Join the journey

Discover more and book online at **rpo.co.uk**

 [royalphilorchestra](https://www.tiktok.com/@royalphilorchestra)

 [royalphilorchestra](https://www.instagram.com/royalphilorchestra)

 [royalphilorch](https://twitter.com/royalphilorch)

 [Royal Philharmonic Orchestra](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalPhilharmonicOrchestra)

 [Royal Philharmonic Orchestra](https://www.youtube.com/RoyalPhilharmonicOrchestra)



Registered charity number: 244533

All details correct at time of publication. Updated December 2025.